

Telework / Hybrid Work Toolkit

EMPLOYEE SECTION

Assessing individual eligibility

There are a number of things to consider when deciding to work remotely, and it is worth the time to give some thought to assessing yourself, your home environment, your supervisor, and your organization. Following are some suggested questions to help with that process:

Assessing Yourself:

- Have you been in your current position long enough to have a clear understanding of your job responsibilities?
- Do you have a history of better than average job performance?
- Are you a self-starter who works well with minimal supervision?
- Do you communicate well with your supervisor and co-workers?
- Do you need a lot of social interaction?
- Are you able to separate work and home?
- Do you have strong organizational skills?
- Are you comfortable and competent with the technologies needed? If not, are you able to complete training or receive the instruction you need to become comfortable with technology?
- How productive are you when working from home?

The two most common challenges reported by remote workers are feeling isolated (especially when done on a full-time basis) and difficulty separating work from home.

Assessing Your Home Environment:

- Is your home a suitable place for you to work? Will you be able to work relatively free of distractions, or are there other activities taking place that could be disruptive (e.g., your partner operates a day-care center)?
- Do you have a suitable place in your home to work from, preferably a separate room with a door you can close or an area that is out of the flow of other household activities?

Assessing Your Work:

- Do you routinely perform tasks that can be done out of the office?
- Can these tasks be done independently?
- Can the quality and quantity of your work be easily measured or evaluated?
- Is the need for face-to-face interaction minimal, or can it be easily accomplished by phone, email, or video?
- Do you have the necessary technology, including a computer, remote access capability, etc., to work from home productively?

Assessing Your Supervisor:

- Does your supervisor manage by objectives and results?
- Is your supervisor comfortable with remote supervision?

- Does your supervisor communicate regularly with employees?
- Does your supervisor trust the staff?
- Is your supervisor open to new ideas?

If your supervisor does not demonstrate all or most of these traits, that does not mean that hybrid work is out of the question; instead, it is just an indication that you may have to take steps to help your supervisor become comfortable with the arrangement. There are many solutions you can explore to help with this, but one of the best ways to accomplish this is by being proactive about communicating with your supervisor. A simple but very effective method is to send your supervisor a weekly email update about what you are working on, what you have accomplished, any problems you have encountered, and anything that you need his or her assistance with. Generally, this should not take more than 15-20 minutes to complete, and it can also serve as a good planning tool.

Assessing Your Organization:

- What is the culture of your organization?
- Is management flexible and open to new ideas?
- Does remote work support the company's goals, mission statement or business plan? Is there a sustainability plan or committee?
- Does the organization invest in equipment, technology, and communications infrastructure that facilitates remote work?

Since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, many organizations have seen first-hand the benefits of remote work and are much more open to the concept, even if this is not something they were supportive of previously.

New to hybrid work? – what you need to know

A hybrid workplace program includes a combination of staff working in the office, working from home for a portion of the workweek, or working 100% remotely from home. If you are working a hybrid schedule, you will be in a work arrangement where you spend some time working in the office and some from home or a remote location.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 the workforce mindset has changed, and hybrid work models are increasing across the globe. This is the result of some important discoveries made during the pandemic - we can be productive working from home, we can better balance work/life, we can recapture time lost to commuting, and we can save money on gas and other expenses associated with working in the office. A [survey conducted by the Society of Human Resource Management \(SHRM\) in 2021](#) showed that 52% of employees surveyed would prefer to work remotely on a full-time basis if given the option, and employers are paying attention. All indications are that hybrid work is here to stay, so it is important to understand how this relates to you now and in the future:

- Work model goals. The benefits of hybrid work are well documented. For employers, continuity of operations is a priority, as well as recruitment and retention, reduced absenteeism, and reduced office space and parking costs. Employers understand how these benefits impact the bottom line, and many are taking a new approach to hiring based on a remote workforce.
- How will you be trained? If your employer does not provide training, share resources such as this Hybrid Work Toolkit and find other materials readily available online (see Resources section

at the bottom of this page). Working remotely successfully is a skill that can be learned and will make you more valuable to current and future employers.

- Explore career options. There are more remote work opportunities available now than ever before. Many of the top job search sites include positions that can be done remotely. There are also specialized recruiters, known as “[headhunters](#),” that have access to job postings before they are advertised and can help you land your dream job working at home. And, with so many people working from home these days, let former managers and colleagues know you are looking for remote work. Before you start your job search, make sure your online job profile is optimized for finding a job.
- Align with your values. Remote work is opening up many more job opportunities for employees and employers by eliminating geographic constraints (i.e., how far is someone willing to commute to get to work).
- Beware of Remote Work Job Scams. Be sure to research prospective job opportunities to make sure the organization is legitimate and aligns with your values before you accept a position. Some common “red flags” include: 1) vague job descriptions or lots of spelling errors; 2) lack of an online presence; 3) odd email addresses or URLs; 4) you have to use your own equipment; and 5) they ask for a lot of personal information upfront. The bottom line is to trust your instincts - if something does not feel right, then keep looking.
- Know your worth. Skilled employees who can work independently and produce results are always in demand. Know what the salary range is for your position and field. Be leery of organizations that want to pay you less for working remotely (unless the salary is based on locality pay).

Best Practices for Hybrid Work

Transitioning between home and office

You can make the most of hybrid working by following a few simple steps to plan and organize your workday:

- Set hours for when you will begin and end your workday and take breaks. It is suggested that you maintain the same hours for working in the office and working from home.
- Establish a morning routine that is like your office routine, minus the commute.
- Start the day by identifying in advance what you will be working on. Make a list and prioritize tasks, do the most important things first, check items off as you complete them, and note anything you were not able to complete and why.
- Keep track of deadlines with supervisors and co-workers; communicate progress and delays. Try setting “internal” deadlines for yourself in advance of actual deadlines with others to prevent delays on your end.
- Break large projects down into multiple, smaller tasks and commit to one task at a time (write them down and specify a time for doing them).
- Minimize at-home distractions (anything that might prevent you from staying focused) by setting ground rules with other household members and making suitable dependent-care arrangements. Also, seek a quieter place in your home to work, avoid constantly checking emails, social media, or any other potential triggers that would affect your ability to concentrate.
- Focus on one thing at a time. [Studies reported by the American Psychological Association](#) have found that multitasking can reduce productivity by up to 40%. Rather than making you more productive, multitasking means you spend a lot of time backtracking; every time you alternate

between tasks, you have to repeat a bit to find out where you last left off. Multitasking may also make you prone to making mistakes. Focusing on a single task is much more effective. Try to fully devote your attention to one task for 20 minutes before switching to another task.

- Make sure you have everything you need in your home office, such as phone numbers, resource materials, and office supplies. Avoid creating work for others in the office by asking them for something you should have made sure you had at home. Be prepared for technology glitches and know who to contact for remote tech support. [have IT's phone number available off your work device.]
- Avoid consistently working long hours. Studies have shown that overworking decreases productivity, can have a negative effect on your health, and can lead to a poorer quality of life, elevated stress, and burnout.
- Have a routine for ending the workday. Take a few minutes at the end of the day to clear your workspace and prepare for the next workday.

Staying connected and building trust

The three main components for staying connected and building trust with others when working remotely include:

- Communication – Make sure you maintain regular communication with others through email, text, video, or other group platforms so that you are “visible” to your colleagues. Adapt your method of communication to what works best for the individual or matter at hand. In some cases, it is easier to pick up the phone and discuss an issue directly rather than getting into a lengthy email chain. This is also an excellent way to connect on a more personal level.
- Accessibility – Make sure you are accessible to others during the workday, preferably through multiple means such as phone, email, text, and online platforms. Likewise, make sure you are responsive to others when they do reach out to you. If you miss a phone call or chat request, return it promptly or schedule a follow-up time.
- Accountability – You are responsible for producing results when working remotely, just as you are when you are in the office. To alleviate any concerns your supervisor may have, you may need to communicate a bit differently. For example, specify in advance what work you will be completing from home, provide feedback on what you accomplished, and note anything unexpected that came up during the day.

Adhering to these principles will ensure that you stay connected and build trusting working relationships.

Battling fatigue

[Research conducted by the Society for Human Resources Management in 2021](#) showed that nearly one-third of employees who telework reported often feeling tired or having little energy, which was seven percent higher than those who work in person.

Factors associated with work from home fatigue include constantly dealing with distractions, being overwhelmed with balancing work/life demands, and being isolated from work colleagues. Symptoms associated with work at home fatigue include feeling overly tired, being extra irritable, and feeling like everything you do feels hard or heavy. Luckily, there are things that you can do to reduce work from home fatigue and re-energize yourself, such as:

- Focus on one task at a time. Multitasking does not make you more productive, instead it causes you to lose focus and drains your mental focus without accomplishing much. You will be much more productive working on one task at a time rather than jumping back and forth between numerous tasks all day.

- Eliminate unnecessary meetings. Attending online meetings can be exhausting, especially if they are back-to-back throughout the day. Work with your supervisor and colleagues to evaluate the meeting schedule to determine if they are still necessary or if a meeting can be replaced with an email or phone call. Also consider meeting length – not all meetings need to be an hour; you can give people time back by ending early. Try to schedule meetings with time before and after the next meeting. Do weekly check-ins to eliminate many, smaller meetings throughout the week.
- Reduce eye strain and screen fatigue. Spending prolonged periods looking at screens can strain your eyes and add to screen fatigue. Get in the habit of taking breaks using the 20-20-20 rule – shift your eyes to look at an object at least twenty feet away, for 20 seconds, every 20 minutes. Adjust your screen brightness and contrast settings, increase the font size and/or use large monitors, and consider using your computer's "night light" 24/7.
- Increase your physical activity. It is very easy to become sedentary when working at home. Not only does this contribute to fatigue, but it can also lead to health issues. Use the time you would typically spend commuting by walking, doing yoga, exercising at home, or going to the gym. Make sure to get up and move around frequently throughout the day as well.
- Drink plenty of water. Dehydration plays a huge role in your energy level and physical performance. Studies show that dehydration leads to decreased alertness and concentration.
- Get plenty of sleep. Lack of sleep increases the risk of accidents and is one of the leading causes of daytime fatigue. On average, most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep to feel well-rested. You might be tempted to stay up later on days that you work from home because you do not have that morning commute, but it can affect your productivity and cognitive ability to stay focused.
- Reduce stress. Stress uses up a lot of energy. Try to introduce a variety of relaxing activities into your day to increase energy levels, such as yoga, listening to music, reading, meditating, journaling, creative endeavors, and spending time with friends and family.

Time Management

Time management is an essential part of being a successful remote worker. It is important to build your workday routine in a hybrid environment because you may be in different locations on different days. You also want to make sure you are meeting your work-related expectations and avoid consistently working after hours. The tips below can help you manage your time more effectively:

- Regardless of where you are working, you should try to start at the same time, take a lunch break at the same time, and end at the same time. This will help keep you focused and create a clear boundary at the end of the workday.
- Find a personal planning tool that you like and use it to manage your time and boost productivity. There are many online or traditional options to choose from, including apps, paper planners, calendars, wall charts, and notebooks. The key is finding one tool that you like and will use consistently.
- Before you get started for the day, take a moment to prioritize your workload. Use a [Telework Task Worksheet](#) to make a list of things you need to get done for the day. Identify the top three to five "Most Important Things" and focus on getting those things done first. There is nothing significant about this simple sheet, you can certainly use it in the office too, but the purpose is to utilize the power of making lists. It is one of the best ways to drive clarity and action. Cross off tasks as you complete them and add uncompleted tasks to the worksheet for the next day. Also, note if something unexpected comes up that impacted your ability to get something done and communicate this to your supervisor.

- Try to do the most important or most challenging tasks when you are the most productive. Your concentration and focus will be much better. Save smaller, more manageable tasks for your low-energy times.
- Block your biggest online distractors. If there are social media outlets or non-work-related websites you frequent, it is an online distractor that you have to manage.
- Establish, or reestablish clear guidelines with family and friends on your hybrid work schedule.
- If you find your mind wandering or you are feeling lethargic, take a quick break to refocus.

At home distractions

Employees who work at home often find they are more productive due to fewer interruptions compared to when they are in the office. That said, possible distractions when working from home [in work from home environment can] include:

- Family members and roommates
- Neighbors
- Chores (dishes, laundry, cleaning, etc.)
- Pets
- Weather
- Email and social media
- Television

It is important to be aware of specific things you may find distracting so you can manage them. Once you identify a potential distraction, develop and implement a strategy for addressing it, and then determine if it is working. If not, then adjust your approach and come up with another strategy until you find a way to overcome your distraction. For example, you may need to set ground rules in advance with family members, so they know not to interrupt you during work hours. This could include discussing your schedule with everyone in the morning and leaving a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your office door if you are on a phone call or video conference. In addition, you may want to develop a routine to take care of any distracting household chores before or at the end of the workday. Also, limit personal email, social media, and television to non-work hours.

Information Technology (IT) Issues

Tips for IT Security

IT requirements are specific to each organization; always follow your employer's policies when it comes to securing information and equipment. Some general considerations include:

- Know who is responsible for backups to prevent the loss of data.
- Use surge protectors to prevent electrical damage to computer equipment from storms and power surges.
- Do not eat or drink around computer equipment.
- Never leave a laptop unattended in a vehicle or at a coffee shop table.
- Consider securing laptops with a cable lock to prevent theft.

Tips to Tackle IT Issues

There are many different IT issues that are unique to each individual, below are some generic tips to be mindful of in a hybrid work model:

- Keep a log of any IT issues you are having. This will be helpful for when you have an opportunity to troubleshoot with an IT professional.
- Communicate any issues you are having to management so they are aware that productivity might be impacted.
- For problems with communication platforms or other apps, there are many online tutorials you can access for free. Here are a couple of resources but speak with your organization's IT department for the best resources.
 - [ZOOM online tutorials](#)
 - [Microsoft Teams online tutorials](#)

Tips for Faster Internet Speed

Bandwidth and slow internet speeds can be a significant issue, especially for households with multiple people streaming and video conferencing. To help address this issue:

- Place your router in a central location above the floor.
- Remove things near your router that might obstruct your Wi-Fi signal.
- Update your modem if it does not support the internet speeds of your service plan.
- Get a Wi-Fi extender for a longer range.
- Update your browser and clear caches.
- Check your router settings.
- Limit your family's data usage.
- Limit your usage when you can.

Work from home setup

When employees work remotely, the home office becomes an extension of the workplace, and workers' compensation applies. Therefore, it is important to have a designated work area, agreed-upon work hours, and a mutual understanding of basic safety requirements. At a minimum, your work area should be free of clutter, and things should be within easy reach. Also, avoid meetings in your home due to third-party liability concerns if someone is injured.

It is good practice for organizations to have employees complete a self-certification safety checklist. For a comprehensive list of practical safety measures, see the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's [Safety Checklist](#).

Psychological Impacts

The psychological benefits of remote work have been well documented over the years. For example, respondents to a [2018 survey conducted by the Mental Health Association](#) said that remote work could help them reduce stress and improve productivity by reducing distractions during the work day (75%) and interruptions from colleagues (74%), keeping them out of office politics (65%), allowing for a quieter work environment (60%), and giving them a more comfortable (52%) and personalized (46%) work environment.

Despite these findings, the Gallop [State of the Global Workplace: 2022 Report](#) showed that workers' daily stress reached a record high, increasing from 38% in 2019 to 44% in 2021. Contributing factors include world events, personal finances, health-related concerns, the economy, and job responsibilities. The pandemic and sudden shift to working from home, often on a full-time basis, has had an impact on the mental health of many employees, leading to anxiety, stress, depression, and loneliness. Many employees may have found that working from home presented a new set of stress factors:

- Social isolation, which is linked to other health issues. A report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found that social isolation, especially in older adults, is linked to higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide; increased risk of heart disease, stroke, and dementia; and premature death.
- Lack of structure associated with going into the office.
- Difficulty setting boundaries with family members.
- Being able to unplug from work at the end of the day.
- Maintaining productivity while juggling other family responsibilities.
- Having to troubleshoot technology issues.

Managing Mental Health

It is important to be aware of how working at home may affect you and then take steps to improve your mental health so you can overcome anxiety, stress, and loneliness that may be experienced by remote workers.

- Keep a schedule with your designated start and end time. Consistently working long hours does not make you more productive; rather, it leads to fatigue and burnout over time. Make adjustments, if need be, to avoid working all the time or have a conversation with your supervisor in terms of their expectations.
- Make sure you step away from the computer by taking regular breaks throughout the day.
- Stay physically active for at least 20 to 30 minutes every day. Exercise reduces anxiety and boosts mood-enhancing endorphins and serotonin levels.
- Stay connected and spend time with friends and family. Social distancing and working remotely can leave us feeling disconnected from everyone.
- Use the time gained by not commuting to get involved in your community or to take up a new hobby.
- Schedule time for the fun things you enjoy doing and make them as much of a priority as work.
- If you are struggling with managing anxiety, loneliness, stress, or depression, stop working from home and seek help. Many employers provide mental health services as part of their employee benefits package or contact local nonprofits or government agencies in your community for 24-hour helplines and other assistance.

Boosting Concentration

Boosting your concentration is one of the most effective ways to increase your productivity and quality of work.

- Be aware of when you are the most productive and work on key tasks that require your full attention during these times.
- Determine if you work better with complete silence or sound, such as music, nature sounds, or white noise in the background.
- Make sure to get enough sleep. Sleep deprivation can easily disrupt concentration and other cognitive functions like memory and attention.
- Exercise regularly, and try to get outside every day, even for just 15 to 20 minutes. Increased concentration is among the many benefits of regular exercise.
- Enjoy nature. [Scientific evidence](#) increasingly supports the positive impact of natural environments.

- Explore mindfulness practices like meditation, yoga, deep breathing, and just being silent to increase concentration, improve memory, and other cognitive abilities.
- Stay hydrated – even mild dehydration can make it harder to focus and remember information.
- Eat breakfast and avoid processed, sugary, and fatty foods that can affect cognitive functions like concentration and memory.

Home Office Considerations

Working from the kitchen table, sofa, or bed is not a suitable place to work from, especially as you prepare to work in a hybrid model long-term. When setting up your home office, determine what you will need to work safely, comfortably, and efficiently and work with your employer to determine who is responsible for providing and maintaining these items.

A report prepared by Global Workplace Analytics and Design Public Group ([Home Office Stipend Factsheet 2021](#)) shows that the technology cost for supporting a remote worker is \$1,400 every three years (laptop, webcam, docking station, keyboard, and mouse) and an additional \$1,000 every five years for home office furniture (desk, ergonomic chair, and storage). The report also indicates that many companies are considering a home office stipend as they formalize their permanent remote work policies and practices; stipends for home office outfitting typically range from \$500 to \$1,500 per employee.

Furniture and Supplies

- An adequate work surface with enough space for you to be productive and comfortable. The right desk for your needs could be a table, writing desk, or even a standing desk.
- A good chair that is comfortable and supports the curve in your lower back. You will be sitting most of the day, so find a chair that is ergonomically correct.
- Good task lighting for reading, writing, and computer work. Look for a desk lamp that provides clear, bright light that is easy to work beneath and is adjustable. LED products are 90% more efficient than incandescent lights. Look for LEDs with Color Rendering Index (CRI) ratings between 85 and 100 and a Color Temperature range of 2700K to 4500K.
- Standard office supplies such as printer/copier paper, pens/pencils, paper clips, binder clips, note pads, white board, cork board, stapler, highlighters, etc.
- Additional storage such as file cabinets, bookshelves, credenza, or banker boxes.

Equipment

- Laptops are the preferred device for remote work because they allow the employee to work at home, the office, and other locations. This avoids the duplication of equipment in the office. If you have a smaller laptop, consider getting a large external monitor and a keyboard and mouse. This will help mitigate eyestrain and create a more comfortable working environment. The use of a USB docking station at the office enables employees to use the same laptop at home and in the office and provides a desktop experience without having to pay extra for a desktop computer.
- “All-in-one” printers have print/scan/copy capabilities, so they are perfect for a home office. These devices are relatively inexpensive, and some printer manufacturers offer cost-effective and reliable Instant Ink subscription services that monitor your ink usage and auto-ship replacement cartridges when you are running low. This eliminates running out of printer ink at the last minute and making unnecessary trips to the local office supply center or office. The cost can be substantially less than purchasing ink from the office supply store.

- Headphones with a microphone can be useful, particularly if you have issues with the sound on your devices or need the noise canceling effect of headphones.
- Surge protectors help protect valuable electronics like computers, printers, and more from electrical damage. An Uninterruptible Power Supply is like a surge protector with a built-in battery. It supplies power to your electronics even if a surge knocks out your power grid, so you can save your work.
- If you are not working on your employer's network through a Virtual Private Network (VPN) make sure you have a way to reliably and consistently backup documents on your computer. Using cloud backup services are a popular solution.
- Check with your IT department on things like backup and storage of data policies, as well as any hardware recommendations or more specific requirements.

Technology

- Wireless or High-Speed Internet Access. You want a minimum of 10 Mbps of download speed and 1 Mbps of upload speed of dedicated internet bandwidth for each individual working at home.
- Remote access to your employer's network, typically through a VPN.
- Videoconferencing capability for online meetings.
- Cellphone with a way to transfer calls when you are out of the office.

Workspace

When designing your workspace, the key is to find an area that is comfortable and will allow you to be productive. Studies have shown that when people are comfortable, morale increases and productivity as well.

- The best location is a quiet area, preferably with a door you can close to maximize privacy. If this is not possible, then choose an area that is located away from other household activities that may be occurring during the day.
- Make sure the area has a window for natural light if possible. [Research](#) has shown that natural lighting helps people be more productive, happier, healthier, calmer, boosts Vitamin D, and can help ward off seasonal depression. You want to add an indirect lighting source to ensure adequate and functional lighting in your workspace. Also, make sure you are not working under the direct glare of overhead lights.
- Make sure the area has adequate heating, cooling, and ventilation so that you are comfortable.
- Consider adding live plants, photos, and artwork to transform your workspace into an area that you like and enjoy. Studies have shown plants clean indoor air by absorbing toxins, increasing humidity, and producing oxygen. They can also boost mood, productivity, concentration, and creativity while reducing stress and fatigue. Pleasant images have been shown to provide a mental escape during times of stress and have a strong calming effect.

Additional home office safety tips include:

- Install a smoke detector and have a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Have two ways to safely exit the work area and have an evacuation plan.
- Do not use space heaters or leave anything unattended on the stove or in the oven.
- If your home office is located in a basement, have the area tested for radon (a naturally occurring inert, colorless, and odorless gas that can cause lung cancer). Most radon exposure occurs inside after the gas becomes trapped indoors after entering through cracks and other

holes in a building's foundation. Have your home tested, either by a professional or with a do-it-yourself home test kit. If radon levels are high, contact a certified radon service professional to fix your home.

For more information, visit the [Pierce County Radon Page](#).

Ergonomics

Many people are reporting back problems and related ergonomics issues since working from home. Take a moment to assess your home office ergonomics: Place your hand on your keyboard and freeze. Look at how you are sitting and review the list below to see how many you pass:

- Your head should be level.
- Your eyes should be looking straight ahead and level with the top of the computer/laptop screen. If you have to look down at the screen, then you may need a device to lift your laptop.
- Your shoulders should be in a relaxed position and not hunched over the computer.
- Your keyboard should be seated at elbow height.
- Your wrists should be straight when typing.
- Your fingers should not be elevated or lower than your wrist.
- Your chair should support the curve in your lower back. Use a lower back support pillow to help with this if necessary.
- Your feet should be flat on the floor or on a footrest.

More information about home office ergonomics is available on the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries website:

[Ergonomics for Remote Workers Presentation - Getting Comfortable in Your Home Office](#)

[Work from Home Ergonomics Self-Assessment](#)

Videoconference Rules of Etiquette

The use of videoconferencing surged during the pandemic and is likely to remain an essential part of the hybrid work model. Following are some best practices for videoconference etiquette:

- Arrive on time. Be ready to participate when the meeting begins; this may mean logging in early to check your audio/video settings in advance.
- Dress appropriately. Your attire should be business casual and follow your organization's dress code. If you would not wear it in the office, then do not wear it during the videoconference.
- Position your camera at eye level. Make sure your camera is positioned in such a way that your entire face is shown. Leave your camera on during the meeting unless you need to step away from your desk to take care of something urgent, or if the host requests that your camera is turned off.
- Act as you would if the meeting were in person. Stay engaged – people can see when you are typing, texting, or disengaged on the screen. This can also be distracting to others, so stay focused on the meeting at hand. Avoid eating and drinking during the meeting unless it is an informal meeting, and this is acceptable to the host and participants.
- Use appropriate backgrounds and filters. Make sure the area behind you on the screen is free of clutter and other distractions. Ideally, that means pointing your camera toward a blank wall or one with minimal decorations whenever possible. If that is not an option, use a neutral

- videoconferencing background or purchase a backdrop to physically place behind you and your living area.
- Minimize background noise and distractions. Make sure other household members know when you are going to be on a videoconference and that they know not to disturb you unless there is an emergency. Likewise, keep pets out of the area and silence phone ringers and other background noises. In general, you should mute yourself when you are not speaking.

Resources

Sample Policies, Agreements, and Forms

University of Washington/Human Resources/Hybrid Work

<https://hr.uw.edu/hybridwork/telework-policies-and-agreements/>

University of Washington/Human Resources/Remote Work Location and Out-of-State Work Policy

<https://hr.uw.edu/policies/telework/remote-work-location-and-out-of-state-work-policy/>

Society for Human Resource Management – Remote Work Resources

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/pages/remote-work.aspx>

Training

University of Washington Foster School of Business

Management and Practice of Telework – Increasing Productivity & Decreasing Cyber Threats

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n14rcWRSnyw>

Remote.co Best Online Courses for Remote Workers

<https://remote.co/best-online-courses/>

U.S. Office of Personnel Management/Telework Training

<https://www.telework.gov/training-resources/telework-training/>

LinkedIn Learning – Remote Work (many employers have a free login)

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/topics/remote-work>

Fairfax County Government, Making Telework Work!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIJ250Hx9JQ>

Research

Global Workplace Analytics – Remote/Hybrid Research and Resources

<https://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/>