



## Supervisor: Onboarding Telecommuting Employees

Hiring an employee who will be unexpectedly telecommuting brings a unique set of onboarding considerations. Feeling connected to UW–Madison, colleagues, and the expected work, are pivotal to new employee engagement and success.

### **Supervisor:**

It is essential you communicate often with your new employee. Your planful and thoughtful approach will have the largest impact on your new hire's success and comfort in the role. Providing meaningful work assignments will contribute to the new employee feeling needed and welcome. Remain conscious of the additional stress the current circumstance creates and do your part to remain positive.

### **Overall tips to help the employee feel connected:**

- Consider planning a virtual team meeting with video to help connect the new employee with colleagues
- Regular virtual team interaction – group chats, calls or meetings
- Suggest online resources that will help the new employee get to know UW–Madison and your unit

### **Prior to start date:**

- Virtually welcome the new employee
  - Acknowledge the unusual circumstances
  - Ask about comfort and prior experience telecommuting
  - Share details of how you will support the new employee
- Coordinate with HR and IT regarding equipment and technology access needed by employee
- Prepare telecommuting agreement with HR
- Create a detailed training plan that ensures comfort with technology and details of job responsibilities
- Create a detailed schedule of check-ins/conferences
- Outline meaningful work assignments
- Determine virtual colleague connections you will need to facilitate
- Add new hire to applicable meetings, mailing lists, etc.

### **First day:**

- Conduct a virtual first-day meeting
- Discuss expectations regarding schedule, work responsibilities, check-ins, etc.
- Give a meaningful work assignment – consider an assignment that requires partnering with a colleague
- Reassure and support

### **Weeks one, two and three:**

- Additional work assignments and follow up
- Frequent check-ins and virtual meetings, not only about work responsibilities, but also regarding their feelings and possible anxiety about the situation
- Offer resources and support
  - Employee Assistance Office: <https://hr.wisc.edu/employee-assistance-office/>
  - LifeMatters (available 24/7): 800-634-6433 or [mylifematters.com](http://mylifematters.com); password: Bucky1

### **Eventual return to the workplace:**

- Plan the transition into the workplace
  - Prepare a welcoming workspace
  - Celebrate