



## **Guidance for Managers with Off-Site Employees**

### **Background**

This document is intended to provide guidance for managers of telecommuters to help ensure that the telecommuting experience is productive and successful for all.

### **Define Rules and Expectations**

Both the manager and employee should be clear on the rules and expectations of the new telecommuting arrangement. Clearly defined rules and expectations will reduce uncertainty for both the manager and employee.

Issues to consider when determining expectations with employee:

- Check-in frequency – determine how often you will touch base with the employee - every morning, every afternoon, once a week, whenever needed, etc.
- Schedule – determine how you will handle minor adjustments to the regular schedule that don't require PTO. Determine if you want to know minor variations to the daily work hours.
- Determine how time out of the office (e.g. PTO vacation, sick) will be recorded so coworkers and managers know when someone who is telecommuting is in or out of the office – eg. Office calendar
- Share information with team members on the best way to reach individuals. Share cell phone numbers or forward office phones.
- Response time – communicate expectations on how quickly the telecommuter is expected to return messages and how often email and voicemail should be checked.
- Method of communication – vary communication methods between email, phone, in-person meeting, zoom, IM, etc. Determine what works best.
- Work updates – determine how often you want an update on work deliverables – daily, periodically, weekly, etc.
- Deadlines – as with any worker, deadlines should be clear, and projects should be broken into stages to see work progress

### **Maintain an Effective Telecommuting Arrangement**

Once expectations and rules are determined and agreed upon, the employee is responsible for maintaining availability, levels of production, and quality of work while telecommuting. The manager should be available for the employee at the agreed upon times, as well as throughout the normal workday.

The initial rules and expectations should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the telecommuting relationship is continuing to be rewarding and successful for both the manager and employee.