

# Administrative Procedure 226

## Telework Arrangement Program

### 1. Purpose

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- 1.1. Establishes guidelines for implementing and operating the Telework Arrangement Program (TAP), one of the County's options for Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA). The procedure defines and outlines employee eligibility criteria, roles and responsibilities involved in the program, work schedules, continuity of operations plans (COOP) and emergency situations, application procedures, approval authorities, and other provisions.

### 2. Scope

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#### 2.1. This procedure:

- 2.1.1. Requires each Agency to support the participation of eligible employees in the Telework Arrangement Program to the maximum extent possible without diminishing employee performance.
- 2.1.2. Addresses routine, non-routine, and emergency situations.
- 2.1.3. Specifies policy and procedures for the TAP, including:
  - 2.1.3.1. Employee eligibility
  - 2.1.3.2. Authorities for approval, renewal, and termination of TAP agreements
  - 2.1.3.3. Alternative workplaces, schedules, training, equipment, procurement, and services
  - 2.1.3.4. Employee and supervisor responsibilities, including work management, reports, and performance
  - 2.1.3.5. Management control measures
- 2.1.4. Provides a TAP agreement and other documents for completion and signature by employees, supervisors, and Appointing Authorities to approve employee participation in the program.

### 3. In this procedure

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1. Purpose ..... 1

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 2. Scope .....                               | 1  |
| 3. In this procedure .....                   | 1  |
| 4. Authorities .....                         | 2  |
| 5. Key Stakeholders .....                    | 3  |
| 6. Definitions .....                         | 3  |
| 7. Policy and Background.....                | 5  |
| 8. Roles and Responsibilities .....          | 6  |
| 9. Program Eligibility .....                 | 11 |
| 10. Program Overview .....                   | 12 |
| 11. TAP Agreement Process .....              | 17 |
| 12. Safety and Security Considerations ..... | 19 |
| 13. Emergency Telework Situations.....       | 19 |
| 14. Monitoring Work Performance .....        | 21 |
| 15. TAP Agreement Termination.....           | 22 |
| 16. Grievances .....                         | 24 |
| 17. Training.....                            | 24 |
| 18. Program Evaluation .....                 | 25 |
| 19. Inquiries .....                          | 26 |
| 20. Attachments .....                        | 26 |

## 4. Authorities

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The following sources provide foundational authority for the guidelines included within this administrative procedure:

- 4.1.** Personnel Law Sections 16-106, 16-107, 16-108, 16-113 and 16-114;
- 4.2.** Administrative Procedure 119 – Electronic Information Policy
- 4.3.** Administrative Procedure 217 – Performance Management Program
- 4.4.** Administrative Procedure 229 – Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) Program
- 4.5.** Administrative Procedure 284 – Administration of Employee Leave

## 5. Key Stakeholders

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It is the responsibility of the following key stakeholders to coordinate and support the Telework Arrangement Program:

### 5.1. Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM)

- 5.1.1. County Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) Program Manager
- 5.1.2. Occupational Medical Services (OMS)
- 5.1.3. Learning, Performance, and Organizational Development (LPOD) Division

### 5.2. Office of Information Technology (OIT)

### 5.3. Office of Finance – Risk Management

### 5.4. Agency Appointing Authorities

- 5.4.1. Agency Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) Coordinators
- 5.4.2. Participating employees and their immediate supervisors

## 6. Definitions

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**6.1. Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA).** The County's AWA programs fall under three general headings: flexible scheduling, compressed workweeks, and the Telework Arrangement Program (TAP).

**6.2. Alternative Workplace.** An Agency-approved workplace separate from the employee's official duty station or regular onsite workplace in one of the following categories.

6.2.1. **Home-based Office.** One type of alternative workplace that enables an employee to perform duties and responsibilities at their residence. Could be a separate office or a specific area set aside to function as an office in the teleworker's home. Does not qualify for any Federal tax deductions for using the home as an alternative workplace.

6.2.2. **Telework Center.** A geographically convenient agency-approved alternative workplace that provides workstations and other office facilities and services that are utilized by employees from several organizations.

- 6.2.3. **Hot Desking.** (Also known as free address or touchdown workstations.) Employees work in one facility part of the time and at one or more alternative workplaces the rest of the time. Employees use non-dedicated, non-permanent workspaces assigned on a first come, first serve basis.
- 6.2.4. **Hoteling.** Shared office space in an agency location designed for use on a drop-in basis by teleworkers. These spaces are equipped with standard office technology including phones, personal computers, facsimile machines, printers, copiers, e-mail, and Internet access. Employees either reserve space in advance or drop in to use a cubicle on an as needed basis.
- 6.3. **Appointing Authority.** An Agency/Department Head or their designee.
- 6.4. **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Periods.** Extended periods during which an Agency may encourage or require teleworking (voluntarily or involuntarily) to support mission-critical operations and essential functions that must continue (**example:** during a influenza pandemic affecting 40 percent of the workforce). The Agency is considered open for business in these situations.
- 6.5. **County-Owned Equipment (COE).** Hardware, software, data and telecommunications equipment owned by the County and loaned to or created for an alternative workplace.
- 6.6. **Onsite Workplace/Official Duty Station.** The County office space or building address where the employee normally works, or at which the employee's activities are based as determined by the supervisor.
- If a teleworker commutes to the onsite workplace at least once a week, their official duty station is the onsite workplace, not the alternative workplace. If a teleworker commutes to the onsite workplace less frequently than once a week, their official duty station is their approved alternative workplace.
- 6.7. **Telework Arrangement Program (TAP).** An official arrangement that allows for paid employment performed away from the traditional office. TAP arrangements are a privilege and not an employee entitlement. Approved TAP workplaces currently include home-based offices and approved telework centers.
- 6.8. **TAP Agreement.** A written agreement completed and signed by the immediate supervisor, reflecting the employee's voluntary participation and the appropriate official's approval, whether on a routine, non-routine, or emergency basis. The TAP agreement includes an employee self-certification of the safety and suitability of the TAP work environment.
- 6.9. **TAP Year.** Period of time covered by TAP agreement. The TAP year runs concurrently with the County's performance appraisal cycle.

- 6.10. Teleworker.** An employee who performs all or part of their official duties at an alternative workplace under a TAP agreement in one of the following frequency categories.
- 6.10.1. Under **routine** telework, the employee works at an alternative workplace in compliance with an approved TAP agreement.
  - 6.10.2. Under **non-routine** telework (**example:** a specific project or hazardous weather), the frequency is not defined.
  - 6.10.3. Under **emergency** telework (**examples:** pandemic influenza, disaster recovery, COOP period), the frequency depends on the nature and duration of the emergency.
- 6.11. Tour of Duty/Work Schedule.** The administrative workweek during which the employee is scheduled to perform work. Employees under TAP agreements may have fixed tours of duties (**example:** Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or may work on alternative work schedules (**example:** flexible and compressed schedules), at the discretion of the supervisor.

## 7. Policy and Background

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### 7.1. Policy

It is Prince George's County, Maryland ("the County") policy to:

- 7.1.1. Encourage the use of TAP to the maximum extent possible without diminishing employee performance.
- 7.1.2. Facilitate routine TAP participation for eligible employees, including supervisors, and managers
- 7.1.3. Manage technology, workspace, and other Agency resources effectively to facilitate employee participation in TAP to the maximum extent feasible and practical.

Teleworking is a privilege, not a right. All County employees who telework must have an approved TAP agreement under this policy. A County Agency may have additional teleworking requirements, guidelines, or procedures, provided they are consistent with the intent of this program.

TAP is intended to be cost neutral. The County is not required to provide teleworking employees with materials or supplies needed to establish an alternative workplace (**examples:** desk, chair, fax, copier, etc.), and assumes no responsibility for set-up

or operating costs at an alternative workplace (**examples:** telephone or internet services, etc.)

The Agency is under no obligation to purchase equipment beyond existing appropriations to enable an employee to telework. Any equipment and supplies purchased by the Agency remains Agency property and must be returned at the conclusion of a TAP agreement or when requested by Agency management. The teleworker must obtain authorization before bringing any Agency-owned equipment or supplies to the alternative workplace.

Agencies after consultation with and approval by the Office of Information Technology (OIT) have the discretion to provide equipment, software, or supplies, or allow employees to use their personal equipment while teleworking. Agencies providing equipment, software, or other supplies to teleworking employees must reasonably allocate those resources based on operational and workload needs.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations do not fall within the parameters of this Telework Program. The employee must contact Occupational Medical Services (OMS) consistent with policy and procedures for an ADA accommodation. An employee may not Telework under any approval of FMLA.

**7.2. Background.** The County supports programs that:

- 7.2.1. Support management with recruiting potential applicants and retaining current employees.
- 7.2.2. Reduce space costs, sick leave usage, and workers' compensation.
- 7.2.3. Reduce energy costs and traffic congestion.
- 7.2.4. Aid air quality improvement.
- 7.2.5. Facilitate resource management in emergency and COOP situations such as an influenza pandemic.
- 7.2.6. Serve as a reasonable accommodation for disability.
- 7.2.7. Support employees in managing a work-life balance.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

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**8.1. Overview of Roles and Responsibilities.** The roles and responsibilities involved in the administration and management of TAP take place across four levels in the County once initiated by the employee.

- 8.1.1. Level 1: Teleworker
- 8.1.2. Level 2: Immediate Supervisor
- 8.1.3. Level 3: Agency
- 8.1.4. Level 4: County

**8.2. LEVEL 1: Teleworker.** The employee begins the process of becoming a teleworker by submitting completed TAP agreement. Upon approval of the TAP agreement the teleworker must adhere to the following responsibilities:

- 8.2.1. Participates in the program voluntarily and only with management approval and in compliance with TAP policy and agreement. An employee should not be coerced or intimidated by other employees to participate.
- 8.2.2. Adheres to all County standards for performance and conduct (eg; personnel law, administrative procedures, and OEA guidelines) and will conduct official County business in a professional manner.
- 8.2.3. Completes any trainings that may be required for teleworkers.
- 8.2.4. Performs only official duties during the tour of duty, including using COE and resources only for official business. Employees may not engage in activities while teleworking that would not be permitted at the official duty station, such as child, elder, or other dependent care unless approved by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designee. Teleworking employees may take care of personal business during unpaid lunch periods, as they would at the official duty station.
- 8.2.5. Performs work at a satisfactory or higher level of performance as determined by the supervisor and documented on the most recent performance evaluation.
- 8.2.6. Communicates with supervisor frequently to share updates on work assignments (**example:** documents and submit work logs). The employee also attends check-in meetings with the supervisor to discuss and evaluate progress on work assignments.
- 8.2.7. Follows all established pay, leave, tour of duty, time and attendance, and travel requirements (**examples:** maintains the work schedule approved by the supervisor; requests leave in advance; and completes and certifies accuracy of timesheet).
- 8.2.8. Notifies the supervisor immediately if a malfunctioning computer, furniture, or other equipment prevents the employee from performing work duties.
- 8.2.9. Completes a renewal TAP agreement at the end of each TAP year to continue participation in the program.
- 8.2.10. Notifies the supervisor immediately if an injury occurs while performing official duties at an approved alternative workplace. Ensuring completion and filing of

the appropriate injury compensation forms, which provide compensation under the County's Workers' Compensation program.

- 8.2.11. Agrees not to hold the County liable for damage to personal or real property during the course of performing official duties while in the alternative workplace, except to the extent the County is held liable for on-the-job injuries and illnesses under the Maryland Workers' Compensation Law.
- 8.2.12. If warranted, terminates the TAP agreement per the guidance outlined in this administrative procedure.

**8.3. LEVEL 2: Immediate Supervisor.** The teleworker's immediate supervisor is responsible for reviewing and approving/denying the teleworker's TAP agreement, as well as managing the teleworker. The immediate supervisor must adhere to the following responsibilities:

- 8.3.1. Applies TAP policies and procedures related to teleworking consistently and equitably within the work unit.
- 8.3.2. Ensures that productivity, customer service, and work operations are maintained without unnecessary cost increases to the Agency or increased work for employees at the onsite workplace.
- 8.3.3. Encourages and facilitates TAP use by:
  - 8.3.3.1. Discussing TAP usefulness at the beginning of the performance appraisal cycle. Promptly reviewing and forwarding TAP agreements.
  - 8.3.3.2. Discussing the effectiveness of TAP with the employee at the mid-point and end of the TAP year.
  - 8.3.3.3. Contacting the Agency AWA Coordinator with questions about the applicability of TAP in the work unit so that participation barriers are identified and overcome.
- 8.3.4. Completes any trainings that may be required for supervisors of teleworkers.
- 8.3.5. Establishes employee expectations for work performance at alternative workplaces, including:
  - 8.3.5.1. Communication practices.
  - 8.3.5.2. Attendance availability for meetings.
  - 8.3.5.3. Availability (**examples:** via phone or e-mail)
  - 8.3.5.4. Establish employee goals and individual performance measures that support Agency performance.

- 8.3.6. Establishes necessary reporting requirements for employees working at alternative workplaces (**examples:** work logs, assignment sheets, e-mail check-in to track work progress), including but not limited to PGSCF Form 226-3, Telework Work Plan Template.
- 8.3.7. Honors the TAP agreement and carries out basic supervisory functions for employees with TAP agreements (**example:** oversees and monitors work assignments); reviews and certifies teleworkers' time and attendance records for accuracy; approves leave; is readily available to answer questions and clarify expectations; provides guidance directed at enhancing performance; and assesses employee performance by measuring results.
- 8.3.8. Makes adjustments to teleworking arrangements to manage the workload.
- 8.3.9. Ensures that employee has any needed and functional computer or other equipment to support the employee in performing their assigned work duties.
- 8.3.10. Makes an individual determination of TAP eligibility for new hires within the first 90 days of employment. If additional time is needed, the employee will be advised. (**Note:** new employees need on-the-job experience to become familiar with Agency activities and establish a minimum record of performance).
- 8.3.11. If warranted, terminates the TAP agreement per the guidance outlined in this administrative procedure.

**8.4. LEVEL 3: Agency.** The roles involved in the TAP process at the agency level include:

**8.4.1. Appointing Authorities.**

- 8.4.1.1. Appointing Authorities shall designate a point of contact as their Agency's AWA Coordinator to facilitate and administer their daily telework needs.
- 8.4.1.2. Appointing Authorities shall periodically evaluate the effectiveness of telework in the Agency by meeting with supervisors who manage teleworking employees.

**8.4.2. Agency Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) Coordinator.**

- 8.4.2.1. Serves as the primary point of contact for Agency employees who have questions or concerns about County AWA programs.
- 8.4.2.2. Provides oversight and advisory services for Agency participation in TAP.

- 8.4.2.3. Reviews all Agency TAP agreements to ensure compliance with requirements of this procedure and forwards to the Agency Appointing Authority for approval.
- 8.4.2.4. Forwards all completed and signed applications to the County AWA Program Manager.
- 8.4.2.5. Maintains official Agency record copies of TAP agreements.
- 8.4.2.6. Assists the County AWA Program Manager with the compilation of metrics to assess the effectiveness of the Agency's AWA arrangements.

**8.5. LEVEL 4: County.** The roles involved in the TAP process at the County level include:

**8.5.1. County AWA Program Manager.**

- 8.5.1.1. The County AWA Program Manager is designated by the Director, Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) as the lead administrator of County Alternative Work Arrangement Programs.
- 8.5.1.2. The County AWA Program Manager maintains official record of all Telework documents, including a list of eligible Telework positions. The County AWA Program Manager will be the primary point of contact and will be a resource on all TAP matters.
- 8.5.1.3. **Responsibilities.** The County AWA Program Manager is responsible for the following tasks:
  - 8.5.1.3.1. Provide countywide TAP oversight.
  - 8.5.1.3.2. Provide advisory services to appointing authorities, employees and managers on TAP policies, procedures, and specific TAP arrangements.
  - 8.5.1.3.3. Establishes, maintains, and publicizes procedures and information on the TAP.
  - 8.5.1.3.4. Reviews all TAP applications to ensure compliance with requirements of this procedure and evaluates the TAP Program.
  - 8.5.1.3.5. Maintains official record copies of TAP agreements.
  - 8.5.1.3.6. Provides TAP training and outreach for employees, supervisors, managers and executives.
  - 8.5.1.3.7. Conducts or arranges for evaluations of the TAP program and reports the results to management.

8.5.1.4. The County AWA Program Manager evaluates TAP annually and prepares County telework reports to the OHRM Director on a fiscal year basis for further reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

8.5.1.5. The County AWA Program Manager manages Agency participation and reviews approved TAP applications for adherence to program requirements.

8.5.2. **OHRM Learning, Performance, and Organizational Development Division**

8.5.2.1. The OHRM Learning, Performance, and Organizational Development Division is responsible for providing training and guidance on TAP for appropriate stakeholders in accordance with the training guidelines set forth in this administrative procedure.

8.5.3. **OHRM Occupational Medical Services.**

8.5.3.1. The OHRM Occupational Medical Services (OMS) team is responsible for providing guidance on policy and procedures related to ADA accommodations.

8.5.4. **Office of Information Technology.**

8.5.4.1. Periodically reviews TAP to ensure it is compliant with current technology standards.

8.5.4.2. Supports teleworkers using COE in the alternative workplace.

8.5.5. **Office of Finance – Risk Management.**

8.5.5.1. Provides resources on ergonomic workstation set-up and tips on office safety as part of the mandatory training consistent with the County Risk Management Program.

## 9. Program Eligibility

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**9.1. Eligible Employees.** All employees are considered eligible for TAP except those who:

9.1.1. Perform on-site activity that cannot be handled remotely. Employees whose duties require hands-on customer service or involve technology and resources that can only be performed at the onsite workplace without significant modification to the position are also ineligible (**examples:** certain field laboratory and administrative support employees).

- 9.1.2. Handle secure materials that cannot be physically removed from the official duty station. OR
- 9.1.3. Received a summary performance rating below Needs Improvement within the last performance cycle, or whose conduct has resulted in disciplinary action within the last year.

## 10. Program Overview

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**10.1. Establishing TAP Arrangements.** Supervisors may establish employee teleworking arrangements for routine, non-routine, and emergency situations

10.1.1. TAP arrangements for teleworks should established for the purpose of:

- 10.1.1.1. Meeting organizational needs.
- 10.1.1.2. Improving service to clients or productivity.
- 10.1.1.3. Reducing office space and associated costs.
- 10.1.1.4. Minimizing a hardship, improving access, or as a reasonable accommodation for disabled employees.

10.1.2. The supervisor establishes the number of teleworking days based on:

- 10.1.2.1. Type of work performed.
- 10.1.2.2. Workload demands.
- 10.1.2.3. Need to facilitate group activities (**example:** staff meetings).
- 10.1.2.4. Office coverage.

10.1.3. **Routine Telework.** Type of telework used by an employee who regularly and consistently uses an alternative workplace to complete their assigned work.

- 10.1.3.1. Routine teleworker may work at an approval alternative workplace from one up to a maximum of five days each workweek.
- 10.1.3.2. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use routine telework.

10.1.4. **Non-routine Telework.** Type of telework used by an employee to use an alternative workplace on an as needed basis to complete their assigned work.

- 10.1.4.1. Non-routine Telework can be used by a teleworker to work at an approved alternative workplace at the discretion and approval of their immediate supervisor.
- 10.1.4.2. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use non-routine telework.
- 10.1.5. **Emergency Telework.** Incorporated into the Agency's COOP and emergency evacuation plan to continue providing customer service and mission responsibilities.
  - 10.1.5.1. Emergency Telework can be used by a teleworker to work at an approved alternative workplace at the discretion and approval of their immediate supervisor.
  - 10.1.5.2. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use emergency telework.

## 10.2. Employee Work Locations

- 10.2.1. **Onsite Workplace/Official Duty Station.** A teleworker's onsite workplace/official duty station is the onsite workplace in a County Government location assigned to the employee for the completion of their work.
  - 10.2.1.1. If approved, an employee may work at a their home-based office or other agency-approved alternative workplace.
- 10.2.2. **Agency-Approved Alternative Workplaces.** The agency may approve telework center facilities, hot desking, hoteling, or other alternative workplaces as funding and policy considerations permit.
  - 10.2.2.1. **Work at Home.** A home-based office:
    - 10.2.2.1.1. Enables an approved employee to perform duties and responsibilities at their residence using approved computers containing the County standard software image and security configuration.
    - 10.2.2.1.2. May be a separate office within the home or a specific area set aside to function as an office.
    - 10.2.2.1.3. Does not qualify for any Federal tax deductions for using the home as an alternative workplace.
    - 10.2.2.1.4. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use a home-based office as an alternative workplace.

- 10.2.2.2. **Telework Center.** The agency may establish telework centers that provide workstations and other office facilities and services (**example:** printing centers) that are utilized by employees from several organizations.
  - 10.2.2.2.1. The availability of telework centers is at the discretion of the agency to provide.
  - 10.2.2.2.2. The agency is responsible for the management of any established telework centers
  - 10.2.2.2.3. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use an available telework center as an alternative workplace.
- 10.2.2.3. **Hot Desking.** The agency may establish a hot desking arrangement in County buildings that provide non-dedicated, non-permanent workspaces assigned on a first come, first serve basis. Hot desking locations enable employees to work in one or more approved alternative workspaces.
  - 10.2.2.3.1. The availability of hot desking locations is at the discretion of the agency to provide.
  - 10.2.2.3.2. The agency is responsible for the management of any established hot desking arrangements available to employees.
  - 10.2.2.3.3. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use hot desking as an alternative workplace.
- 10.2.2.4. **Hoteling.** The agency may establish hoteling spaces in County buildings that are dedicated spaces for teleworkers that are designed for use on a drop-in basis. Hoteling spaces include access to standard office technology as determined by the agency and needs of the agency employees.
  - 10.2.2.4.1. The availability of hoteling locations is at the discretion of the agency to provide.
  - 10.2.2.4.2. The agency is responsible for the management of any established hoteling arrangements available to employees.
  - 10.2.2.4.3. Eligible employees must have an approved TAP agreement in place to use hot desking as an alternative workplace.

### 10.3. Designated Telework Days

- 10.3.1. With supervisory approval, an employee may telework on any day designated as a workday during the official tour of duty. If there is a need to facilitate communication, meetings, group activities at the onsite workplace, and office coverage, the supervisor may designate specific days the employee works at the onsite workplace and at the alternative workplace (**example:** A supervisor may designate Monday and Friday as days for employees to work at alternative workplaces and the other days of the week at the onsite workplace).
- 10.3.2. If two or more employees in the same office are approved to telework, the supervisor may require the employees to stagger or rotate the days that they telework (**example:** If one employee teleworks on Fridays, the supervisor may require the other employee to telework on a different day). By staggering the days when employees telework, supervisors ensure office coverage and equitable teleworking participation.
- 10.3.3. The interests of the office and workload take precedence over working at an alternative workplace. If a conflict arises on a day when an employee is regularly scheduled to telework, the supervisor may require the employee to work at the onsite workplace that day (**example:** office coverage is needed at the onsite workplace).
- 10.3.4. If on an approved telework agreement, the employee must be able to report to his or her official worksite, if requested to do so by the immediate supervisor, within a time period as prescribed by the agency. (**example:** an agency may require its teleworking employees to report within two (2) hours following a request to attend a mandatory meeting, due to an emergency situation, etc..)
- 10.3.5. The teleworker works at the onsite workplace when directed by the supervisor. Teleworking may not adversely affect the performance of the teleworker's duties, other employees at the onsite workplace, or customer service.

### 10.4. Establishing Work Schedules

#### 10.4.1. Determining Work Schedules

- 10.4.1.1. Employees approved to participate in the program must select a specific work schedule including teleworking and non-teleworking workdays using PGCSF Form 226-1, Telework Arrangement Program Agreement (Attachment A) and obtain supervisory approval.
- 10.4.1.2. Teleworking employees may work any schedule available within the Agency approval. Teleworkers can be approved both to telework and work an alternative work schedule.
- 10.4.1.3. Supervisors determine employee work hours and lunch periods based on workload.
- 10.4.1.4. TAP employees maintain work schedules (fixed or alternate) as approved in advance by their Appointing Authority.

- 10.4.1.5. Teleworking employees who work 8 to 10-hour days take a normal 30-minute lunch period.
  - 10.4.1.6. Employees who telework are required to respond to all emails and phone calls within a time frame as designated by the agency. **(example:** an agency may require that its employees respond to calls/emails within 45 minutes of receipt.)
  - 10.4.1.7. Work schedules may be changed as dictated by the needs of the Agency and employee.
- 10.4.2. **Changing Work Schedules.** Employees document all changes in their work schedules using PGCSF Form 226-1 (Attachment A) before the pay period when the change is effective. The employee and supervisor sign the form and the supervisor keeps it on file with the employee's time and attendance record.
- 10.5. Official Duty Hours.** TAP employees follow existing procedures for time and attendance, work performance, conduct and ethics rules, and overtime as outlined in Administrative Procedure 284 – Administration of Employee Leave. Employees:
- 10.5.1. Perform official duties during their scheduled work hours when they are working from home or a telework center.
  - 10.5.2. Do not use official government time to conduct personal business or provide dependent care. Employees must conduct personal business during non-work hours (lunch periods and/or breaks), during periods of approved leave, or before or after work hours.

## 11. TAP Agreement Process

**11.1. TAP Agreement Process.** The TAP agreement process includes three distinct phases. The below image summarizes the phases of the process. Each phase is described in detail further below.



**11.1.1. Phase 1: Preparation & Submission Phase.** During this phase, the employee completes the following steps:

11.1.1.1. Completes any required trainings as dictated by the OHRM Learning, Performance, and Organizational Development (LPOD) Division.

11.1.1.2. Completes and sends to immediate supervisor the following documents:

11.1.1.2.1. Relevant training certificate(s)

11.1.1.2.2. PGCSF Form 226-1, Telework Arrangement Program Application (Attachment A)

11.1.1.2.3. PGCSF Form 226-2, Telework Arrangement Property Checklist (Attachment B)

11.1.2. **Phase 2: Review & Approval.** During this phase the following steps take place:

11.1.2.1. **The immediate Supervisor:**

- 11.1.2.1.1. Reviews and approves or disapproves the employee's TAP agreement and related documents, based on eligibility requirements.
- 11.1.2.1.2. If approving the TAP agreement, forwards the approved TAP agreement to the Agency AWA Coordinator for forwarding to the Appointing Authority for review.
- 11.1.2.1.3. If disapproving the TAP agreement, provides the employee the reasoning for disapproval and forwards a record of the disapproval to the Agency AWA Coordinator.

11.1.2.2. **Next, the Agency AWA Coordinator:**

- 11.1.2.2.1. Advises supervisor and employee as needed on modifications
- 11.1.2.2.2. Forwards TAP Agreement to Appointing Authority or Agency Head for review
- 11.1.2.2.3. Plans to return agreement to supervisor within five business days, or as soon as reasonably possible

11.1.2.3. **Next, the Appointing Authority:**

- 11.1.2.3.1. Reviews and approves or disapproves the employee's TAP agreement and related documents, based on eligibility requirements.
- 11.1.2.3.2. Plans to return TAP agreement to Agency AWA Coordinator within five business days, or as soon as reasonably possible
- 11.1.2.3.3. If approving the TAP agreement, forwards the approved TAP agreement to the Agency AWA Coordinator.
- 11.1.2.3.4. If disapproving the TAP agreement, forwards a record of the disapproval to the Agency AWA Coordinator.

11.1.3. **Phase 3: Documentation.** During this phase, the Agency AWA Coordinator completes the following steps:

- 11.1.3.1. Retains and forwards a copy of the approved or disapproved TAP agreement to the supervisor, employee, and County AWA Program Manager.

**11.2. TAP Agreement Renewal Process.** TAP agreements automatically expire at the end of the TAP year. To renew the TAP agreement, the employee must resubmit the TAP agreement following the process outlined above.

## 12. Safety and Security Considerations

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### 12.1. Safety Procedures.

12.1.1. **Safety Inspections.** The TAP program ensures that the employee's alternative workplace meets safety standards by requiring the employee to complete the PGCSF Form 226-2, Telework Arrangement Property Checklist (Attachment B). The supervisor has the right to inspect the site for safety purposes. Supervisors and/or the Office of Finance-Risk Management should give employees 24-hour notice if an inspection is to occur.

12.1.2. **Workers' Compensation.** TAP employees are covered by the Maryland Workers' Compensation laws and may qualify for payment of on-the-job injuries or occupational illnesses. If an injury or illness occurs while performing official duties at an approved alternative workplace, an employee should report it to the supervisor immediately. The employee or supervisor should complete the report, by the end of the day that the injury or illness occurs.

## 13. Emergency Telework Situations

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### 13.1. COOP, Pandemic, Emergency Closures, Hazardous Weather, and Leave

13.1.1. **COOP/Emergency Closures.** Telework will be incorporated into the Agency's COOP and Influenza Pandemic Plan to support customer service and mission performance during emergencies.

13.1.1.1. Agency teleworkers who are designated as "emergency employees" or "mission critical" employees will be identified as such on their TAP agreement. Future requirements implemented by the CAO will supersede Agency requirements.

13.1.1.2. During a pandemic situation, employees who are not eligible to telework under normal circumstances may be able to telework if certain measures were in place.

13.1.1.3. Employees and supervisors should communicate daily to keep each other informed.

13.1.2. **Telework and Remote Access Security**

- 13.1.2.1. Approval may be obtained by the Office of Information Technology in emergency situations (**example:** pandemic/COOP) to use personal computers to connect securely to work computers for non-sensitive unclassified data using an approved remote access solution such as terminal service solution (**example:** Virtual Private Network (VPN)) or web-based e-mail. No sensitive data will be stored on the employee owned device.
- 13.1.2.2. The Office of Information Technology supports the network and telecommunications infrastructure and the priority needs of teleworking employees to include wireless communication, e-mail, and web-mail by:
  - 13.1.2.2.1. Implementing security controls that introduce no additional risk to the County.
  - 13.1.2.2.2. Implementing the access needed to perform official duties and protect County information technology resources.
  - 13.1.2.2.3. Identifying the Cyber Security Rules of Behavior for managers and employees.

### 13.1.3. **Hazardous Weather and Group Dismissal**

#### 13.1.3.1. **Onsite Workplace/Official Duty Location Closure**

- 13.1.3.1.1. When a weather or other non-routine situation prevents the performance of work at the official duty location, a TAP employee working at an alternative workplace is expected to continue to work at the alternative workplace during the disruption of Agency or government operations.
- 13.1.3.1.2. When a weather or other non-routine situation causes an adjusted work dismissal (**example:** office closure and early release after the workday has already begun at the official duty location), a teleworking employee working at an alternative workplace is expected to continue to work at the alternative workplace for the remainder of the workday.

#### 13.1.3.2. **Alternative Workplace Closure.** When weather or other non-major routine (example: power outage) situation prevents the performance of work at the alternative workplace for a major portion of the workday, the Agency may:

- 13.1.3.2.1. Require the TAP employee to report to the official duty location to work unless doing so would prove hazardous to the employee.

- 13.1.3.2.2. Approve annual leave, leave without pay, accrued compensatory time off for travel, or regular compensatory time off.
- 13.1.3.2.3. Allow the employee to work at another alternative workplace.
- 13.1.3.2.4. Grant up to one hour of excused absence (administrative leave) according to County procedures.
- 13.1.3.3. **Onsite Workplace/Official Duty Location and Alternative Workplace Closures.** When a weather or other non-routine situation prevents the performance of work at both locations, the Agency grants excused absence according to County procedures.

## 14. Monitoring Work Performance

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### 14.1. Work Management, Reports, and Evaluations

- 14.1.1. **Work Management.** The supervisor and employee must:
  - 14.1.1.1. Determine the particular duties and the timeframe for completion of the duties that will be performed at the regular and alternative workplaces.
  - 14.1.1.2. Agree on a process for transferring work to and from the alternative workplace to ensure efficiency.
- 14.1.2. **Telework Work Plan and Status Reports.** At the Agency's discretion and depending on the type of work the employee performs, supervisors may require employees to periodically discuss, review, and evaluate work assignments. Supervisors who hold regular staff meetings may rely instead on PGCSF 226-3 Telework Work Plan Template (Attachment C) or status reports to keep track of work assignments on a weekly basis.
  - 14.1.2.1. Employees must report on the status of assignments as required by the supervisor (at minimum weekly). As requested, employees are to summarize their work accomplishments and activities performed.
  - 14.1.2.2. Supervisors may use employee worklogs or status reports to:
    - 14.1.2.2.1. Monitor assignments.
    - 14.1.2.2.2. Evaluate work performance.
    - 14.1.2.2.3. Assign work to the employee.
    - 14.1.2.2.4. Validate time and attendance.
    - 14.1.2.2.5. Balance the workload of the office.

### 14.1.3. **Measuring and Evaluating Work.**

#### 14.1.3.1. **Employees must:**

- 14.1.3.1.1. Report on the status of work assignments as required by their supervisors
- 14.1.3.1.2. Perform work independently, effectively, and in a timely manner.
- 14.1.3.1.3. Summarize work accomplishments and activities, as requested.

#### 14.1.3.2. **Supervisors must:**

- 14.1.3.2.1. Ensure equitable distribution of work among TAP and non-TAP employees by:
  - 14.1.3.2.1.1. Maintaining a productivity record or database log-in system to identify assignments, employees responsible for those assignments, due dates, and completion dates.
  - 14.1.3.2.1.2. Using the teleworkers' Telework Work Plans and other reporting systems to monitor work products, define tasks and expectations, and balance workloads.
- 14.1.3.2.2. Follow the same procedures for evaluating the work performance of TAP employees as non-TAP employees.
- 14.1.3.2.3. Measure and evaluate work performance by establishing quantity and quality standards consistent with Agency policy on performance evaluation. Evaluate the timeframe for project completion, the progress towards completion, the quality of the final product, and customer service feedback.
- 14.1.3.2.4. Do not allow TAP if it requires significant modifications to an employee's position.

- 14.1.3.3. **Employees and supervisors** communicate daily to coordinate work assignments and keep each other informed.

## 15. TAP Agreement Termination

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- 15.1. **Employee Withdrawal from TAP Agreement.** Employees may withdraw from the voluntary TAP agreement at any time for any reason, including due to retirement,

resignation, or transfer to another position. The employee would provide their immediate supervisor written notice of their withdrawal.

**15.2. Termination Reasons.** The Agency may suspend or terminate a TAP agreement for any business reason that is not arbitrary or capricious, including if an employee's performance, conduct or productivity declines, or if the arrangement no longer benefits the Agency's needs. Reasons for termination include, but are not limited to:

- 15.2.1. Less than fully successful employee performance.
- 15.2.2. Adverse organizational impact or productivity.
- 15.2.3. Valid customer service complaints.
- 15.2.4. Conduct-related issues.
- 15.2.5. Failure to adhere to the provisions of the TAP agreement or other related guidance.
- 15.2.6. Adverse impact on other employees in the Agency.
- 15.2.7. Change to an ineligible position.
- 15.2.8. Arrangement no longer benefits the Agency.
- 15.2.9. Loss of equipment or release of sensitive information due to negligence.

**15.3. Terminating a TAP Agreement.** The Agency may suspend or terminate an employee's participation in the program by completing the following process:

- 15.3.1. **Teleworker's Immediate Supervisor.** Upon the determination to suspend or terminate the teleworker's TAP agreement:
  - 15.3.1.1. Document the reason for suspension or termination.
  - 15.3.1.2. Notify the employee verbally
  - 15.3.1.3. Provide the employee with written documentation of the termination.
  - 15.3.1.4. Maintain the official file of the documentation for suspending or terminating the employee's participation.
  - 15.3.1.5. Provide a copy of the written notice of the suspension or termination to the Agency AWA Coordinator

- 15.3.2. **Agency AWA Coordinator.** Upon receipt of the written notice of suspension or termination from the teleworker's immediate supervisor:
  - 15.3.2.1. Send the written notice of suspension or termination received from the teleworker's immediate supervisor to the County AWA Program Manager.
- 15.3.3. **County AWA Program Manager.** Upon receipt of the written notice of suspension or termination from the Agency AWA Coordinator:
  - 15.3.3.1. Update the County list of active teleworkers to reflect the change in status of the employee

## 16. Grievances

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Participation in TAP is a privilege for employees meeting the eligibility and qualifications specified in this procedure. TAP is a management tool and work scheduling option. Participation varies depending on the nature of the job and each employee's circumstances.

- 16.1. Participation in teleworking is strictly voluntary and subject to management approval. An employee may not be coerced or intimidated by other employees to participate.
- 16.2. Management may remove employees from the TAP if their performance or productivity declines, or if the arrangement no longer benefits the Agency's needs.
- 16.3. Management or employees may terminate participation at any time after a written notification (**exceptions:** this requirement may be waived for emergencies, hardship cases, or situations when TAP interferes with effective work operations).
- 16.4. Since TAP is not an entitlement or considered a condition of employment, decisions are not grievable.

## 17. Training

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- 17.1. **Training Requirements.** All teleworkers and their immediate supervisors must complete any required trainings before beginning a teleworking arrangement.
  - 17.1.1. **Employee Training.** Training for employees may cover:
    - 17.1.1.1. Completing the TAP agreement.
    - 17.1.1.2. Expectations of work assignments, accountability, accessibility, time management, and self-discipline.
    - 17.1.1.3. Expectations of time spent in teleworking status. Time must be accounted for and reported in the same manner as time spent at the official duty station.

- 17.1.1.4. Communicating with supervisors, progress reporting, deadlines, contacts, and meetings with coworkers and support personnel.
  - 17.1.1.5. Ways to avoid isolation, find the best work schedule and balance work and family life.
  - 17.1.1.6. Annual computer security awareness and privacy for safeguarding government data, telecommunications, and documents.
  - 17.1.1.7. Procedures for making telephone calls, using e-mail, and accessing networks remotely.
- 17.1.2. **Supervisor Training.** Training for supervisors may cover:
- 17.1.2.1. Managing by results, establishing quality and quantity standards, planning workloads, and scheduling and tracking assignments.
  - 17.1.2.2. Administering work schedules, time and attendance, and leave.
  - 17.1.2.3. Communicating expectations to teleworkers.
  - 17.1.2.4. Computer security awareness and privacy for safeguarding government data, telecommunications, and documents.
  - 17.1.2.5. Managing an office with teleworkers and non-teleworkers using current technology.

## 18. Program Evaluation

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- 18.1.** The County AWA Program Manager evaluates TAP annually and prepares County telework reports to the OHRM Director on a fiscal year basis for further reporting to the CAO.
- 18.2.** The County AWA Program Manager manages Agency participation and reviews approved TAP applications for adherence to program requirements.
- 18.3.** Appointing Authorities, supervisors and employees in the program should provide feedback to the County AWA Program Manager as needed to assist with program evaluation.

## 19. Inquiries

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### 19.1. Direct questions about the program to the following offices.

- 19.1.1. **TAP participation.** Guidance on TAP policy and participation. Contact the OHRM Alternative Work Arrangements Program team at [AWA@co.pg.md.us](mailto:AWA@co.pg.md.us).
- 19.1.2. **Training.** Guidance on coordination and completion of any required trainings. Contact the OHRM Learning, Performance, and Organizational Development Division at [LPOD@co.pg.md.us](mailto:LPOD@co.pg.md.us).
- 19.1.3. **Safety Considerations.** Guidance on any workplace safety considerations or concerns. Contact the Office of Finance – Risk Management at 301-952-5025.
- 19.1.4. **ADA Accommodation.** Guidance on any ADA accommodations. Contact the OHRM Occupational Medical Services team at [DisabilityLeave@co.pg.md.us](mailto:DisabilityLeave@co.pg.md.us).
- 19.1.5. **Technical Support.** Support with technical issues with COE, including County-issued hardware or software, County email and phone, VPN access, and network security. Contact the Office of Information Technology Services Support Desk at [ServiceDesk@co.pg.md.us](mailto:ServiceDesk@co.pg.md.us) or by phone at 301-883-5322. A service ticket can also be submitted upon request by Agency's assigned Agency IT Coordinator.

**Note:** The County does not provide technical support for equipment and resources not issued by the County (**examples:** internet access and connectivity issues in the employee's residence, home printer).

## 20. Attachments

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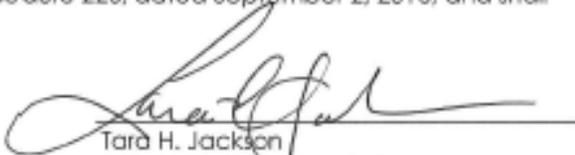
- 20.1. Attachment A: PGCSF Form 226-1, Telework Arrangement Program Application
- 20.2. Attachment B: PGCSF Form 226-2, Telework Arrangement Property Checklist
- 20.3. Attachment C: PGCSF Form 226-3, Telework Work Plan Template

## 21. Effective

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This procedure supercedes Administrative Procedure 226, dated September 2, 2016, and shall become **effective August 2, 2021**.

6/14/21  
Date

  
Tara H. Jackson  
Chief Administrative Officer