



Telework Policy Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why does the Telework Policy apply only to people who telework at least half time?

Revenue has defined “teleworker” as those employees who conduct all or some of their work away from the official worksite for 50 percent or more of their contracted work hours on a regular basis.

2. When does a new telework agreement need to be submitted?

The new Telework Agreement form has been condensed and is now offered electronically. There is no expiration date on telework agreements. They remain in effect until:

- The employee changes jobs.
- The employee’s supervisor changes.
- There is a change in the job duties the employee performs at the alternative worksite.
- The agreement is rescinded or revised.

3. What is exempt from the Telework Policy?

The policy does not apply to:

- Job duties performed while in travel status. Examples include tax auditors and property appraisers, who often must travel to perform the duties of their position.
- Job duties performed away from the official worksite and outside of established work hours on an occasional basis.
- Job duties performed away from the official worksite for less than 50 percent of the employee’s contracted work hours.
- Telework as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Contractor’s employees.

4. What does “adverse agency impact” mean?

It is a negative impact to the Department of Revenue due to an employee’s physical absence from the official worksite. This includes:

- A reduction of the work unit’s productivity. Examples include:
 - An individual’s or work unit’s inability or reduced ability to perform required tasks.
 - An individual’s or work unit’s failure to meet performance goals.
 - An individual’s or work unit’s unsuitability for alternative work.
 - A reduced level of work unit teamwork and communications.
 - Physical or technological barriers to productivity at an alternative worksite.
- A reduced level of services provided to Revenue’s customers. Examples include:
 - Not enough worksite staffing.
 - An individual’s or work unit’s inability or reduced ability to provide essential services, products, and support to Revenue’s customers.
- An increase in the cost of agency operations. Examples include:
 - The cost of authorized overtime to carry out unit operations.
 - Not enough resources to provide ongoing communications, data security, or other agency equipment and resources needed to perform tasks at the alternative worksite.

Step K in the [Agency-wide Procedures for Telework](#) provides more examples of adverse agency impacts.

5. Can anyone telework?

No. Employees in positions whose duties include regular face-to-face contact with the public and other customers may not be able to participate. Some positions require work near equipment, resources, and other positions that aren't available away from the official work site.

In addition to the position requirements, individuals who want to telework must have the approval of their supervisor, who will consider such factors as the employee's ability to work independently and be able to successfully communicate with customers, coworkers, and their supervisor. And while the employee's position may be appropriate for telework and the employee has the individual knowledge, skills and abilities, supervisors have to determine whether the employee's absence would have an adverse impact on the employee's work unit as a whole.

Revenue's primary responsibility is to our customers. We have to be accessible and responsive; and provide excellent service to the public. The operational requirements of Revenue's business processes vary, which prevents a one-size-fits-all solution for our agency. Eligibility for telework is at the discretion of the employee's management.

6. Who decides which employees get to telework?

Immediate supervisors and the next-level approvers review telework requests and recommend approval or denial. Program directors or their single designee make the final approval decision. These approval authorities consider such factors as the work unit's needs, customer service, and costs in making telework determinations.

7. How do I know if I can telework?

The first step is to meet with your supervisor and discuss it. Employees and supervisors should discuss whether telework is possible, given the business and customer service requirements of the work unit. They should also discuss how the employee would communicate with customers and coworkers, and how the supervisor would monitor and evaluate the employee's performance at an alternative location.

A good tool for deciding whether to request telework is the [Employee Individual Self-Assessment](#). You can use this form as a guide to some appropriate characteristics for telework. This is not a test, and it isn't binding on your supervisor. This self-assessment is intended to help you consider the issues that may limit your ability to telework. When you talk about telework with your supervisor, you may want to bring this form so you can talk about the results together.

If you and your supervisor decide that telework may be a good option for you and your work unit, you should prepare a *Telework Agreement* with your supervisor. He or she will review your request, complete the supervisor portion of the form, and forward the request to the next-level approver. The program director or a designee will make the final decision.

8. If I telework, can I also have a flexible work schedule?

It is possible. There is no prohibition on flexible work schedules for teleworkers. See the Work Hours and Leave Approval Policy for information on flexible work schedules.

9. Can telework agreements be canceled?

Yes. Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to meet operational requirements and maximize productivity. Telework is a privilege, not a right. If an employee's telework causes an adverse agency impact, the agreement can be terminated. Employees may also cancel a telework agreement, but must provide managers with 15 days' written notice to adjust staffing or workspace arrangements.

If an employee doesn't comply with established agency standards and policies, management should revoke the agreement immediately.

10. What happens if there's an important meeting on a day when I'm off or teleworking?

Employees are expected to be available for meetings, at least remotely, during regular business hours. Work shouldn't be delayed because of alternative work arrangements. This should be part of the regular communication between an employee and supervisor. Supervisors and employees should consider whether the employee's physical presence is required at the meeting, or if the employee could effectively participate by telephone or through the use of teleconferencing resources such as GoToMeeting. The supervisor will decide whether the employee will be required to come to the office or can join the meeting remotely. Travel restrictions and budget will also be considered when making these decisions.

11. Can telework help an employee with child- or other dependent-care needs?

Employees may not provide direct care to others during working hours. Employees must provide care arrangements while they're teleworking the same as they would if they worked in the office. Telework is not appropriate in situations requiring care by the employee that will interfere with the employee's job duties.

Supervisors may temporarily waive the dependent care requirement in some circumstances. See the [Telework Policy](#) for more details.

12. Can employees use personal equipment when teleworking?

Employees can use their own computers to access information on Revenue networks that isn't confidential information, as defined in Revenue's Confidential Information Policy and Procedures. They can also use their own telephones to communicate with other Revenue employees, but should use Revenue telephones whenever possible when discussing confidential information. Employees must never leave or retain voice or text messages containing confidential information.

Employees using personal equipment at an alternative work site should limit personal use during working hours as they would limit personal use of Revenue equipment at the office.

Employees cannot use their personally-owned computers to receive, access, store, or process federal tax information or Federal Parent Locate Service (FPLS) data. Revenue's Confidential Information Procedures require that only state-owned or agency-approved computing or storage devices may be used to receive, access, store, and/or process state confidential information.

13. Who is responsible for maintaining and servicing equipment used at the alternative work site?

Only Revenue may service and maintain state equipment. Employees are responsible for the safe return of state equipment to the official work site for maintenance and repair. Employees are responsible for maintenance of their own personal equipment.

14. What can supervisors and managers do to make supervising teleworkers easier?

Talk to supervisors and managers who have experience managing teleworkers. Other tips include:

- Consider piloting an alternative work arrangement for a limited period of time.
- Try starting with successful telecommuting employees and talk with them about how the pilot is working. If it works, you can continue the agreement or alter it, as needed. But if at any time telework adversely impacts the agency or is no longer a good fit for Revenue or the employee, it must be canceled.

15. How is required telework different from optional telework?

When telework is required, Revenue will add the requirement to the employee's position description, along with a specification of the minimum amount of telework required. Florida law also requires that the telework requirement be included in any recruitment activities and that the agency provide equipment and supplies necessary to carry out job functions at the telework site.

16. Why would we require telework?

Revenue has historically only required telework when we close or reduce leased space in our field offices. A required telework arrangement will only be added if it benefits the agency.

17. How can hoteling and other alternative work arrangements reduce leased space needs?

Alternative work arrangements maximize office space and equipment usage by providing flexibility in *when* people work, not just *where* they work. Office space needs are decided, in part, by the space needed by customers and employees when the unit is operating at full capacity. If a business process reduces the maximum number of employees and customers at an office at any one time, it could lead to needing fewer offices and less equipment. Each program's leased space decisions will include a consideration of how alternative work schedules and alternative work sites may reduce Revenue's leased space needs. See [Guidelines for Developing Alternative Work Strategies](#) for more information.

18. How can alternative work arrangements create cost savings?

Revenue can realize cost savings in the short term by maximizing facility and equipment usage. Revenue could save money in the future as lease space is negotiated. The need for less space could lead to lower rental rates.