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

STAY CONNECTED – KEEP IN TOUCH
- Check in at least once daily with your supervisor and/or coworkers. This can be done by phone, email, WebEx meeting, etc. Keeping in touch will not only help ensure progress on work, but will help you feel more connected and less isolated. For more information about using WebEx for meetings, visit:
  [https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/?utm_source=redirect&utm_content=webex](https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/?utm_source=redirect&utm_content=webex)
- If you are not clear about your remote assignments, ask for clarification of 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 you are clear on priorities...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 consider projects and activities you’ve wanted to do but haven’t had time for.

BE AVAILABLE...BUT BE RESPECTFUL
- If you are not using your own accrued leave time, you are expected to be available during work hours and responsive within a reasonable timeframe. If you must take time off for personal reasons during agreed upon work hours, you will need to notify your supervisor and use accrued leave to cover missed time. If you are unable to fill your work day due to lack of available work, please consult with your supervisor and refer to the timesheet guidance for instructions on how to report your time:
- Working from home doesn’t mean you are working a 24/7 schedule. Work should only occur during agreed upon work hours. There is no expectation that you will respond to communications outside of these hours. (NOTE: Non-Exempt staff should be careful to track and record actual hours worked on their timesheet during a period of teleworking.)
- Let your supervisor and coworkers know the best way to get in touch with you. Do you prefer email, phone call, text message, or WebEx teams chat message? Make sure you ask others how they prefer to be reached, too. For more information about WebEx teams, visit:
  [https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/teams.html](https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/webconferencing/webex/teams.html)
- Take advantage of Cloud based tools, such as Microsoft Onedrive. Documents can be easily uploaded, shared, and edited by team members. For more information, visit

LIMITED CAMPUS ACCESS
- Whenever possible, employees who are non-essential or sustainable should remain off campus. If you need to visit campus to perform a specific task or to access your workstation, your supervisor should be notified in advance. The visit to campus and the worksite should be limited to the time required for the specific task. For more information about the temporary/episodic COVID-19 telework policy, please visit:
TELEWORKING TIPS

○ MAINTAIN A WORK SCHEDULE AND ROUTINE
  ▪ Get up at the same time every day.
  ▪ While flexibility may be needed throughout the day, recognize and respect regular working hours.
  ▪ Start and end work at the same time.
  ▪ Experts suggest that following your normal morning routine (and getting dressed in normal work clothes) can help put you in the right mindset to be ready to work.

○ PLAN YOUR DAY
  ▪ Creating a daily to-do list and using an hourly planner to structure your day can help you stay productive and measure your progress.
  ▪ Try to set times when your family cannot/will not disturb you. During this unusual time, many are finding it stressful to balance work and family care. If you can find even an hour or two when you know you won’t be interrupted, it can help you focus and be more productive.

○ ESTABLISH YOUR WORKSPACE
  ▪ Find a place that is as quiet and as secluded as possible.
  ▪ Create a workspace where any non-digital files can be stored securely.
  ▪ Avoid any distractions such as a television, etc…
  ▪ Avoid multi-tasking of personal and work responsibilities. Keep your work time and your workspace separated as much as is practical and possible.

○ PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY
  ▪ Be aware of documents and data that are confidential and need to be protected. Be sure to discuss with your manager/supervisor how to handle any confidential information/data while working remotely.

○ SCHEDULE BREAKS AND DOWNTIME
  ▪ Be sure to schedule and take breaks...for meals and just to stretch and relax.
  ▪ Get outside for some fresh air or do something else that allows you to take a mental break from work.
  ▪ If you want to watch TV, do household chores or other personal business, make sure you plan time after work so you aren’t distracted by thinking about it all day.

○ BE REALISTIC
  ▪ Be mindful of maintaining work-life balance and try not to work more than you normally do just because you don’t physically leave your workspace like you would leave an office.
  ▪ If caring for others in your household, inform them of your need to respond to calls and meetings without distraction, so expectations are clear as far in advance as possible.
  ▪ Everyone is doing the best they can right now and if your day doesn’t go quite the way you planned it, you can always try again tomorrow. Don’t be too hard on yourself.

Other resources:

- 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
- 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