

DLA Guidelines for Telework and Virtual Meetings

August 2020

Many DLA employees have participated in maximum telework due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Teleworking has been critical to maintaining both mission accomplishment and the health and safety of the DLA workforce during the pandemic. However, telework on such a broad spectrum can also present challenges, including ensuring effective communication with supervisors through virtual means; navigating virtual formal and informal meetings; and maintaining a clear distinction between “work life” and “home life” while working almost exclusively on telework.

Below are “Do’s and Don’ts” for employees to keep in mind while teleworking and participating in virtual meetings, both now during the pandemic and in the future:

While Teleworking:

Do: Ensure your telework agreement is approved and in place (via the EAGLE Telework Management), to include completing the “DLA Telework Training for Employees/Supervisors” via the DLA Learning Management System. Even if you’re a practiced teleworker, consider refreshing your understanding of the telework by taking the training again.

Do: Remember that teleworking from your designated alternate worksite (i.e. home) is considered the same as working at your duty station and, as such, you will be held to the same performance and conduct standards outlined in Federal and Agency law, rule, and regulation.

Do: Pay close attention to your work schedule and hours, following your approved work schedule, and working with your supervisor for any deviations or changes. In a maximum telework scenario, it is easy to inadvertently work beyond normal scheduled hours, so try to establish a routine. Remember to follow all administrative requirements associated with receiving advanced approval to work overtime, earn compensatory time, etc.

Do: Properly code all situational telework hours in your EAGLE timesheet as “TS” and normally scheduled telework hours as “TW.”

Do: Telework during your tour of duty or pre-approved schedule, just as if working from the normal duty station. Completely unstructured work schedules, where employees simply work at will, are not authorized in DLA. Current policy and collective bargaining agreements regarding hours of duty and flexible work schedules apply to telework arrangements. While flexibilities are available, management should consider mission and operational needs first before pre-approving work schedule changes.

Do: Remember that employees are expected to use the same Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) in both the DLA workplace and the alternative worksite. Any misuse or incident involving DLA equipment at the alternative worksite will be treated the same as if it occurred on the Agency’s premises. Teleworkers assume full responsibility for the protection and appropriate handling of government property, whether paper or electronic.

Do: Remember that teleworkers must comply with DLAI 6404, Information Assurance Rules of Behavior.

Do: Be prepared to return to the official duty station if your supervisor recalls you for mission reasons.

Do: Remember that the Hatch Act prohibition against political activities in the workplace applies when teleworking.

Do: Know that political activity means any activity that supports or opposes the election of a party or candidate in a partisan election.

Do: Understand and comply with the Hatch Act Rules. See DLA Hatch Act website (<https://dla.dod.afpims.mil/Info/HatchAct/>) for additional guidance. Violators are subject to discipline by the Office of Special Counsel (OSC).

Do: Consult with the DLA Office of General Counsel if you have questions about the Hatch Act.

Don't: Post, share, or like any political activity on social media during the duty day, even if you use your personal email or personal device.

Don't: Ever use your government computer or email to engage in any type of political activity, even when off-duty.

Don't: Access classified information. Accessing classified information is *not* permitted at an alternative worksite. Teleworking with classified material may be allowed *only when* approved by the DLA Director as described in DLAI 6304, Information Security Program Handbook.

While in Virtual Meetings:

Do: Mute your microphone whenever you are not speaking -- even if you are alone in the room. Background noise can be an annoying distraction and stifle any meeting's flow.

Do: Announce the meeting's agenda items at the beginning of the virtual meeting and recap all tasks and action items at the end.

Do: Try to join the virtual meeting a few minutes prior to the meeting start time to avoid system overload if everyone joins at the same time, and do announce yourself. If you are joining after the meeting has begun, please wait to speak until after the administrator or meeting leader has requested you introduce yourself, rather than interjecting over the ongoing discussion.

Do: Be aware of your video settings. Check if your microphone is muted before delivering a two-minute monologue that no one will hear.

Do: Make sure your workspace is well lit so you appear clearly on video conferences. Use natural light from windows or simply turn on the overhead light in the room to brighten up the conference.

Do (CIVILIANS): Wear appropriate clothing while participating in virtual meetings. In other words, wear clean, professional clothing, free of inappropriate language and/or graphics.

Do (MILITARY): Military members working from home should be in their OCP's/NWU's or Service Physical Training uniform to maintain military professionalism. DLA military members should adjust their dress/appearance appropriately based on the engagement, including virtual/video engagements with external stakeholders (OSD, Service customers, Industry, Congressional staff, etc.). For such external meetings, military members should be in OCP's/NWU's.

Do: Make sure your wall art or decorations are work-appropriate and your surroundings are clean. This also includes your desk. Avoid displaying multiple coffee mugs, trash, etc., on the surface.

Do: Test your microphone before you video call. One way to test it is by video conferencing a colleague before the meeting. It is frustrating and unproductive to find yourself not being able to share critical information or communicate clearly because your audio clarity and volume are poor.

Do: Introduce yourself before you talk, especially if you are in a group call without video. Consider something like "Hi, it's Jim Smith; I have a question." While several programs will notify you as to who is talking, conference line numbers will not. Therefore, be polite and introduce yourself.

Do: Look into the camera instead of looking at yourself talking on the computer screen. It will help others on the call feel like you are 100 percent engaged and present.

Don't: Position your camera too low, too high, or hooked onto a different monitor. Make sure your camera is eye level and on the monitor you plan to use for the conference.

Don't: Check or read emails or scan articles while on the video call. This also includes doing additional work beyond the call. It is easy for other participants to tell if you are not fully focused and engaged during the video call.

Don't: Drink alcohol during a meeting, or while teleworking generally. This may seem obvious but, remember, you are on the clock and all standards of conduct are to be adhered to and followed.

Don't: Use inappropriate language or discuss off-topic issues such as politics.

Sexual Harassment in a Virtual Environment:

Do: Know that DLA has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment/assault and all sexual harassment/assault allegations will be investigated promptly.

Do: Say 'No' to the harasser and report the incident to your servicing EEO office or a member of your supervisory chain immediately. (Note: If filing an EEO complaint, it must be reported within 45 calendar days of the alleged incident.)

Do: Know that if you sexually harass an employee you may be subjected to discipline.

Do: Know that threatening to distribute sexual or intimate images of someone using email, text, social media, or other electronic devices is known as digital sexual assault or revenge porn. Contact the DLA SAPR 24/7 Hotline @ 1-800-841-0937, or your servicing Sexual Assault Response Coordinator immediately to report the incident.

Do: Keep evidence by taking screenshots or printing out text messages, social media posts, etc., as well as other identifying information if you receive unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and if being verbally harassed.

Don't: Make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature by text or Instant Message, email, or on any of the social platforms.

Don't: Retaliate against an individual for opposing sexual harassment.

Don't: Use government property to view or share sexually explicit material.