

Important Information Regarding Telework, Temporary Exception to Telework, Remote Work, and Reasonable Accommodations

INTRODUCTION

Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, there has been an increase in interest across the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) workforce about telework and remote work. This message provides **current** information to assist employees and supervisors to understand the differences between telework, temporary exceptions to telework, remote work, and reasonable accommodations.

PLEASE NOTE: Remote work and telework arrangements from any foreign country (including Mexico and Canada) are not currently authorized at NASA.

If applicable, any changes resulting from the Future of Work (FOW) study will be communicated to the workforce and incorporated into NASA's telework policy.

Since NASA instituted maximum telework during the pandemic, not all employees have communicated changes to their location in advance, which caused both mission and employee impacts. Ongoing communication between employees and supervisors on these flexibilities is especially important during the challenging times of COVID-19 to avoid these impacts.

NASA is supportive of employees requesting and coordinating workplace and location arrangements, including telework and remote work, with their supervisors during the pandemic and beyond. It is very important for employees to discuss requested changes to their telework schedule or location with their supervisor and obtain **prior approval**. Supervisors are responsible for making these decisions using business-based criteria. Supervisors should also consider whether approval of remote work arrangement is cost effective or negatively impacts the work/mission of the organization or other employees currently assigned to the organization. Supervisors should provide timely responses to employees' requests.

TYPES OF TELEWORKERS

To enhance understanding of the differences in telework and remote work, we offer the definitions below.

A **Teleworker** is an employee whose work is performed at an approved alternative worksite (normally the employee's home residence). The employee is required to physically report to a NASA Center/Government facility at least twice each pay period.

There are two types of teleworkers:

Routine teleworkers work at an approved alternative worksite (normally the employee's home residence) on a recurring schedule (e.g., 1 or more days per week or pay period).

Situational teleworkers work at an approved alternative worksite on an occasional, one time, or irregular basis. Situational telework is also referred to as episodic, intermittent, unscheduled, or ad-hoc telework.

- o Situational telework includes emergency telework as a result of inclement weather, a medical appointment, or a special work assignment.

- o Situational telework is different than a temporary exception to telework. (Refer to the Temporary Exceptions to Telework information in this message.)

TEMPORARY EXCEPTIONS TO TELEWORK

Temporary Exceptions to Telework removes the requirement for an employee to report to a NASA Center/Government facility twice a pay period due to an emergency (e.g., illness, family emergency, etc.). The employee is required to report to the NASA Center/Government facility at the end of the approved work arrangement. **The employee will retain a residence in the local commuting area and the official worksite will not change.**

A temporary exception to telework can only be granted if the employee meets the requirements outlined in NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) 3600.2, NASA Telework Program, paragraph 5.2, Temporary Exceptions to Telework Arrangements.

Teleworking during an Agency closure due to an emergency such as evacuation/pandemic allows an employee to work at an approved alternative worksite for the duration of the evacuation/pandemic. In these situations, telework may be mandated. Apart from mission-essential activities, employees are not required to report to a NASA location or other approved Government facility during the period of evacuation/pandemic. The employee's duty location does not change on the Standard Form (SF)-50, Notification of Personnel Action. Employees are required to report to the NASA Center/Government facility after the evacuation/pandemic period. This type of teleworking reflects the current status for most NASA employees during COVID 19.

REMOTE WORK

A **Remote Worker** is an employee who permanently works at an approved non-NASA/Government worksite location (normally the employee's home residence). Additionally, the employee is not required to physically report to a NASA Center/Government facility at least twice each pay period. The employee's duty location will change on the SF-50 and will be based on the employee's residence.

The local commuting area does NOT determine whether an employee is considered a remote worker or teleworker. The duty station is defined as either a specific Center site, or a non-site location such as an employee's home (we are updating our NPR to reflect regulatory guidance). If the duty station is on-site, the employee is required to be on-site twice a pay period.

Remote work may pose additional costs. Due to the implications associated with remote work, employees are required to obtain approval from their supervisor prior to making any changes to their situation. Employees and supervisors should contact their Human Resources (HR) Business Partner and Servicing HR Office Telework Coordinator if they have questions.

OVERSEAS TELEWORK

Overseas Telework is domestic **work** performed by an employee from a foreign location. Overseas Teleworkers or Domestic Employees Teleworking Overseas (DETO) must receive approval from NASA and the Department of State (DOS), Chief of Mission. DOS requires agencies to have a policy in place before authorizing employees to work from a foreign location.

Until a policy is established at NASA and DOS coordination is complete, NASA supervisors cannot approve or allow NASA employees to perform domestic **work** from a foreign location. The only exception is when the **work must** be performed from a specific foreign location.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable Accommodations during Telework, Remote work, Emergency Telework or teleworking during an Evacuation/Pandemic.

Please consult with your Center Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, Disability Program Manager for employee requests to telework/work remotely based on the need for reasonable accommodation. Please note that the law requires NASA to provide an employee an effective accommodation, not the accommodation of their choosing. All such requests must be made in accordance with NPR 3713.1, Reasonable Accommodations Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities. Requests made by employees who are seeking telework/remote work for reasonable accommodation will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please note that supervisors may provide alternative accommodations, as appropriate. For additional information, please review NPR 3713.1.

For more information regarding telework, temporary exception to telework, remote work, and reasonable accommodations, visit either of the following links:

- [Employee Decision Table for Telework, Temporary Exception to Telework, Remote Work, Agency Closure, and Reasonable Accommodations](#)
- [Supervisor Decision Table for Telework, Temporary Exception to Telework, Remote Work, Agency Closure, and Reasonable Accommodations](#)

You may find more information about telework by reviewing the NASA Human Resources Portal Telework page, which is located at: <https://hr.nasa.gov/telework>. You may also contact your Center Telework Program Coordinator. The list of coordinators may be found on the NASA [Human Resources Portal Telework](#) page. In the **Telework Coordinators** portlet, click the **View list of Telework Coordinators** link. For questions concerning this notice, contact: **NASA Shared Services Center Customer Contact Center** 1-877-677-2123 (1-877-NSSC123) or nssc-contactcenter@nasa.gov