

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees Updated: 29 March 2023

1. What is Remote Work?

Remote work is an arrangement under which an employee is scheduled to perform work within or outside the local commuting area of an agency worksite and is not expected to report to an USCG worksite on a regular and recurring basis at least twice a pay period.

Example. An employee's agency worksite is Washington, DC, and they are approved to work remotely out of their home in Baltimore, MD. The supervisor submits a personnel action to change the employee's official duty station to Baltimore (not Washington, DC). The employee works from his/her home and does not report to a USCG worksite on a regular and recurring basis.

2. How is a remote work arrangement different from a telework arrangement?

The key differences between telework and remote work are how the official duty station is determined for the employee and how often they report to a USCG worksite. For a teleworker, the official duty station is the USCG worksite, as annotated on form SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action. The teleworker must report to a USCG worksite at least two days per bi-weekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis.

For a remote worker, the approved remote worksite (e.g., their home) is the employee's official duty station. This distinction is important because a remote worker receives locality pay and other entitlements based on the approved remote worksite location. The remote worker does **not** report to a USCG worksite on a regular and recurring basis at least twice a pay period.

3. Is there still the option of 100% (or full-time) telework?

No. The new OPM/DHS guidance defines a work arrangement in which there is no expectation for the employee to regularly report to an agency worksite as remote work. Employees that were previously approved for 100% telework will need to submit a new request for remote work in accordance with Question #15 and #16 below.

4. What are the eligibility requirements for remote work?

Since remote work is an alternative work arrangement where employees perform work at a location other than the traditional agency worksite, remote work position suitability and employee eligibility determinations are similar to that of telework. Positions that are more oriented toward research, writing, and analysis and produce tangible work products are generally a good fit for remote work arrangements. In general, employees eligible for remote work arrangements must be able to accomplish work requirements without close on-site supervision or continual in-person interaction with other staff.

Supervisors identify positions as eligible for remote work, using the characteristics below, and approve requests by employees to participate. Ongoing participation in

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

remote work is not automatic, and supervisors can decide to change, modify, or terminate participation due to mission needs or other work-related considerations. Not all positions or employees are eligible to participate in remote work. Employees must self-identify their interest in remote work and prepare a “business case” to support their requests. The requests must address the following areas: ability to work with minimal supervision, past and current performance and productivity, organizational and communications skills, and ability to successfully accomplish work remotely.

Appropriate Positions. Contain the following characteristics:

- a. Portable work activities that can be performed effectively away from the regular worksite.
- b. Quantifiable or project-oriented assignments or job tasks.
- c. Unclassified work for which data security, including sensitive, non-classified and Privacy Act concerns, is adequate (work involving classified data or information shall take place only in a government office where adequate controls exist to protect the data).
- d. Technology required for off-site work (when necessary) is available.

Appropriate Participant. Supervisors must consider the following employee characteristics prior to approval of an individual’s remote work agreement:

- a. “Meets” or “Achieved Expectations” summary rating for current and the previous year’s performance appraisals, when applicable (i.e., not applicable for new hires).
- b. Military members do not have marks below a four (4) on the current and the previous year’s Enlisted Employee Review or Officer Evaluation Report, and enlisted military members have a satisfactory conduct mark for current and the previous year’s Enlisted Employee Reviews.
- c. Agrees to comply with remote work requirements.
- d. Demonstrates the knowledge, skills and ability to successfully work remotely.

Positions Ineligible for Remote Work. Employees whose positions require the following on a *daily basis* are ineligible for remote work:

- a. Direct handling of classified information.
- b. Performance of onsite activities that cannot be handled remotely or at a remote worksite.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

Employee Not Eligible Under Any Circumstances. Employees may not participate in remote work if any of the following apply:

- a. They have been formally disciplined for being absent without leave (AWOL) for more than five (5) working days in any calendar year.
- b. They have been formally disciplined for viewing, downloading, or exchanging pornography on a Federal Government computer or while performing official Federal Government duties or any other inappropriate use of government property.
- c. They have an unacceptable decline in performance during the rating period. Examples of a decline in performance include placement on a performance improvement plan, letter of restriction or reprimand, or greater disciplinary action, within the last year.
- d. They have an unacceptable decline in conduct.

5. What is the official worksite for remote workers?

The official worksite for a remote worker will be his/her home (or other approved alternative location where he/she is authorized to regularly perform his/her duties). The request to change a remote work location is requested on an SF-52 form by the supervisor and the official duty location is annotated on Standard Form (SF) 50, Notification of Personnel Action. The employee provides their own workspace to accomplish his/her day-to-day work and the work location is usually the employee's residence. The workspace must be adequate to allow for effective and efficient work and provide reliable telephonic and internet connectivity as well as access to all the necessary agency systems and tools needed to accomplish the work. The remote worksite must also conform to safety and data/information security requirements, and the employee must acknowledge adherence to all safety and security protocols.

6. If an employee chooses to work remotely, will his/her pay change?

Yes. If an employee is authorized to work remotely, he/she receives the locality rate based on the duty location of the remote worksite. The remote work duty location could be in: the same locality pay area as the USCG worksite, a higher pay locality rate area, or a lower pay locality rate area. An employee must be aware that his/her official duty station and rate of pay may change if approved for remote work.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

7. How can an employee find out if his/her pay or benefits will change as a remote worker?

If considering applying for remote work, an employee must consider the possible effects on benefits and pay:

- a. Will health benefits be affected?
 - Contact the servicing [human resources benefits specialist](#) to understand the impact, if any, on your Federal Employee Health Benefits.
- b. Will locality pay change?
 - Determine if change in duty location will be in a new locality pay area. Look up what the locality pay area would be if the residence becomes the official duty station using this [duty station locator](#).
 - Next, determine what the locality pay would be for the remote work location (employee's residence) by viewing the [pay tables for each locality pay area](#).

8. If an employee's health benefits are impacted, what is the effective date of the change in coverage?

The employee will need to work with an [HR Specialists](#) in the Benefits office in CG-123RBSC to identify any necessary changes to Health Benefits as well as the effective date.

9. Does the USCG have to provide office space for a remote worker?

No. For remote workers, an assigned or dedicated workspace at the USCG worksite might not be provided. For a new employee, it could be a condition of employment, meaning that the employee has accepted the remote work arrangement as part of the position and a USCG worksite might not be provided.

10. Can employees be reimbursed for Internet services at their home?

No. Remote workers are expected to provide internet service and other general utility costs at their own expense.

11. Can a supervisor suspend or terminate a remote work agreement for performance or conduct issues?

Yes. A supervisor may revoke a remote work arrangement request based on an employee's conduct or performance if the conduct or performance problems could otherwise be effectively addressed if the worker were not remote. Agencies may also deny a remote work request for an employee with a documented history of misconduct (e.g., misreporting work hours, failure to respond to customers, frequently non-responsive, etc.).

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

12. What other reasons can a supervisor terminate a remote work agreement?

Decisions to change an employee's remote work arrangement should be based on the supervisor's determination that the arrangement no longer advances the efficient and effective delivery of the USCG mission. A remote work agreement may be terminated if:

- The employee fails to adhere to requirements outlined in the signed remote work agreement.
- The employee is not a good fit for remote work
- The need for in-office interaction between customer/co-workers arises.

13. If a remote worker is required to travel, will travel expenses be paid by USCG?

Travel reimbursements are based on the employee's official worksite, as identified on their SF-50 Notification of Personnel Action. The Coast Guard will pay all approved TDY travel costs (e.g. per diem, lodging, etc.) in accordance with the travel policy specified in Coast Guard travel policy or other Coast Guard financial policy guidance. An employee who is required (or officially authorized) to travel to the Coast Guard worksite will be compensated for time in a travel status, which includes:

- Time spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station,
- Time spent traveling between two temporary duty stations, and
- The "usual waiting time" preceding or interrupting such travel (e.g., waiting at an airport or train station prior to departure).

14. How is a remote worker impacted by office closures?

Remote workers are expected to work during any office closures, delayed arrivals, and early dismissals in emergency situations (e.g., inclement weather). Weather and safety leave is generally not granted when the Coast Guard worksite is closed, since the remote worker is able to safely perform work at their residence. Weather and safety leave may be appropriate if the employee is unable to safely perform work at the remote duty location. A remote workers must notify their supervisors when emergencies occur that affect their worksite and request leave, excused absence (if appropriate), worksite relocation, etc. For further information, please see [OPM's Governmentwide Dismissal and Closure Procedures](#).

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

15. What is required for an employee to request a remote work arrangement?

An employee must complete the following and submit it to his/her immediate supervisor:

- Required training:
 - View Remote Work [Training Slides](#)
 - Complete training: [Telework for Government Employees \(502807\)](#)
- Remote Work Supervisor Checklist ([CG-1230C](#)).
- Self-certification Safety and Security Checklist ([CG-12630D](#)).
- Remote Work Agreement ([CG-12630](#)).

16. How do employees and supervisor download the required forms?

Seeing "Please Wait" when opening a form? 1. Download the form. 2. Save it where you will retrieve it. 3. Either open the form, or open Adobe Acrobat (Reader or Pro) then open the file. 4. Click the "Enable Features" button on the banner. 5. Do not use your browser to fill out a form, features will not work.

17. Who do employees submit their remote work agreements and attachments to for review and approval/disapproval?

Employees should submit their request for remote work to their immediate supervisor or other designated approving official. The approving official will review and either approve or disapprove. If approved, the approving official will initiate a personnel action (Standard Form SF-52) in [FedHR](#) for "Change in Duty Station" (if the employee is remaining within his/her locality pay area) or "General Adjustment" (if the employee is moving outside his/her locality pay area). The SF-52 requires the name and digital signature of the first level supervisor in block 5 (*Action Requested By*) and Name and digital signature of the second level supervisor in block 6 (*Action Authorized By*). If there are no labor obligations, or disapprovals, the [Civilian Human Resources Operations Office](#) will process the SF-50 and the action will be effective the following pay period. Supervisors must retain a copy of the approved remote work agreement and supporting documents.

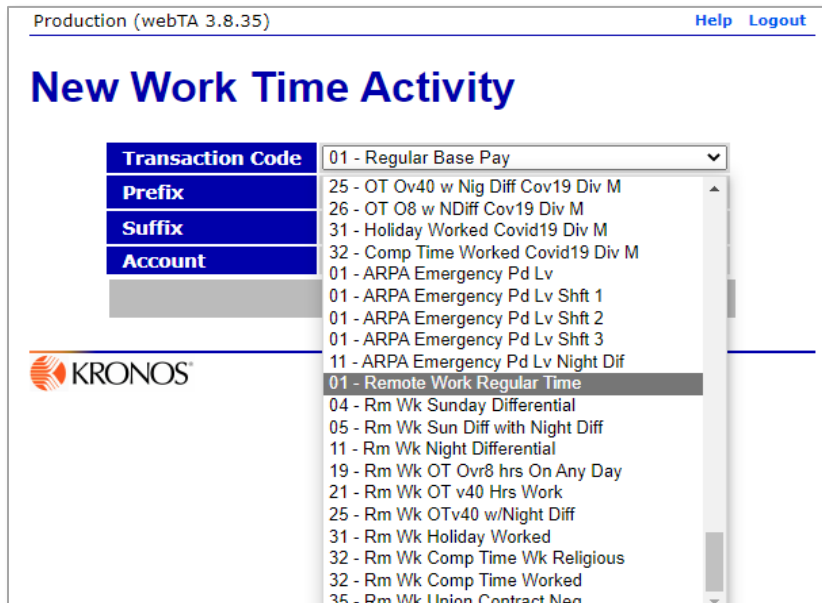
18. How do employees code the timecard to reflect remote work?

Once approved and the action is processed, employees must be sure to record remote work in webTA using the appropriate code below:

Remote Work - Code 01 will be used for the duration of their remote work participation. As indicated on the drop down menu below, there are several 01 – Remote Work transaction codes. Employees/supervisors should only use "01 – Remote Work Regular Time".

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023



Below is an example of a Remote Work time and attendance summary in webTA:

Transaction	Pfx	Sfx	Account	Mar							Wk 1	Mar					Wk 2	Total	
				12	13	14	15	16	17	18		19	20	21	22	23			24
				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
Work Time																			
Remote Work Regular Time			(NFC Stored Account)	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	8:00		44:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00				36:00	80:00
New																			
Work Time Total				9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	8:00		44:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00				36:00	80:00
Leave and Other Time																			
New				(No Leave and Other Time transactions)															
Daily Total				9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	8:00		44:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00				36:00	80:00
Dollar Transactions				Remarks															
Transaction	Account	Description	Dollar Amt																
(No Dollar Transactions)																			
New																			
Total																			

19. Why is it important to submit a CGFIXIT if employees have technology issues?

Remote workers must be diligent in immediately addressing IT issues by submitting a [CGFIXIT](#) ticket. Additionally, the issues raised by submitting CGFIXIT ticket provide tracking information of common IT issues for CG-6 and could support new enhancements or global IT solutions.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

20. Why do employees need to turn their camera on or inform customers of their contact information? Can customers just email or IM remote workers their questions?

Remote workers must make deliberate efforts to enhance communications with customers, colleagues, and their supervisors. The same level of access must be available for these groups, this include visual interactions through Microsoft Teams (or other virtual collaboration tools), providing phone number to contact the remote worker, etc. Calling using Teams does not allow the caller to leave a message and sometimes a discussion, not an email, is needed to respond to an issue.

21. If a civilian employee has been teleworking successfully during the COVID-19 pandemic, is that a basis for an automatic approval of a remote work arrangement?

Remote work is not an employee right or entitlement, and supervisors are responsible for determining employee/position remote work eligibility. There are a variety of factors that must be considered in making such determinations and ultimately, it may be determined that remote work is not in the best interests of the Coast Guard. A denial of a remote work request does not preclude participation in telework as discussed in [COMDTINST 5330.4](#) (series).

22. If an employee requests remote work to live in another lower locality pay area, and plans to report to the previous worksite for 2 days per pay period on a recurring basis, and agrees to travel on his/her own expense in order to maintain the higher locality pay, can this be approved under remote work?

No. This does not meet the definition of remote work because a change in duty station to the new remote work location is required. The position is not eligible for remote work if there is a requirement to report to the USCG at least 2 days per pay period. Authorizing a remote work arrangement for the purpose of maintaining a higher locality pay would be a misuse of the remote work program. Per [OPM](#), if an employee changes their place of residence to a distance location outside the commuting area, they are not reasonably viewed as being part of the local labor market for the agency worksite.

23. Is a remote worker's duty time based on where they live or based on where they report to? If a supervisor is in DC and sets up a meeting for 8:00 am, are people in Alaska expected to call in? That potentially causes pay impacts with night pay differential as well.

It can be quite challenging to supervise employees in different time zones. The remote workers' duty time is based on the time zone of their remote work locations. When scheduling meetings, supervisors should do their best to schedule a time that works for all time zones associated with their remote workers. Requiring employees in Alaska to report to a meeting in DC at 8:00 a.m. would result in employees working between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. requiring payment of night pay differentials. Night pay is a 10

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

percent differential paid to employees for regularly scheduled work performed at night (i.e., between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.). Regularly scheduled work is typically work that is scheduled before the beginning of the administrative workweek. Employees, however, are entitled to night pay when they are temporarily assigned during the administrative workweek to a daily tour that includes night work. This temporary change in schedule is distinguished from a period of irregular or occasional overtime. Night work must be assigned – remote workers may not earn night pay by electing to work at night. Night pay is computed as a percentage of employees’ rate of basic pay (including any applicable locality payment or special rate supplement).

24. Where can an employee go to find out more information about the remote work program?

Employees interested in the remote work program should familiarize themselves with the Remote Work Program [COMDTINST 5330.11](#) found at [Coast Guard Directives and Publications website](#). They may also view the Office of Civilian Human Resources Remote Work website for additional information. Questions regarding the Coast Guard Remote Work program may be directed to SMB-COMDT-USCG-RemoteWork@uscg.mil.

24. Are military members eligible to participate in the new Remote Work Program?

Military members may be eligible for remote work in certain circumstances when approved by the first Flag Officer or Senior Executive Service (SES) member. Questions regarding military members remote work requirements should be directed to HQSPolicyandStandards@uscg.mil.

25. If I have an employee or military member that wants to remote work in a foreign area, who do I contact for guidance and procedures?

Commands must seek approval from Department of State, through CG-DCO-I, to have employees work in foreign locations.

26 Will the workplace flexibilities extended throughout the COVID-19 pandemic remain in effect?

Implementation of [COMDTINST 5330.11](#) will allow greater flexibility in order to transition to COVID-19 post-pandemic normalcy. Therefore, the workplace flexibilities issued in previous ALCOAST throughout the pandemic will no longer be used after September 30, 2023. These flexibilities included a) work schedule modifications allowing use of split shifts on a maxi-flex work schedule, and b) full-time telework.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Remote Work Program for Civilian Employees

Updated: 29 March 2023

27. How will an employee's state tax withholdings be impacted when approved for remote work?

State tax withholdings are based on the employees' duty location. If an employee is approved for remote work, the employee's duty location will be changed to the city and state where the employee works remotely. This change is initiated with a request for personnel action (SF52) submitted in FedHR by the supervisor. When this personnel action is processed and applied to NFC, the employee may use MyEPP to update their state tax withholdings to reflect their remote work location. If an employee has issues updating their state tax withholdings in MyEPP, they should contact their [servicing HR representative](#) for assistance.

Also, note information from NFC regarding the [Military Spouse Residency Relief Act](#).

Tax or other legal implications for the business use of the employee's home will be based on IRS and state and local government rules and restrictions. It is the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implications for maintaining a home office. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss the tax implications of a remote work arrangement.