Telework for Employees and

What is

Telework, working away from the official job site, at home or at an off-site telework center, can be done on a full-time or part-time basis, and is considered paid employment. Telework may be an option that will bring ease to your life and accommodate your disability. Through telework, current barriers to employment such as inadequate transportation, fatigue, inaccessible work environments, and the need for personal assistance, can be reduced and eliminated.

Telework is not telemarketing. Though a telemarketing job may be performed through working from home, so can other jobs that involve tasks which do not require your presence at the office or general worksite, such as emailing, teleconferencing, writing and researching.

Who Hires Telework-

You may be hired as a teleworker by an employer who often hires people with disabilities. For example, the Maryland National Guard Human Resources Office Full-Support Telework Policy lists the enhancement “of efforts to accommodate people with disabilities” as a main goal (https://www.md.ngb.army.mil). You may telework for your employer under an existing general policy, or as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if your employer does not have a teleworking policy.

How Do I Make a Request to Telework?

- Requesting to telework is a flexible, interactive process which begins with a request to your employer.
- You do not need to reference “Americans with Disabilities Act” or “reasonable accommodation” when you make this request, but should explain how your disability may interfere with your ability to do your job.
- Next, explain why you would like to telework. How will working from home remove limitations you may experience in the workplace?
- Your employer may request information about your disability, including reasonable documentation.
- Your employer may wish to discuss alternatives to full-time telework.
  — Can other accommodations be made so that you may work full-time at the workplace without barriers, or is teleworking the only effective option?
  — Based on the requirements of the job — such as level of face-to-face interaction with coworkers or clients, or level of access needed to certain documents — you and your employer can determine if you will be able to work from home full-time or part-time.
- You and your employer will also need to discuss how you will be supervised at home, and what your schedule will look like.

What If I Need Technology In Order to Telework?

- Employers who have telework policies will sometimes provide the technology employees need to telework.
- The Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) can sometimes provide technology that Marylanders with disabilities need to telework in a specific job. To contact the DORS office nearest you, go to [http://www.dors.state.md.us/DORS/AboutDORS/DORSLocations/default](http://www.dors.state.md.us/DORS/AboutDORS/DORSLocations/default) or call 1-888-554-0334. If you do not already have a case open with DORS, however, your services may delayed because of long waiting lists.
- You may apply for a loan from the WorkABILITY Loan Program ([http://www.mdtap.org](http://www.mdtap.org)) of the Maryland Technology Assistance Program / Maryland Department of Disabilities. The WorkABILITY Loan Program helps Maryland residents with disabilities qualify for low-interest loans to buy equipment to be able to telework or start small businesses. Though you are not guaranteed to get a loan, the program's criteria are much less stringent than banks’ criteria, and will enable many more people to obtain loans.

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**Information based on “Work at Home/Telework as a Reasonable Accommodation” fact sheet published by the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission, available online at: [http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/telework.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/telework.html).**

Know Your Rights: Telework and the Americans with Disabilities

- According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), employers are not required by the ADA to have a telework option for their employees. However, if an employer generally does offer telework to employees, this option must be extended to workers with disabilities.
- Employers who generally offer telework to all employees under a condition might be required under the ADA to waive this condition for workers with disabilities. For example, UMBC’s telework policy requires that employees may only participate in telework after having “a performance rating of ‘meets standards’ in previous and current year.” If a new employee with a disability makes a request to work at home, and can perform his or her job at home, the University may need to waive this condition to accommodate the new employee.
- If an employer allows a person with a disability to work from home, and does not have a telework policy, this is a reasonable accommodation under the ADA.
- An employer may, as a reasonable accommodation, allow an employee with a disability to telework only to the extent that the disability necessitates that he or she work from home. For example, the employer might allow the employee to telework only when his or her medical condition makes work in the office difficult or impossible, but may not allow the employee to telework at other times.
- Other reasonable accommodations may meet the needs of an employee with a disability and provide an alternative to telework. For example, if an employee preferred to work from home because of the paratransit schedule, the employer can adjust the employee’s work hours to match the schedule so that the employee can work at the official job site.

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**Resources**

**Maryland Department of Disabilities**
Voice / TTY: (410) 767-3660  
Voice / TTY: (800) 637-4113  
Email: mdod@maryland.gov  
Website: [www.mdod.maryland.gov](http://www.mdod.maryland.gov)

**Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP)**
Voice: 1-800-832-4827  
TTY: 1-866-881-7488  
Fax: 410-554-9237  
Website: [http://www.mtgap.org/DivisionofRehabilitationServices(DORS)/](http://www.mtgap.org/DivisionofRehabilitationServices(DORS)/)  
Voice / TTY: 888-554-334  
Website: [http://www.dors.state.md.us/dors](http://www.dors.state.md.us/dors)

**Online Job Recruiting for Telework Seekers**  
Phone: 606-215-7242  
Phone: 800-541-0627  
Website: [www.teleworkrecruiting.com](http://www.teleworkrecruiting.com)

**Telework Advisory Group for WorldatWork (Produces reports; Advances telework)**  
Phone: 877-951-9191, Option 7  
Press Office Email: hrhoderes@worldatwork.org  
Website: [www.workingfromanywhere.org/TeleworkConsortium (Works with agencies/businesses to develop telework programs)](http://www.workingfromanywhere.org/TeleworkConsortium)

**Telework Consortium**  
Website: [www.teleworkconsortium.org](http://www.teleworkconsortium.org)

**Telework for a Federal Government Agency**  
Website: [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov)

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**Telework for a Federal Government**

**Website:** [www.teleworkrecruiting.com](http://www.teleworkrecruiting.com)

**Phone:** 800-541-0627

**Website:** [http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/](http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/)

**Voice / TTY:** (800) 949-4232

**Email:** [hrhotline@worldatwork.org](mailto:hrhotline@worldatwork.org)

**Voice / TTY:** (301) 217-0124

**Website:** [www.adainfo.org](http://www.adainfo.org)

**Voice / TTY:** (800) 949-4232

**Email:** jillw@csmd.edu

**Website:** [www.teleworkcr.org](http://www.teleworkcr.org)

**Commuter Connections: Telework Employer Case Study, Macro International in Bethesda, Maryland**

**Website:** [http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/Telework%20Case%20Studies_072706%20MacroIntl.pdf](http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/Telework%20Case%20Studies_072706%20MacroIntl.pdf)

**Mid-Atlantic ADA Information Center: Disability and Technical Assistance Center**

**Voice / TTY:** (800) 762-2273

**Voice / TTY:** (301) 217-0124

**Website:** [http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/](http://www.mwcog.org/commuter/)