

FAQs for Supervisors

How will I know my employees will be available when I need them?

As part of the telework agreement supervisors and teleworkers will document how they will maintain communication with the office and what will be done to meet contingencies. If the teleworker is needed, he or she may be asked to come in to the office or join an emergency staff meeting by conference call.

How do I know they're really working at home?

Some supervisors express concern that when their employees are teleworking, they won't be able to monitor the work effort. But when approached correctly, supervisors discover they are better able to monitor the work by shifting the focus from how much work the employee looks like he or she is accomplishing to how much he actually is accomplishing. By focusing on the work product instead of the work activity, many supervisors find they are better able to communicate clear expectations to their employees. The resulting agreement on job expectations often leads to increases in employee productivity and job satisfaction. Many supervisors already use this method of management by results.

How do I ensure that the home work arrangement is safe, and how is a claim for injury handled?

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that their home work area complies with health and safety requirements. Home offices must be clean and free of obstructions. The home must be in compliance with all building codes and free of hazardous materials. Management may deny or cancel the telework agreement based on safety problems in the home. If an employee is injured while at home, worker's compensation law and rules apply. The employee must notify their supervisor immediately and complete the necessary documents regarding the injury. Because an injury at home is outside the traditional work place the supervisor must be sure to investigate all reports immediately following notification.

Won't productivity decline if an individual is not being supervised on site?

No. Survey results show that both teleworkers and their supervisors believe that teleworking has increased the teleworker's productivity. Productivity increases because employees have fewer distractions and interruptions, work at their personal peak times, and are less stressed due to the absence of the commute.