



COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Procedures for Non-Faculty Employees

Effective Dates: January 3 - January 30, 2022

PURPOSE

This procedure addresses the requirements for establishing and managing COVID-19 virtual work agreements for non-faculty employees during the effective dates above.

SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to all full-time and part-time non-faculty employees of the College whose duties and responsibilities render them eligible for temporary part-time virtual work during the effective dates above.

BACKGROUND

Delgado Community College's focus has always been to adapt as needed to safeguard the health of all students, faculty, and staff, while ensuring operational continuity for programs and services. As background, on June 21, 2021, the College implemented a full return of Delgado employees to campus for pre-COVID-19, in-person work schedules due to positive variables such as drastically lower city and state infection numbers. However, due to recent shifts in local and state COVID-19 conditions, part-time virtual work agreements are being reinstated for a temporary timeframe during the effective dates above.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. All offices and units of Delgado Community College will remain fully operational, adequately staffed, and open to the public, as applicable, during the effective dates.
- B. Supervisors are responsible for identifying employees whose physical presence is required and those whose tasks can be performed virtually, relative to the current workload and activities of their department.
- C. All employees are expected to work at their normal work station that is generally on the College's premises, or at another location when representing the College, **for a minimum of three days a week.**
- D. Virtual work agreements may be approved for a **maximum of two days a week.**
- E. Employees not eligible and/or not approved to perform their work virtually, as determined by their supervisors, must report to work for the full work week unless while on approved leave.
- F. Exceptions to the requirements above will be permitted only following review and with the Chancellor's approval. Employees who are significantly impacted by COVID-19 and unable to meet the requirements of this procedure must contact their supervisor and [Human Resources](#) for a review of their circumstances and eligibility for exceptions.

- G. While working onsite, due to COVID-19, all employees must continue to comply with *all current College safety protocols*, including but not limited to:
- Mandatory use of the Delgado Pre-Screening App or QR Codes daily to maintain clearance before arriving at their work station.
 - When applicable, following the directives and protocols set by the Office of Human Resources or the Delgado App for immediately responding to potential COVID-19 exposures or confirmed cases.
 - Staying home when sick and notify the supervisor.
 - Continuing to wear a mask or face covering when walking down the hallways, in elevators, restrooms and any other common spaces.
 - Allowing only two individuals in elevators and restrooms at a time.
 - Reporting directly to the work station and limiting movement to other locations for work activities.
 - As a courtesy, *not* entering a co-worker's workspace without permission.
 - Allowing virtual meeting options for all participants, where applicable.
 - Practicing good hygiene, including covering mouths when coughing or sneezing, using hand sanitizer stations when entering common areas, and washing hands multiple times a day.

VIRTUAL WORK REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

- A. The supervisor and employee must discuss, confirm, and document on the [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Agreement for Non-Faculty Employees](#), which job duties can be performed virtually, while maintaining optimal productivity and without interruption to College operations.
- B. The supervisor must ensure the employee confirms they have appropriate space, equipment, phone, and Internet access to perform the above duties virtually, without creating an information security risk for the College.
- C. ***At the beginning of the virtual work agreement period***, the employee **and** supervisor must certify on the [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Agreement for Non-Faculty Employees](#) that they:
- have thoroughly reviewed and discussed all elements of the *COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Guidelines for Non-Faculty Employees* to ensure all requirements can be met during the agreement period;
 - have read, understand, and agree to abide by the *COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Procedures for Non-Faculty Employees* in effect at the time of the agreement; and
 - understand that any deviation from the agreement must be approved with justification in writing by the supervisor.
- D. During the agreement period, full-time employees remain responsible for a regular 40-hour work week, and they are responsible for 8 hours of work (or the number of regularly scheduled work hours) for each virtual work day. Part-time employees remain responsible for the number of regularly scheduled work hours for each virtual work day during the agreement period.
- E. Employees must perform all virtual work at their official home address on file with the Office of Human Resources, and any exceptions during the agreement period must be documented and approved by the supervisor.

F. The supervisor is responsible for providing adequate supervision and monitoring performance to ensure the employee's productivity for all work performed in accordance with the Agreement.

G. ***Upon completion of the virtual work agreement period:***

The employee must certify on the [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Agreement for Non-Faculty Employees](#) that

- they have performed the virtual duties, as described in the agreement, in accordance with the employee's time worked as reported and approved via their biweekly web time entry/timesheet, and
- they have abided by all requirements of the agreement.

The supervisor must certify on the [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Agreement for Non-Faculty Employees](#) that

- they have sufficiently monitored the employee's productivity during the agreement period;
- they have abided by all requirements of the agreement; and
- the employee has performed the job duties in accordance with their time worked as reported and approved via biweekly web time entry.

POLICY REFERENCE

This COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Virtual Work Procedure for Non-Faculty Employees is in accordance with the College's [AD-005 Telecommuting policy](#). While the policy states an employee's normal work station is generally on the College's premises, or at another location when representing the College in accordance with the employee's job duties and position, telecommuting (virtual work) procedures may be implemented when in the best interest of the College as approved by the College Chancellor. **This procedure is in effect January 3, 2022, through January 30, 2022**, and may be extended as deemed necessary by the College Chancellor.

Attachments:

- COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work *Guidelines* for Non-Faculty Employees Effective January 3 – 30, 2022
- [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Agreement for Non-Faculty Employees: Effective January 3 – 30, 2022](#)

COVID-19 Temporary Part-time Virtual Work *Guidelines* for Non-Faculty Employees: Effective Dates January 3 – 30, 2022

Delgado Community College is committed to safely and effectively meeting the challenges presented by COVID-19. This resource will help supervisors and their teams navigate potential virtual working scenarios. These arrangements must be approved by the department head as per the College's [COVID-19 Temporary Virtual Work Procedures for Non-Faculty Employees \(link\)](#).

These *Guidelines* are designed to provide guidance for supervisors, employees, and departments designed to help set up temporary virtual work arrangements quickly and successfully.

1. What is virtual work?

Virtual work is a work arrangement in which some, or all, of the work is performed from an off-site location. In general, regular office hours are worked and deviations from that schedule require supervisor approval. Please refer to the *COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Virtual Work Agreement*.

2. Which factors should departments consider when determining if virtual work is possible?

- a. Operational requirements
- b. Security of work data
- c. Technological capabilities and equipment necessary to perform job duties
- d. Productivity
- e. Accuracy of records reflecting time worked by employees

3. Which jobs are suited for virtual work?

Virtual work is easiest to implement for jobs or tasks that require reading, writing, research, working with data and talking on the phone. In general, and at leadership's discretion, a job is suited to work virtually if the job or some components of it can be done off-site without disruption to the flow of work and communication.

4. Which jobs are not as well suited for virtual work?

It is not uncommon to require employees in positions needing in-person contact/customer service or that rely upon specific equipment or supplies to work on site.

5. What is most important for starting a productive virtual work arrangement?

Clearly outlined and executed virtual work arrangements can prove beneficial to employees and supervisors alike. Supervisors should articulate clear procedures regarding check-in times and hours of availability. With proper planning, communication problems can be minimized.

SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST FOR SUPPORTING TEMPORARY VIRTUAL WORK

Working virtually works best when employees and supervisors communicate clearly about expectations. The following checklist will help you establish a foundation for effective virtual working, continued productivity, and service.

1. Review technology needs and resources.

Identify technology tools employees use in their daily work and determine whether the resources will be accessible when working virtually. Also, ensure employees know how to access the appropriate technical support, should they need assistance. Confirm that employees know how to set up call forwarding and how to access their voicemail remotely.

- Determine which platform(s) you will use to communicate as a team, clarify expectations for online availability, test and confirm the employee has access to and proficiency with the technology tool(s) such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Conference calls. Your department may have additional tools or resources.

2. Review Work schedules

Be clear about expectations with employees maintaining their current work schedule and submitting their timesheet as normal.

3. Draft a work plan

Review the questions below with employees and work through answers together.

- What routine responsibilities/tasks cannot be fulfilled while working virtually and how will it impact operations or other people? What are ways to reduce any identified impacts?
- Are there cross-training opportunities to identify backup employees who can do essential work within and/or interdepartmental? Plan for employee absences.
- What key processes have been identified for each area/or department? Will there be specific platform access necessary to fulfill these processes?
- What routine responsibilities/tasks require regular communication and collaboration with others? Proactively contact each other to confirm how you will communicate while the employee is working virtually.
- Are there critical work activities that are vulnerable to the absence of a small number of key employees?
- Identify which teams or individuals have limited or no experience with virtual work.
- What training will be necessary for virtual work tools and technology?
- Identify and agree on priorities during this time.
- Often times employees experience fewer interruptions while working virtually. Are there any special projects, tasks, or online training that you can suggest while working virtually?
- What events or meetings are scheduled during the time in which the temporary virtual working arrangement is in place? Will they be postponed or canceled, or will they take place using technology?
- What follow-up should occur due to postponements or cancellations? What circumstances require on-site attendance?
- Identify employees who may need special requirements or currently have work accommodations, and plan accordingly.
- Provide resources or the process for technical support.

4. Make a communication and accountability plan

Supervisors should communicate to employees how often they should send updates on work plan progress and what those updates should include. Supervisors should also communicate how quickly they expect the employee to respond and the best ways for the employee to contact the supervisor while working virtually. Current performance standards are expected to be maintained by employees.

- If you normally visit employees at their desks, you can give them a call during this period. Maintain team meetings and one-to-one check-ins, altering the schedule if needed to accommodate any alternative schedules that have been approved.
- Conduct regular check-ins. Your employees will be eager for connection and information during the disruption, and the structure will help to create a positive routine. Every other day or weekly check-ins may be fine, so long as you are in contact frequently enough that your employees are in sync with you and/or with one another.
- Prepare an emergency communication plan. Identify key contacts (with backups), chains of communications for tracking business and employee statuses.

5. Be Positive

A positive attitude and a willingness to trust employees to effectively work virtually is key to making such arrangements successful and productive. Working virtually presents an opportunity for supervisors to become better managers. Instead of focusing on how many hours your employees are working, re-emphasize a focus on measuring results and reaching objectives—regardless of work arrangement. The employee's completed work product is the indicator of success, rather than direct observation. By focusing on the employee's work product, supervisors will improve their organizational abilities and their own skill in managing by objectives.

TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES TEMPORARILY WORKING VIRTUALLY

Employees often learn working virtually is different than they expected, and it requires specific skills and habits. The following tips will help employees work virtually:

1. Define your workspace.

Employees who are experienced in working virtually will tell you it is often difficult to stay focused. We are creatures of habit and most of us are used to our normal routines. Establishing a workspace, gives your brain a cue that it is time for work. You are expected to report to work as agreed upon with your supervisor in the *COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Virtual Work Agreement*.

2. Master the basics.

- Set up call forwarding and how to access your voicemail, if available. Know how to log in virtually into the DCC network and other online tools you use regularly.
- Use Zoom, Microsoft Team or Conference calls to stay connected to colleagues. Additional support for campus employees can be found at by contacting the OIT department.
- Plan for video calls/meetings by making sure you know how to turn on your computer's camera (if available) and microphone and being aware your colleagues may be able to see the background behind you.

3. Set daily goals, track them and share your progress.

You may be surprised by how differently the workday passes without the comings and goings of an office to break things up or influence what you do next. Consider starting each day of virtual work by writing down what you need to accomplish and then track your progress. Pay attention to how long tasks take you and start adjusting your daily goals to match your current rhythm. Update your email/voicemail/ location/calendar, etc. to indicate your work situation.

4. Eliminate distractions.

Working virtually can mean pets, children or a favorite hobby are only a few feet away. Depending on your living arrangement, you may need to hang a "do not disturb" sign so your family members don't interrupt you. Pets often need a closed door to keep them away and you might need headphones to block the noise.

5. Prioritize privacy.

Whether you are in a private or common area, take five minutes to assess the privacy of your workspace. Can someone see your computer screen? Are your windows open so that your neighbor can hear your phone calls? What information need to be secured when away from your workspace? Also, your personal privacy matters, make sure there is not anything visible during a video call you don't want others to see.

6. Remember Public Records Law.

Keep in mind the work employees do while working virtually, even on their personal devices is subject to the Public Records Act and other applicable regulations.

7. Continue to employ security best practices.

Situations like these are prime phishing opportunities. Remain vigilant for security concerns and be sure to report suspicious emails as recommended by the Delgado OIT Security Team. It should be noted that caution needs to be taken when dealing with HIPAA information while working virtually.