

MS 632 Direct Hire Telework Program

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MS 632 Direct Hire Telework Program Procedures

1.0 Purpose

This Manual Section establishes the Peace Corps telework policy.

2.0 Authorities

Public Law 106-346, Section 359; Public Law 111-292; 22 U.S.C. 2503; 5 CFR 630.

3.0 Policy

- (a) The Peace Corps encourages the use of telework and allows supervisors, and employees the flexibility to establish telework arrangements on a case-by-case basis, consistent with good management practice and the need for accountability.
- (b) The Peace Corps will give serious consideration to each telework arrangement proposed by an employee, but such arrangements are a management option for accomplishing the Peace Corps mission and not an entitlement of employment.
- (c) No employee may be required to enter into a telework agreement. Employee participation in the telework program is voluntary. An agency may not compel an employee to participate in telework, even if some or all of the duties of the position can be performed at an alternative location.
- (d) Peace Corps employee telework arrangements overseas must be based on a telework policy established by the Chief of Mission (COM) at each post. While Peace Corps employees cannot be authorized a Routine Telework arrangement overseas, there may be situations where Temporary and Situational Telework would be appropriate.

- (e) Procedures implementing this Manual Section are set forth in the MS 632 *Direct Hire Telework Program Procedures*.

4.0 General Rules

4.1 Applicability

This Manual Section applies to all United States Direct-Hire employees working in the United States and overseas, except for employees whose appointments were made with the advice and consent of the United States Senate.

4.2 Eligibility

Eligibility standards for telework are set forth in the MS 632 *Direct Hire Telework Program Procedures*.

4.3 Privacy and Data Security

Telework agreements may not be executed or continued if it cannot be implemented in a manner consistent with applicable Peace Corps policies, including policies governing privacy or the security of the IT systems of the Peace Corps, such as the policy on remote access to Peace Corps information systems.

Under no circumstances may classified materials be taken from official Peace Corps offices to be worked with or stored at the alternate work station. Employees' supervisors must give prior written approval for the removal and use of any Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), Privacy Act, or HIPAA information to the alternate work station.

Each office is responsible for determining appropriate security and privacy procedures for their office materials, subject to applicable sections of the Peace Corps Manual or other guidance from Safety and Security, the Privacy Act office, Records Management office, or the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

4.4 Peace Corps Equipment and Supplies

The Peace Corps may, but is not obligated to, make equipment available for the purpose of telework. An employee may volunteer to use personal equipment for telework purposes as long as policies governing privacy and security of the Peace Corps IT systems are followed.

The Peace Corps will make available, upon approval by the employee's supervisor, office supplies reasonably deemed necessary for completion of the work assignment. Supplies may be used only for Peace Corps-related activities.

The employee is obligated to promptly return all unused equipment or supplies once the telework agreement ends, or as stipulated by the office that provided the equipment or supplies.

4.5 Monitoring

The Peace Corps will ensure that teleworkers and non-teleworkers are treated the same for purposes of:

- (a) periodic appraisals of job performance of employees;
- (b) training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees;
- (c) work requirements; and
- (d) other acts involving managerial discretion.

4.6 Pay and Leave

4.6.1 Pay and Overtime

Existing rules for pay administration apply to telework employees, including the existing rules for overtime under Title 5 of the United States Code, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (see MS 625 *Direct Hire Premium Pay*). Supervisors must ensure that telework employees work overtime only with written approval.

4.6.2 Duty Station

The physical location of the Peace Corps office will generally be designated as the official duty station for purposes of special salary rates and travel, regardless of where the teleworker's alternate work station is located. Only in cases where the employee will permanently reside in another commuting area and will not return to the office at least twice a pay period will the alternate work station be designated as the official duty station for purposes of pay and travel.

4.6.3 Hours of Duty

The existing Peace Corps policies and rules for hours of duty apply to telework employees (see MS 630 *Direct Hire Hours of Duty*). Supervisors must report time and attendance to ensure that telework employees are paid for work performed and to account for absences from the fixed work schedule.

4.6.4 Leave

Leave requested by a teleworker must be made in the same manner as it would for employees not engaged in telework activities (see MS 635 *Staff Absence and Leave*).

4.7 Liability

Telework is subject to applicable law and regulations. Any exposure to liability arising out of the employee's actual performance of assigned duties may be covered under the appropriate authorities, which include the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA), Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964, and the Federal Tort Claims Act.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Human Resources

The Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Human Resources, as the Peace Corps Telework Managing Officer, is responsible for:

- (a) Managing and implementing the telework policies, as described under this Manual Section;
- (b) Ensuring all teleworkers and their supervisors receive the appropriate training; and
- (c) Maintaining the Peace Corps official record of telework agreements.

5.2 Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- (a) Reviewing telework requests and reaching a decision to approve or deny a proposed telework agreement for their staff;
- (b) Working with employees in preparing telework agreements, especially in defining the work to be performed;
- (c) Completing “Manager Training” on www.telework.gov in order to better support telework employees;
- (d) Treating both teleworkers and non-teleworkers fairly and consistently;
- (e) Ensuring that telework employees are working as scheduled and are available to co-workers and customers as necessary, by evaluating the work output or other appropriate criteria;
- (f) Recalling telework employees in the event of an emergency or other exigency, such as an unanticipated work assignment that requires their presence at their official duty stations; and
- (g) Notifying the Office of Human Resources of any terminated agreements and the effective date.

5.3 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- (a) Requesting a telework agreement for Supervisor’s consideration and, if approved, completing the telework agreement;
- (b) Certifying that the alternate work station meets safety and security requirements;

- (c) Completing required employee training on www.telework.gov;
- (d) Adhering to the provisions of the telework agreement;
- (e) Remaining available to their supervisors, co-workers, and customers while working at the alternate work station;
- (f) Returning to the official duty station immediately when recalled for emergencies, unanticipated work assignments, or other exigencies of the Agency's business; and
- (g) Notifying their supervisor in writing if they wish to terminate their telework agreement.

6.0 Procedures

Procedures implementing this Manual Section must be approved by the Human Resource Council.

7.0 Effective Date

The effective date is the date of issuance.