Telecommuting Expectations for Employees:

This is an unprecedented time for NMU. Be creative in how work is being done. Employees and leaders need to take time to communicate expectations, set up processes and tools for documenting and sharing information. Proper expectations and communication can help employees feel connected and successful. Here are a few tips to begin telecommuting:

Tip #1: Communication is Critical
- Keep informed with day-to-day updates.
- Let your supervisor and co-workers know how and when they can reach you throughout the workday.
- Attend all virtual meetings, via phone, email, and videoconferencing. Work with your supervisor to identify the best means of communication.
- You will need to check in as advised by your supervisor by email, online chat, phone or videoconferencing with your supervisor and coworkers.
- Keeping connected will help you feel less disconnected. It also helps to avoid miscommunication when giving feedback, because others can read your facial expressions and body language.
- Contextual information should be documented in a central location, like a Google Drive, that all team members can access.
- Project timelines and team members' work schedules should also be current and available through shared documents or shared calendars.
- If you are unable to complete something remotely, be accountable and transparent about it. Communicate any problems you encounter immediately with your supervisor.

Tip #2: Workspace Considerations
- Workspace
  - Separate work life from home life. It is critical to set boundaries. Establish 'do not disturb' guidelines, work hours, break times, and a policy on handling personal matters.
  - Try to have a proper workspace. Ideally, the space should have the capability to shut out noise and distractions. The space should allow confidentiality for your screen, papers, and voice as well. Remember that FERPA and Data Classification Policies governing confidential and private data apply whether working from campus or telecommuting.
- Technology Resources and System Access. Plan how to address technology issues.
  - Computer equipment: Laptop, docking station, mouse and keyboard. If an employee does not have a laptop, contact the Technology Asset and Business Management Office at thinkpad@nmu.edu.
  - Internet connection
  - Secure remote access to NMU's internal network through the use of the VPN. See http://nmu.edu/workfromanywhere for more information. You are expected to use VPN for university work. Home networks are not as secure. While employees often use Gmail using personal devices or home networks, use VPN for all University work.
  - Access to NMU Gmail
  - Access to shared drives and Google drives
  - Establish protocols for updating hardware, software, virus protection, firewalls, passwords, etc., for telecommuters
  - Consider backup solutions if one type of technology is temporarily unavailable
  - Phone. To redirect your phone see http://nmu.edu/workfromanywhere for more information.

Tip #3: Set Goals and Expectations

- Routine
    - Establish office hours. If you don't create a window of time for your job, you'll either work around the clock or put off your work. Know when your schedules overlap with your supervisor and co-workers. Work with your supervisor and be transparent.
    - Start each work-from-home day the way you would a work-from-the-office day: Get out of bed at a set time, change clothes and "commute" to a designated workspace.
    - Practice good time management. Discuss best working routine with your supervisor. Take meal breaks and wellness breaks just as you did in the office.
- Goals and Expectations
    - Work with your supervisor to set clear expectations for the work to be done and how you will work together to monitor how things are going.
    - One of the hardest aspects of telecommuting is concentrating on the task hand. Identify what needs to get done every day and make sure to do it.
- Work Hours
    - Union contract language and employment laws still apply.
    - All employees:
        - Your supervisor will determine your work schedule. Work hours should be consistent or compatible with your current FTE and position. Arrangements to work an alternate schedule must be approved by your supervisor.
        - Take your meal break and wellness breaks.
        - Remember to notify/get approval from your supervisor if you are taking a sick or annual day.
    - Non-exempt employees:
        - Record hours worked and submit for approval as you normally would.
        - All overtime work resulting in overtime pay or comp time must be approved in advance and must be worked as directed by your supervisor.
    - Exempt A/P employees:
        - Any A/P exempt employee hours over forty (40) hours in a regular workweek must have prior approval from your supervisor. Those hours are eligible for an equal amount of compensatory time.

Telecommuting Checklist for Employees

This document should help you assess your technology requirements and prepare you to work remotely.

Technology / Access

☐ Obtain appropriate hardware

   ☐ Laptop　　　　　☐ Current　　　　　☐ Issued

   Notebook computer, related accessories and internet connection needs should be sent to thinkpad@nmu.edu. Pick up of materials will be at the Micro Repair Desk in Harden Hall.

   ☐ Mouse

   ☐ Keyboard

   ☐ Monitor (in rare circumstances if two screens are required to complete work)

☐ Obtain appropriate software/accessibility. For detailed instructions visit http://nmu.edu/workfromanywhere.

   ☐ Make sure you have tested your remote internet connection to ensure it works

   ☐ If issued a new laptop, access Google suite, re-create bookmarks and frequently used sites and systems, i.e. Banner, Extender, etc.

   ☐ Make sure you have downloaded Cisco VPN app disconnect from network and tested it to ensure it works remotely.

   ☐ discontct from the on-campus network and test mapping and connecting to your department's shared drive

   ☐ Make sure you know how to use Google Drive for information/document sharing

   ☐ Set up Zoom access

   ☐ Redirect work phone number to appropriate phone number

   ☐ Know whom to contact if you need technology assistance

Work Documentation

☐ Copy/scan files needed to department share drive.

☐ Identify additional hard copy files and/or documentation that will be needed. Do not remove paper documents that are not copied elsewhere. If you MUST remove paper documents that are not available anywhere else, you will be requested to consider logging them out and checking them back in upon return.

☐ When telecommuting, understand that privacy and confidentiality rules still apply. Employees agree that any resources and/or documentation removed from campus will be returned to campus in a timely manner when the telecommuting period is over.

Communication / Setting Expectations

☐ Understand the departmental communication plan. Know when and how you will be able to communicate with your supervisor, co-workers and other stakeholders (students, etc.)

☐ Make sure you know the policies and procedures associated with handling confidential information. Confidentiality rules vary by department, but at a minimum, everyone must comply with the University's [FERPA](#) and [Data Classification](#) policies.

☐ Establish work hours with your supervisor.

☐ Understand the expectations of work to be done and how progress will be assessed.

☐ Continue to track and submit work hours/time off for approval. Submit time per payroll schedule via MyNMU.