Telecommuter: Supervisor Checklist

Telecommuting is successful when employees and supervisors have a clear communication about expectations. The following checklist can help establish a foundation for effective teamwork, continued productivity, and service to the Lawrence community.

Technology Needs and Resources

- Identify the technology tools needed for employee to complete day-to-day work and determine whether the resources will be accessible when working off-site.
- Share with the employee the contact information to technical support if they need assistance.
- Discuss and agree on which communication platform (email, phone, zoom, etc.) will best fit for your department business while the employee is working off-site. This will ensure a clear standard and expectation for online availability and confirm all colleagues of the department have access to the technology tools and support resources.

Outline a Work Plan Prior to Telecommuting

The questions below may help inform a work plan to assure the areas the telecommuter supports have a plan in place to minimize interruption to the workflow in this arrangement. This is an opportunity to identify potential areas that might need additional support as well.

- Which responsibilities/tasks cannot be completed telecommuting? How will this impact operations and/or other colleagues? What are ways to reduce the impacts?
- Which duties require continuous communication and collaboration with others? Encourage the employee to have a discussion with the impacted colleagues prior to or during the transition to identify ways of being available while working remotely to continue the collaboration.
- Teleworking often times have less interruptions. Are there any special projects or tasks the employee can work while working remotely?
- Are there events or meeting on the calendar that will require the employees to be present for? Will they be flexing their telecommute schedule to accommodate those dates?

Establish a Communication Plan

Having team members working from various locations can, at times, lead to productivity challenges and a disjointed team. Set guidance on how often communications should occur during the work week within the department. There are many ways to achieve this. When transitioning to teleworking, consider establishing a communication plan consisting of the following:

- Set and share communication expectation with the department. Having a process in place will express communication expectations. Tools to document and share information among team members is another way to express expectations. Ensure that all team members understand the expectations and have access to tools to eliminate the feeling of isolation from team members. Creating an inclusive culture will continue to have camaraderie and motivation with department.
- Schedule routinely check-ins. Set time for department meetings however often as necessary for the department; whether employees are working on campus or remotely. Seeing each other will help reduce the feeling of distance among one another. If supervisor did daily check-in continue to do so by utilizing different channels of communication available through Lawrence University. This is a positive interaction and builds personal rapport with members.
- Evaluate which channel of communication to converse with telecommuters. Select the form of communication that is most appropriate, effective, and efficient.

Debrief after normal operations resume

Telecommuters and supervisors should review work plans when employee is on campus. Connecting with telecommuter to discuss progress on the employee's work plan can provide support and prioritize any unresolved or new work/projects.