Guidance for Managing Remotely at Towson University
(Updated March 23, 2020)

- **STAY CONNECTED – KEEP IN TOUCH**
  - Clear and honest communication is VITAL for remote workers. Remote employees can’t just swing by your desk for conversation, so make sure you schedule time for check-ins and discussions. Phone or WebEx meetings create more of a connection than communicating solely via email. For more information about using WebEx for meetings, visit: https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/?utm_source=redirect&utm_content=webex
  - Connection doesn’t have to be just for business needs, either. Get creative with ways to build morale and connection with your team, like sharing fun photos or setting up dedicated “fun” chats.

- **BE AVAILABLE**
  - Establish the best way to get in touch with you. Do you prefer email, phone call, text message, or WebEx teams chat message? Make sure your team is aware of your preferences, and ask them about theirs. For more information about WebEx teams, visit: https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/teams.html

- **REMIND STAFF of LIMITED CAMPUS ACCESS**
  - Whenever possible, employees who are non-essential or sustainable should remain off campus. If an employee needs to visit campus to perform a specific task or to access their workstation, their supervisor should be notified in advance. As a supervisor, you should coordinate with your employees to limit the number of people in the same office at the same time. For more information about the temporary/episodic COVID-19 telework policy, please visit: https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/polices/tu-temporary-episodic-covid-19-telework-policy.pdf

- **BE RESPECTFUL, PATIENT and FLEXIBLE**
  - Working from home should only occur during your employees’ agreed upon work hours. There should be no expectation that employees will respond to communications outside of these hours. As their manager, you can also encourage work-life balance and assure them they do not need to work more than they normally do. They should still have boundaries between work-life and home-life.
  - Be as flexible as the work allows. During the current emergency situation, many employees are unexpectedly caring for children or other family, and may not have the dedicated workspace in their home to avoid interruptions from others in their household. If schedules can be flexed or altered while still maintaining the same level of student/customer service, flexibility is encouraged.
- **SET EXPECTATIONS**
  - Set expectations about what work is to be done. Most departments have activities that may need to be altered or temporarily put on hold. Make sure your team knows what work is to continue, what can wait, and what other work can be done in its place. This may be a great time to think about those projects and planning activities you’ve wanted to do but haven’t had time for.
  - How frequently would you like your employees to update you on their activities and progress? Make sure your team is clear on your expectations. Be careful to keep in touch, but without micromanaging. Checking in several times daily with employees may cause employees to feel like you don’t trust them.

- **PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY**
  - Be aware of documents and data that are confidential and need to be protected. Be sure to discuss with staff how to handle any confidential information/data they use or will be generated while working remotely.

- **MONITOR TIME RECORDED FOR WORK ACTIVITIES**
  - This is especially important for non-exempt staff who should be recording actual time worked. As a reminder, non-exempt staff should be paid for all time spent working on job related duties and activities. Please avoid unnecessary use of overtime (actual work performed in excess of 40 hours in a workweek), and be sure to follow up with any employees who enter overtime which was not discussed in advance.

- For additional information, view a webinar titled “Navigating your Work from Home Transition due to Coronavirus”, found in the ComPsych Coronavirus toolkit: https://pages.e2ma.net/pages/1807892/20932

Other resources:

- Staff technology resources for remote working: https://www.towson.edu/technology/facultystaff/support/staff-resources-closure.html
- OTS Self-help Learning Resources: https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/
- E-learning opportunities for all TU faculty and staff:
  - SkillSoft portal: https://marylandschools.skillport.com/skillportfe/login.action
    - Contact Jill Rice (jrice@towson.edu) if you are a new user and need access
  - LinkedIn Learning: https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/linkedin-learning.html
- Employee Assistance Program: Available to all TU faculty and staff. For more information, visit: https://www.towson.edu/hr/current/benefits/employee-assistance.html