COVID-19 Telework Program Supervisor Guidelines

While telework can greatly assist in the continuity of business operations, the University realizes some challenges could be faced by both employees and supervisors when engaging in a telework arrangement. Supervisors are encouraged to consider the following tips in managing operations and employees in a telework environment:

1. **Make communication a top priority**: Supervisors should communicate daily with employees in some fashion, whether verbal or electronic form of communication. Employees will not be able to stop by a supervisor’s desk to ask a question or quickly relay a good morning greeting, which makes frequent communication even more essential. The goal should be to never make an employee feel as though they are isolated from their supervisor or the team.

2. **Request employee productivity updates**: Employees should be asked to provide updates on work progress based on assigned tasks. Supervisors are encouraged to develop a standard protocol with employees concerning expectations on frequency of these updates. Productivity updates will help foster employee focus and provide supervisors with more opportunities to provide feedback.

3. **Establish standard hours of work**: Employees may have conflicts, such as childcare needs. Similar to in office work, employees should have a schedule, where co-workers and managers are able to reach them.

4. **Build team morale**: Having multiple employees engaging in telework can make it challenging for a supervisor to assure cohesiveness and good team spirit. Supervisors are encouraged to use technology (e.g., Zoom conferencing, Microsoft Office365 Teams, Microsoft Planner) to create frequent and detailed communication that is consistently shared with all team members.

5. **Hold virtual staff meetings**: Again, supervisors should make every effort to hold virtual staff meetings with teleworking employees. Having scheduled and structured virtual staff meetings will help foster the team’s morale.

6. **Emphasize work/life balance**: Telework arrangements, while convenient in some respects for employees, can potentially create situations whereby employees put in working hours that exceed their typical work day. Supervisors should outline expectations for non-exempt, hourly paid employees that emphasize observing work hours that follow the standard workday. Additionally, supervisors should try to respect the assigned telework schedules.