



Remote Worker Playbook and Sample Policy

The AME Group | www.theamegroup.com | 1.800.264.8851

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For an editable WORD version of this playbook,
contact Liz Robinson: eRobinson@theamegroup.com | 812.423.1950 x2801



Introduction

This remote worker playbook addresses the mechanical and cultural considerations required to ensure a successful remote worker policy. Each resource section below targets a critical component of your comprehensive approach to managing a remote workforce. Specific tools, requirements, and scenarios are mentioned that might not apply. Legal or organizational circumstances may require you to add more specifics. However, this sample policy provides a customizable starting point for making remote work a reality at your organization.

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Remote Worker Policy

Ownership level:

Framing a comprehensive remote worker policy is the responsibility of the *Executive and/or Leadership* levels of the organization.

Suggested Format: Policy Doc

Objective

Remote working environments allow employees flexibility to work from home, on the road, or at a satellite location for part, or all, of their workweek. Remote work is becoming more popular and more viable as a long-term arrangement provided that both the employee and role are suited for the environment. Not all employees and roles are appropriate for remote working environments. Authority to engage in remote working needs to be approved through management.

Eligibility

[Your organization may have certain requirements and a process to become eligible for remote working. We suggest you customize the following eligibility requirements in your Remote Worker Policy according to your organization's specific needs.]

Individuals interested in working remotely must be employed for a minimum of twelve months of continuous, regular employment and must have an adequate performance record.

Before any agreement is established, the employee and manager will evaluate the long-term viability of an arrangement. With the help of Human Resources, the following topics will be reviewed:

- **Employee Suitability**—The employee and manager will discuss work habits, needs, and plans to ensure the employee has the right traits to be successful in a remote work environment.
- **Job Responsibilities**—The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities of the employee's role. Attention will be paid to responsibilities that require a physical presence in the office as well as responsibilities that have customer-facing components.
- **Workspace Design and Scheduling**—The employee will detail their proposed workspace and planned schedule. If the employee has customer facing responsibilities, he or she will also address plans for managing other inhabitants and/or ambient noise in the workspace.
- **Equipment Needs**—The employee and manager will discuss the equipment needed for remote work.



If management decides the employee and role are a good fit for a remote working environment, they will then establish clear goals and expectations for remote work. This will vary by role, frequency, and duration of the remote work.

The agreement will continue to be evaluated as employee responsibilities and organizational goals adjust over time.

Equipment

[In addition to the following, please address any equipment required for successful remote work in your industry. Remember that equipment needs may vary team to team. Multiple versions of this equipment guide may be required. and role to role.]

The following equipment will be provided for all employees working remotely:

- Computer headset
 - Wired headsets are available at no charge
 - Bluetooth or noise canceling headsets are available, but may incur a charge
- Laptop computer
- Laptop charger

Additional required equipment that is *not* provided:

- Suitable workspace
- Desk and chair
- Reliable high-speed internet connection (25 Mbps up/down minimum)

Additional equipment that may be provided, depending on role and frequency and duration of remote work. Seek your manager's for guidance on specific needs:

- Additional monitors
- Docking station
- Printer
- Scanner
- Physical phone or speakerphone device

Communication

Communication is the cornerstone of collaboration and is critical for reaching company and individual goals. Your manager will set expectations for standing meetings, regular check-ins, and reporting procedures that provide feedback and ensure team alignment. In arrangements where an employee works remotely 100% of the time, managers may request employees come to the office for face-to-face meetings.



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As part of keeping communication channels open, remote employees will not u set their status as in our Do Not Disturb in our collaboration tools without your manager's understanding and approval for your reasons why you feel you need to use that feature. Remaining accessible is more critical when organizations shift to remote work.

Security

[Your organization's CISO or CIO will likely want to expand on this section. Remote work can open additional vulnerabilities to your intellectual property, among other concerns.]

Information security is everyone's responsibility. While working remotely, you are required to protect proprietary company and customer information. Consistent with standards and expectations for employees working in the office, remote employees are to take appropriate actions that include:

- Locking sensitive information inside of filing cabinets or desks
- Adhering to regular password maintenance as outlined by Information Security
- Locking computers whenever when away for any amount of time
- Using only approved online storage and sharing tools for all sensitive information

We are all in this together—we are counting on you!

Sick Leave

[Your organization may have corporate policies or local, state, federal, or industry requirements that will need to be added to this sample sick leave policy.]

During cold and flu season, we may ask you to refrain from coming into work if you are ill. If you have a cough, sneeze, or are running a fever, please do not come into the office. If you are feeling well enough to work from home, and if your role is suited to working remotely, discuss with your manager remote work arrangements until fully recovered and medical professionals determine you are not contagious. If you are not feeling well enough to work, please take a sick day. You can check your balance of sick days in the company's Human Resources portal.

If you come to work and are showing symptoms, you may be asked to leave the office.

Ad-Hoc Arrangements

Several possible events may prompt a temporary or short-term remote work environment. These include:

- Unsafe weather conditions
- State of emergency that includes travel restrictions



- Commuting issues
- Large community events (parades, festivals, conventions, etc.)

If temporary remote work arrangements are approved, their approval will be on an as-needed basis, with no expectation to continue after the events are over.

Other short-term arrangements can be made for employees if practical for both the employee and organization. Early communication with your manager is critical to make appropriate arrangements possible. Possible reasons to enact an informal remote working environment may include:

- Personal emergencies
- Illnesses
- Appointments during the workday
- Other reasons approved by your manager

All ad-hoc arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis. If the length of the informal remote work environment merits taking equipment from your desk with you, you may be allowed to do so, provided it is returned when you return to the office.

Time Keeping Requirements

[Your organization may have corporate policies or local, state, federal, or industry requirements that will need to be added to this sample time keeping policy.]

Employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all work hours accurately in our time keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and workweek require advance approval of your manager. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the termination of your remote work agreement.

Termination of Agreement

Failure to meet any of the outlined requirements or expectations may result in the immediate termination of your remote work agreement.



Setting Expectations for Remote Work

[Your organization should customize the following expectations and best practices for remote employees to follow to ensure successful results for the employee and your organization.]

Ownership level:

Setting expectations of remote work is the responsibility of the *Leadership and Manager* levels of the organization.

Suggested Format: Teams or email announcement, All-hands meeting

Join the Daily Meeting

Our team will have a daily standing meeting that will take place at 9:00 AM EST. Everyone is expected to attend the meeting and arrive prepared to share the following items:

- What I accomplished yesterday
- My objectives for the day
- Where I need help

Once everyone has provided an update, the team will agree on priorities for that day in alignment with organizational goals and expectations. We will then book any supporting meetings for the day to accomplish these objectives.

The meeting should last no longer than twenty minutes. Please remember this is not a meeting for making complicated decisions, fixing problems, or receiving feedback. Adherence to the agenda will ensure we finish on time and complete our day's objectives.

Turn Cameras On

For all meetings and internal calls, cameras should be turned on. While this might feel uncomfortable at first, seeing each other face to face facilitates understanding and familiarity. Remember that the majority of conversation context is conveyed through visual cues. Please consult the section titled Keys to a Successful Remote Work Environment for tips to help ensure you are prepared to share your camera. If you are concerned about people seeing what is behind you, please use the Blur my Background feature in Teams to add a layer of privacy to your home environment.

If someone else does not have their camera on, others are not excused from sharing theirs. We should hold each other accountable and make sure our cameras are always on.



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Use Your Status in Teams

Everyone needs to step away from their desk from time to time. If there is a time when you need to be away from your desk, please update your status in Teams to indicate this and communicate how they should contact you if required. To update your status in Teams, click on your picture in Teams and select “Set Status Message” then enter your status message. Make sure you specify when your message should expire so it does not remain up too long.

Examples of status messages:

Eating lunch—will return at 12:45 PM

Shoveling the driveway—call my cell phone for urgent matters

Be Prepared

Be prepared to work from home in the face of difficult circumstances, for example a forecast of inclement weather. Before leaving the office make sure you are ready to work from home by ensuring you have the essentials:

- Power cord for your laptop
- Headset (a quality headset, not your old iPhone ear buds)
- Physical files related to your job
- VPN connection devices (if required)
- Power cord for your laptop (that’s right—check for it twice!)

If the time you are working remotely is extended over a few days, you might want to consider bringing these additional items home as well:

- Second monitor
- Keyboard
- Mouse
- Docking station
- Any peripherals that help you do your job

If you expect to need any these items, please secure your manager’s approval and proactively contact the service desk to make your request.

Book All Meetings as Teams Meetings

During extended periods of remote work, please look ahead and ensure all calendar appointments are updated to include a Teams meeting link. This preparation will avoid wasting meeting time setting up and connecting to a virtual meeting. Further, Teams meetings can be recorded meetings and later shared ensuring any absent employees stay up to date and reducing miscommunication and unneeded repetitions.



Pro Tip—If you want to record a meeting, it must be scheduled as a Teams meeting. You cannot record direct calls in Teams through the chat app.

Remote Worker Frequently Asked Questions – IT Focused

[Your organization’s specific requirements, processes, and authentication procedures needed for enabling remote work should be added to the topics in this sample FAQ. The following is simply a sample to start from, and you should consider adding additional organization specific information.]

Ownership level:

Proactively outlining and conveying the technical requirements for adhering to information security and efficient work practices will significantly reduce employee uncertainty. Information should be distributed by **IT leadership** and reviewed by **all Employees** within the organization.

Format: Website or doc FAQ

Systems and VPN access

- Which systems require a VPN and which systems can be accessed from any browser with an organization login?
 - What are the step-by-step instructions for connecting to the VPN?
 - What are the step-by-step instructions for how to secondary authenticate from a phone (if required)?

Office phones

- How do users forward calls from their work number to their cell or home phone?
- How do users change voice mail from outside the office?

Equipment and internet needs

- What office equipment is needed to work remotely (computer, headset, internet minimums, etc.)?
- How do users request devices to use remotely (employees might take equipment home from office; alternatively, the organization might send equipment or reimburse approved devices)?
- Is there an internal tech support hotline specific to internal remote setup issues?

Online meetings

- How do users create online meetings?



- What are the best practice protocols for joining and participating in online meetings?
- What does the meeting invite include? Ex. Meeting join link, audio call in vs VOIP included?
- How do users mute/unmute a line? (with screenshot of web conference tool)
- How do users add chat text? (with screenshot of web conference tool)
- How do users share their screen? (with screenshot of web conference tool)

Best Practices for Managing Remote Employees

Ownership level:

Managers will need to embrace new techniques for managing a team of remote employees. These Best Practices should be reviewed by **all Managers** within the organization.

Format: Resource Doc

Managing Outcomes—Not Outputs

One of the hardest transitions to managing a team working remotely is learning how to measure worker productivity. In traditional work environments, managers sometimes rely on tracking how many hours people are at their desk to gauge productivity. However, when working remotely, that tried-and-true method no longer works. With well-established teams it is easier to trust the integrity of employees to carry on their work without physical oversight, but for new teams or during times of significant uncertainty it's important to develop new management methods that go beyond calling people every five minutes to ensure they are at their desks.

The first step towards managing remote workers effectively is transitioning to managing the outcomes of your team and understanding that outcomes are different from outputs. Outcomes are goals and expectations, while outputs are items on a to-do list. Both outcomes and outputs matter, but the most effective managers focus on tracking progress towards clearly communicated, business driving outcomes, allowing their experienced and savvy employees to manage their own outputs and milestones. As you will see below, it is important to clearly define target outcomes—particularly when they may shift during a temporary transition to a remote work environment. To increase visibility and clarity, consider putting your goals and expectations—your target outcomes—into Planner, assigning ownership for these goals and expectations.

While tracking outcomes is an important measure when working remotely, outputs often cannot be ignored. A shift to working as a remote team is an opportunity to change how your team shares and collaborates on those outputs. For example, if you use physical white board to display a sales leaderboard in your office, maybe pin a OneNote tab in Teams to simulate a similar (yet more visible) version of this information. You also could also track metrics using



information collected from your team using Microsoft Forms. Or consider creating a team Planner in which the “buckets” mimic a process flow and individual Planner cards are moved bucket to bucket to visualize progress or indicate where assistance is needed.

Adjusting Your Management Style

One classic strategy made popular by Hewlett-Packard in the 1970s for leading a group of people is practicing “Management by Walking Around”. Many managers rely on this method to build relationships with their team and facilitate opportunities to receive feedback from their reports. However, this method becomes challenging with a remote workforce.

However, this strategy can still be employed by leveraging tools already available to you in Microsoft Teams. Instead of walking up to someone’s desk, make a video call to them via Teams. This could be coined as “Management by Calling Around.” An audio conversation paired with video presence will enable you to build a better relationship with your team. While it might not seem as convenient as walking up to a desk, it requires only the click of a button, and still provides the benefits of checking in to receive feedback or provide help.

Set Up Daily Stand-up Meetings

Creating a daily stand-up meeting is an easy way to ensure your team feels connected to each other. In the office, when assistance is required, it is easy to drop by someone’s desk and ask them a question. In a remote world, a daily stand-up meeting allows your team to align on goals for the day, ask for help when required, and creates a unified vision of the day’s expectations.

Key components of a well-organized daily stand-up meeting:

- The goal a stand-up meeting is to align the team—not have a staff meeting
 - A stand-up meeting should last somewhere between 10 and 20 minutes
 - Stay away from trying to make complex decisions or fix problems. Those conversations should be scheduled outside of the stand-up meeting
- Your team should come prepared to share; the manager should not act as a dispatcher
- A stand-up meeting should provide visibility to what is happening on your team
 - Not working in the same area, you might not be as aware of any struggles your employees are encountering
 - Focus on understanding and helping your team—not rapidly changing their direction

A sample agenda for a stand-up meeting could include:

- Quick progress update from the team
 - What each team member accomplished yesterday
 - What the goals for team members today
 - Where help is needed
- Harmonization of goals and objectives
 - Layer additional business goals and objectives



- Prioritize and assign ownership of tasks
- Schedule any follow ups required before the next day's stand-up meeting

To simplify stand-up meeting preparation, consider creating this agenda as a OneNote template with a page for each day. This allows each team member to provide their information independently so you can review before and during the meeting.

Maintain Your Company Culture

It is important that your team knows that you care about them while they're working remotely, especially if remote work is necessitated by urgent or sudden circumstances. Personal connections are developed in person while grabbing coffee in the breakroom or having a quick conversation in the hallway, but working in isolation can complicate fostering important connections. Your daily stand-up meeting can bring some of that personal touch. Make sure to plan a few moments to acknowledge individual contributions. Organizations are made up of individuals, so be sure to make them feel like valued individuals rather than cogs in the machine.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict exists anywhere people have differing desires—meaning conflict exists everywhere. Resolving this conflict is essential to maintaining team health while working remotely. Use Teams meetings to with both audio and video—not in chat or email to resolve conflicts. Meeting face to face in Teams avoids misunderstandings common with written forms of communication lacking context and physical and vocal cues. Hesitations and concerns are easier to detect and address before they become a bigger problem when using video. Remember also that curiosity is a much more effective opener to difficult conversations than accusations. Treat each other with respect and focus any concerns on the outcomes rather than the individual.

Some general considerations related to conflict resolution:

- Focus your conversations on interests rather than positions
 - A position is often just a statement of a preferred solution. It is often relayed as a demand. People can get very entrenched when discussing positions.
 - An interest is the real thing underlying their position. What is the person in conflict really wanting by proposing their solution? (underlying interests include acceptance, autonomy, connection, integrity, survival, understanding, etc.)
- Get creative with solutions by focusing on solving interests. Look for overlapping and common interests. Propose solutions based on interests and *not* on positions.

Setting Expectations During Remote Work Prompted by External Circumstances



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Shifting to a work-from-home environment is a major change for any office. Many guides for conducting remote work overlook setting realistic expectations and goals for the remote office, particularly if the need to work remotely was predicated by sudden, external forces. Communicating top priorities and temporary expectations helps employees understand how to prioritize and perform their individual jobs. These messages should ideally come from both the executive level to the whole organization and from managers to their own reports, differing in scope and specificity.

Possible real-world considerations needing to be balanced against expectations and goals include:

- Not everyone having a dedicated workspace at their home
- Employees not having the right equipment or resources available to them, which may include:
 - Second monitor
 - Headset
 - VPN access to organization's network
 - Physical access to files and records
 - Internet with enough bandwidth to support their full spectrum of work
- If the cause for the temporary shift to remote work is a result of weather or natural disaster:
 - Children likely being at home if schools and daycares are closed
 - Possible power, internet, and phone outages
- In a densely populated area, distracting background noise during calls

When suddenly shifting to a remote work situation, managers must adjust and communicate employee expectations and goals during the duration of the event. Outlined are some examples that could come into play in a call center environment.

Goals:

- While temporarily remote, our focus is maintaining critical operations
- Our primary goals are to maintain customer satisfaction and response times
- Additional priorities will be assigned as we stabilize operations throughout this event

Expectations:

- We have identified peak hours of 7:30 AM to 10:00 AM—everyone must be online and available to assist customers
- As the peak subsides, we will rotate who is on the front-line allowing people to handle the following:
 - Responding to weather conditions (shovel snow, check sump pumps, remove tree limbs from the street, etc.)
 - Checking on children, family, etc.
 - Taking your lunch break
- We move together as a team and flexibility will be the cornerstone to our success



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- A schedule will be sent out ahead of time to help coordinate the flow of people on and off the front line
- You might be called back to the front-line during surges of activity
- If your situation is more stable, we might ask you to stay on the front line while others take care of urgent situations

While every team is different, a little preparation ahead of time will ensure you have the right plan, goals, and expectations to react to your situation. Clarity on those points will put everyone at ease as they know what is expected and are informed on how they can take care of their real-world situation while navigating this temporary remote work arrangement.

Keys to a Successful Remote Work Environment

Ownership level:

Organizations can support employees by sharing best practices for organizing their remote work environments. These Best Practices should be distributed by **Managers** and reviewed by **all Employees** within the organization.

Format: Teams or Email Announcement, Resource Doc

Dedicate a Space for Work

Find a quiet space in your house that can serve as your dedicated workspace. If you work remotely on a regular basis, working in a room with a closed door is ideal. The goal is knowing when you are sitting down to work, that space is conducive to getting work done.

If you don't normally work from home, you may have to find creative solutions to find a temporary workspace. A spare bedroom or room that is not frequently visited might suffice. Set up a card table for your laptop and bring some of your work essentials with you. If you need to print, bring your printer into the room so you do not have to travel to print.

Areas you might want to avoid when working from home:

- Living rooms or your bedroom—It can be too tempting to take a nap or turning on the TV
- Dining room table—This is not ideal if you have multiple household members and use that space daily
- High traffic areas like rooms by the front door can be a bad choice if noisy or prone to visitors walking through

Always remember, if your camera will be on for meetings, it might be ideal to place your desk in a location where your back is to a wall rather than a background with people walking past.



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Create a Do Not Disturb Signal

There will be times when you have meetings and cannot have people coming in and out of your workspace. In the office, the universal sign that someone is on a call is often wearing a headset. However, you might need to be a little more obvious with people in your home.

If you have a dedicated office space with a door, it could be as easy as closing the door or even hanging a sign to let people know that you are in a meeting. If you do not have a dedicated space, it might be helpful to use a flag of some sort to show people that you are in a meeting. Maybe a bright orange scarf or t-shirt near the entryway to the room to catch someone's eye could work. Alternatively, a chair or potted plant positioned in the middle of the entry to a room without a door can help. These cues may also be helpful by the house entries to let people who were outside of the house know that when they return, they should do so quietly so as not to disturb any meetings or calls.

The solution does not require a lot of technology—just make sure it is clear and everyone understands the message.

Share or Send Your Daily Agenda Every Morning

A simple solution to reduce disruptions is to send your calendar every morning to everyone in your home. In Outlook, create a new message and under the Insert tab, select calendar. You can set the date range and details before sending it. This way you share only the right amount of information every day.

If you want to get fancy, you could send it every morning using Power Automate so you never forget to do it.

Create a Daily Work Routine

You have a daily routine when you go into the office and you should apply the same principle to your workday at home to help keep you focused and prevent you from working all hours of the day. Create a routine and set alarms using the Alarms and Clock app on your PC or use the alarm app on your phone. A simple routine could look like this:

7:30 AM	Go for a quick walk around the block to adjust your mindset
7:55 AM	Sign into my computer for work
9:45 AM	Walk down the street for a quick cup of coffee
12:00 PM	Break for lunch
2:45 PM	Head to the kitchen for a quick snack
5:30 PM	Last call for the day—go for a quick walk around the block to reset the end the day. Any remaining tasks are for tomorrow.



This may seem small, but a routine ensures that you take breaks during your day which keep you more productive. The walks also provide you the opportunity to focus and transition between work life and home life.

Dress for Success

Working from home shouldn't mean lounging in your pajamas. To jumpstart your productivity when working from home, getting up and dressing like you normally would for the office can help set your attitude for the day. As a bonus, when you turn on your camera, it will be easy for your colleagues to infer that you're engaged for the day as you'll look the part.

PDF Printing Documents

Though we aspire to a paperless office, we sometimes must print out documents to meet retention and reporting policies. Working from home can introduce problems with printing because most personal printers were not designed to efficiently print large volumes and many people do not have printers at home. So, how should workers print documents out for retention purposes while working remotely?

Instead of trying to print everything out to paper, consider using the Microsoft Print to PDF feature. If you "print" everything to PDF and place the files into a folder, you can quickly print them in a large batch once you return to the office. This saves wear and tear on personal printers, the cost of ink, and configuring personal printers on work computers.

Be Prepared to Snack

Snacking during the day is especially easy when working from home and becomes a problem when the available snacks are unhealthy. Be prepared with the right snacks in your home. Have a variety of healthy snacks on hand so you are not tempted to grab that bag of potato chips.

Evaluate Yourself

Sometimes it helps for you to take a periodic self-assessment on your remote work habits. Maintaining awareness of how you work at home will ensure you are remaining productive. Some items to consider for your assessment could include:

- Are you meeting your goals?
- Are you meeting your deadlines?
- Are you connected to your coworkers?
- Are you setting and maintaining your hours of availability?
- What tasks are difficult for you while working remotely?



You might find that you need to adjust how you work as a result of your assessment. Maybe your expectations are too high, or you need to make a change to your environment. Spending a few minutes to assess your situation will provide insight to how you are working and where you could make positive changes.

Talking to Your Spouse/Partner/Children/Roommate About Remote Work

[Remote working impacts your employees in ways beyond the obvious work-focused changes. Though complicated, these interpersonal challenges should not be ignored. Give remote workers guidance in how they can they work through these challenges.]

Ownership level:

Organizations can support employees by sharing guidance for navigating interpersonal frictions that will surface when unexpectedly working from their home environments. This conversation guide should be distributed by **Managers** and reviewed by **all Employees** within the organization.

Format: Teams or Email Announcement, Resource Doc

The reality of working from home goes beyond the business collaboration adjustments and the technical and workspace setup. The people who share your workspace also need to adjust to your new working arrangement. Suddenly working from home can inadvertently cause friction, aggravation, and even embarrassment during the workday. The best way to manage these situations is to get ahead of them and have an open, two-way conversation about needs and expectations.

Interpersonal Challenges that Arise when Working from Home

While every home is different, here are some common challenges you might encounter when working from home.

- With adults:
 - People encroaching your space while working
 - Noise or disruption when entering or exiting the home
 - Smoke detector going off from cooking in the kitchen
 - Singing or music while others prepare for their day
 - The doorbell ringing
- With children:
 - Barging in during a meeting
 - Sitting outside the office door and making noise
 - Lack of awareness of their noise levels while playing or crying
 - If the sole adult, ensuring kids are not getting into trouble



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- Needing to take over watching children for a spouse/partner
- With pets:
 - Making disruptive noise during meetings
 - Tampering with keyboards and mice and sending nonsense emails or chats

To reduce frustrations and increase positive shared home workspace experiences, set aside time to talk about your needs and work expectations, and to hear their needs and expectations.

Outline: Sample Conversation with Your Spouse/Partner/Children/Roommate About Working from Home

This is a sample conversation that can be adapted for your specific situation. While it might not directly apply to your situation, it is a great starting point when speaking to someone about working from home.

Hi _____, I wanted to talk to you for a few minutes regarding my transition to working from home. This will be a change from our normal routine and one that I am excited about as there are some great opportunities that working from home can offer. For example, I look forward to _____ (eating lunch with you every day, being able to go to the gym with you after work, be able to cook dinner, take you to the playground before it gets too late, etc.).

However, with all things new, we'll need to work through some adjustments. At first, it might be difficult to see me physically at home, but mentally at work. That is because my manager has laid out very specific goals and expectations for me during this time. I want to share these items with you as I believe it is important for you to know what is expected of me even though I am not in the main office.

[Share goals / expectations that are outlined by manager / organization]

As a result of these goals, I think it is important that I share some guiding principles that will help prevent some common issues that come up when people like me work remotely:

Office Space: Since this is a temporary situation, I believe I can work at the desk in our bedroom. However, since I am expected to be online by 7:30 to start managing the peak flow of phone calls, I will need to be alone in the room. This does not mean that it is off limits, but access might need be limited.

Daily Schedule: I will commit to sending you a list of my calendar appointments for the day. While this could change at any point during the day, it should be stable. Maybe when we are eating breakfast or drinking our coffee in the morning, we can discuss our schedules and plan out lunch for the day?



The “Do Not Disturb” Sign: If I have the door closed, it means that I cannot be disturbed. If there is an emergency, please text me to see if it is okay to enter. If I do not respond, I might be involved in a meeting requiring my full attention. I will respond as soon as I am finished.

Watching the Kids: Since we are both working from home right now, we will need to consider who will watch our children during the workday. In addition to reviewing our schedule each day, it might be a good idea for us to plan out shifts for when each person can keep an eye on our children around any focused work meetings and ensure one of us is always available.

If issues arise, let’s plan to work through them together. This will be different for both of us, so I want to make sure we keep an open dialogue. I know we’ll need to make some adjustments as we go along, but I am hoping these principles will help keep our household happy as we adapt to this change.

Suggest Regular Meetings with People at Home: Setting aside a regular interval of discussing how things are going, what is working well, what needs improvement allows those at home with the remote employee an opportunity to not let things build up to higher conflict.

SAMPLE