

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

few firms sit down to flesh out detailed policies for remote workers before their first virtual employee is in place. Typically, one valuable employee requests to work ...

Jim Boomer • May. 22, 2017



Remote work is a popular topic of discussion at many firms across the country. Yet few firms sit down to flesh out detailed policies for remote workers before their first virtual employee is in place. Typically, one valuable employee requests to work from home and soon more follow, either on a full-time or as-needed basis. Before long, the firm has several employees with a wide range of remote work situations, and somebody asks, “Should we have a formal policy for this?”

If your firm doesn't have official policies for remote work, now is the time to work on getting one in place. Here are a couple areas to consider.

What tech does the firm provide?

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

Who provides the tech is a critical question. Is your employee accessing client data on an operating system that hasn't been updated in a decade? Does the employee use firewalls or current antivirus software? Do other members of the household have access to that computer? Is the computer left in a vehicle when traveling or does the employee access client information while working on public networks? You may want to consider providing hardware and software that addresses all of these issues for remote workers or make firewalls, physical security and antivirus software part of your formal policy.

How will you remain connected?

This isn't about internet speed but about maintaining a connection between the remote workers and people in the office. One of the perks of remote work is being able to work flexible hours that accommodate personal and family responsibilities. But there should be a policy in place outlining hours the employee will be available and how quickly they respond to emails and phone calls. We also recommend investing in technology that will allow remote workers to collaborate and video conference for "face-to-face" communication.

Who is eligible for remote work?

The fact is that not every employee has the discipline to work remotely and remain productive on a long-term basis. Furthermore, some positions in the firm just don't lend themselves to remote work. Your policies should outline who is eligible to work remotely. Do employees have to earn the right after demonstrating their work ethic in the office? Or will new hires be able to take advantage right away? Also, consider a scenario in which an employee who has been allowed to work remotely isn't meeting expectations. What is the policy for bringing remote workers back into the office?

How will remote work be measured?

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

would in the office. Will they continue to be promoted? Or will their career stagnate when they are “out of sight, out of mind?”

If your firm hasn't started addressing remote work policies, it's time to give these questions some thought. Your ability to attract and retain the best employees depends on your ability to offer flexible work arrangements. And the cost of making remote work arrangements successful pales in comparison to losing a valuable employee.

Jim Boomer is CEO of [Boomer Consulting](#), Inc.

Firm Management • Technology

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved