Telework for Managers: Work Assignments to Consider for Telecommuting Employees

Purpose
Telecommuting employees may not require 100% of the workweek to complete their telework duties. In addition, some employees may not be able to accomplish all their normally assigned tasks while telecommuting. Managers can assign several valuable and meaningful work assignments to individuals or teams when they are telecommuting and do not require 100% of the workweek to complete their main telework duties. Options and guidelines for assigning tasks that work well in the telework environment are provided below.

Guidelines for Identifying Work Assignment Options
Consider the knowledge, skills and abilities of the employee when determining which options are most appropriate.

Consider which tasks will contribute the most toward your agency's mission and objectives or department strategic plan.

Consult with HR for guidance and advice regarding the most appropriate and effective tasks to assign, if you have questions or concerns.

Work Assignment Options
The list of potential work assignment options below can be considered when identifying additional work conducive to the telework environment.
- **Document business processes**: employees can document the work process flows for the work they perform. This is invaluable information when assessing efficiency and identifying ways to streamline and /or improve existing business processes. A common format for documenting work process flows may be viewed here: https://www.quickbase.com/blog/how-to-document-your-current-processes-in-10-easy-steps
- **Update job resources**: employees can review the resources that help them perform their jobs to ensure they are accurate, up-to-date, and effective. Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Standard operating procedures (SOPs)
    - Alaska Administrative Manual (AAM)
    - State of Alaska regulations
    - Desk manuals
    - Websites (public facing as well as intranet sites)
    - Training modules and materials
    - Knowledge transfer materials (e.g., cheat sheets, job aids, resource lists, etc.)
- **Complete performance evaluations**: supervisors and mangers can ensure all performance evaluations are completed and up to date.

- **Develop performance metrics**: supervisors and managers can develop performance metrics for their sections and work units, using SMART goals. HR can assist supervisors and managers in learning how to develop SMART goals.
- **Update Position Descriptions**: employees can update their position descriptions; supervisors and managers can review PDs and assist direct reports with updating their position descriptions.
- **Identify competencies for positions**: consider the competencies required for positions and/or job classes unique to their department.
- **Clean up/Organize email**: employees can clean up their email inboxes and folders. Reduce email clutter that is stored on servers.
- **Develop vision, values, strategic plan**: employees can meet virtually to update or develop team, section, division's vision, values, strategic plan. Ensure these roll up to and align with department or agency mission and strategic plan.
- **Take free on-line classes or webinars:** employees can gain new skills or refresh existing knowledge and skills by taking job-related training from credible/approved sources. For example, an employee can improve their proficiency or learn a new software program that they use in their job (e.g., Excel, NeoGov, Power Point, etc.). Other training ideas include: IRIS HRM video tutorials; on-line training on how to create an ADA Title II self-evaluation. Ensure supervisors or managers approve the training before taking it.
- **Records clean-up:** employees can perform a number of tasks associated with records
  - Record retention schedule – review existing, applicable retention schedules to ensure they are accurate and up to date
  - Identify hard copy records that could be converted to electronic records / consider options for reducing hard copy records and making records and resources accessible electronically – this could be for public facing records or records/resources that are necessary to allow more employees to be able to telework
  - When reviewing records, consider the ROT concept and identify all information that could be removed because it is:
    - Redundant
    - Obsolete
    - Trivial
  - Recommendations to remove specific records will be reviewed and approved by a supervisor or manager before permanent removal action is taken
- **Prepare for upcoming activities:** employees can identify upcoming job duties that require preparation and planning. For example, a hiring manager could develop new interview questions and benchmarks, a project manager could identify milestones and resources needed for the next project, and all supervisors/managers can plan for their team's May employee appreciation event.
- **Increase job knowledge**: employees can catch up on professional reading so they stay on top of best practices and the latest information in their discipline/field.