Pre-pandemic telework at NIST

- Different levels of support across the organization

- Agreements inconsistent across OUs

- Dependent on the nature of the work (bench scientist/science advisor/administrative)

Best practice for building a telework program

NIST

Plan pilot

- Gain management support
- Build diverse planning team
- Outline expectations for telework
- Determine what successful telework looks like
- Gather pre-assessment data

Run pilot

- Train managers and staff
- Set expectations
- Provide necessary hardware and software
- Launch

Gather and review results

- Conduct post-pilot assessment
- Review and share data and conclusions
- Determine outcome (expansion or termination)

COVID-19 forced NIST into
a maximum telework situation
(ultimate pilot program)

Employees have shown they can be
**productive** and **trusted** while working
remotely

# Telework and Remote Work are here to stay

NIST

The Biden administration is expected to release federal telework guidance in **June 2021**
A flexible and forward-leaning strategy aligned with organizational needs will ensure NIST's competitiveness

Post-pandemic telework offers a great opportunity for federal agencies:

- *Government officials are moving to make a pandemic experiment permanent by allowing more employees than ever to work from home.*

- *Collectively, the federal government has an opportunity for a 'leap frog' moment to shape the future of work.*

- *Abroad rethinking of the federal workplace to include remote and virtual options brings big positives … by appealing to younger workers in particular and helping employers expand their talent pool.*
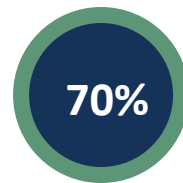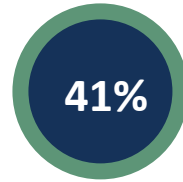
70% of workers want flexible remote work options to continue
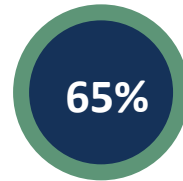
65% of workers are craving more in-person time with their teams
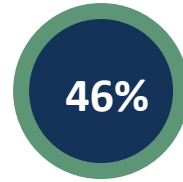
46% of the global workforce says they're likely to move because they can now work remotely

41% of the global workforce is considering leaving their employer this year

Benefits and considerations:

- *Remote work has created new job opportunities for some, offered more family time, and provided options for whether or when to commute.*

- *There are also challenges ahead. Teams have become more siloed and digital exhaustion is real and unsustainable.*

- *A thoughtful approach to hybrid work will be critical for attracting and retaining diverse talent.*

Federal example: USDA will allow employees to telework up to 4 days per week, expanded use of virtual and remote duty stations, and more flexible schedules in its post-pandemic workplace.

Effecting change through policy and strategy
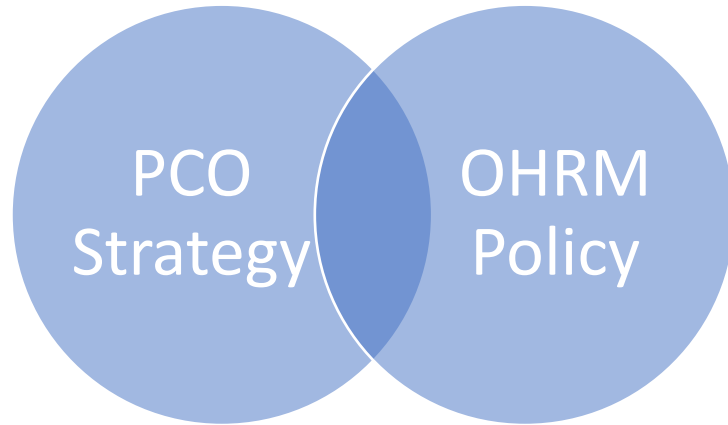
PCO Strategy
- Addresses culture expectations
- Provides examples of effective use of telework
- Sets eight principles for telework

OHRM Policy
- Outlines rules
- Includes approval forms

Together, the OHRM policy and PCO strategy:

- Provides consistent guidance for telework across the organization

- Encourages flexibility to allow for efficient equipment sharing in the laboratory programs

- Allows for hiring highly qualified individuals

- Cultivates a more diverse and inclusive workforce

- Improves NIST's ability to recruit and retain a highly qualified workforce

NIST PCO Telework Strategy: Key Principles

NIST

NIST will be a forward-leaning, telework friendly organization

NIST staff may telework with dependents in the home

NIST will ensure teleworking staff have access to adequate IT resources to work effectively

Staff schedules should be transparent and consider individual as well as organizational needs

Workspace is at the discretion of the employee

A recall time should be set that is fair and reasonable

Leadership must be prepared and equipped to manage a mixed onsite and telework workforce

All meetings will enable virtual attendance

Strategy in Developing New Telework and Remote Work Policies

- Tangible policy changes needed to effectively compete for talent

- Feedback gathered by PCO helped inform policy direction

- Goal to increase flexibility and address current policy gaps

- Draft policies reviewed by multiple customer and stakeholder groups (*DOC Human Resources, DOC General Counsel, NIST Leadership, and NIST Operations Advisory Committee*)

- Policies sent to NIST Directives Review Board on May 4

- Implementation of new policies scheduled for October 1

- Vendor-led training for supervisors on leading hybrid teams

Telewerk versus Remote Work

	Telework	Remote Work
Definition	When an employee performs work from an alternative worksite	When an employee performs work from an alternative worksite outside the locality pay area of the NIST worksite*
PT/FT	Part-Time or Full-Time	Full-Time
Duty Station	NIST worksite	Employee's residence
HR Impacts	None	Changing an employee's official duty station may impact pay, Reduction-In-Force competitive area, travel reimbursement, and unemployment compensation
Approving Official	First line supervisor	OU Director

*locality pay area: geographic area that serves as basis for setting pay

New Remote Work Policy

- Prior to COVID, few employees at NIST had remote duty stations. Approval criteria was rigid and OHRM retained approval authority.

- New policy provides OUs with approval authority and greater flexibility in establishing remote positions for recruitment or retention purposes.

- New policy also offers many considerations for management and employees to inform decisions

- Will improve NIST's ability to recruit expanded and more diverse applicant pools

- Will also improve NIST's ability to retain high performers