



ARAP

Accountability, Rule of law and
Anti-Corruption Programme

Telecommuting

IN THE TIME OF COVID19

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Telecommuting:

Telecommuting plays an important role in protecting ARAP CU staff and ensuring ARAP's ability to deliver. In order to take appropriate account of our obligations, ARAP intends to establish all prerequisites for the establishment of telecommuting to maintain business-critical work flows (work continuity). As we are all working from home, video conferencing tools have become even more important than before.

MESSAGES:

1. Consider your Home Office as a Virtual Office

It is only a matter of perception that prevents people from performing well at home. If you aren't working from your office, this shouldn't affect your productivity because the only thing different is the way you communicate with your colleagues, customers, and partners. In fact, you are still with them, virtually though. That's not such a big change only the way you perceive it.

2. Setup a Workstation

If you haven't set up a proper workstation at home, you would miss the regular working environment. That's why some people are not as productive when working from home. To deal with it, set up your home office just like your workplace to feel more connected to work. Working from your bed or sofa is not ideal for ensuring productivity. Make sure to include a facility at your home office from a desktop, a good chair, internet connection, power source, video camera (if not built into your laptop), headset and of course enough light to look good on camera.

3. Define your WorkSpace

They say the home is where the heart is, but I think it is also where your family is. So, whether you live with family and kids or roommates, you need to define your workspace if you want to get things done without disturbing others or being disturbed yourself. After all, you would also need a quiet environment for working and others would need their privacy too. Dedicating a room or an area for work will enhance your productivity too.

4. Use Technology to Virtually Meet your Team Regularly

The only thing that bothers workers when they work from home is losing connection with their team. However, given the technological advancement, working remotely without compromising quality of teamwork or communication is not difficult anymore. So, stay in contact with your team and follow all necessary work.

5. Get the right license and software downloaded

5.1 Which tool to use? Where can I find more information on Zoom, GotoMeeting, WebEx, or other platforms?

You can check any of this links:

- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/>
- GotoMeeting: <https://www.gotomeeting.com/en-gb>
- WebEx: <https://www.webex.com/>
- Lifesize: <https://www.lifesize.com/>

5.2 How to invite external partners to the meeting?

- For any of the tools mentioned before, you can invite people external to your organisation.
- The invitation will give the receiving person instructions about calling in. On a Windows 10 or macOS device, guests can participate in a meeting with a modern browser (e.g. Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome). On mobile devices (Android and iOS), they have to have to install the mobile app to join a meeting.

5.3 How to make meetings productive?

- Use virtual backgrounds (image or video) to hide chaos: When having a video conversation, a professional virtual background can help people get the needed professional impression from you. Moreover, it has a unique psychological impact on your entire thought process as you instantly get into work mode.
- Don't forget to temporarily unmute: In large meetings it is better to stay unmute just in case your dog barks or someone rings your doorbell.
- Screen sharing: It's easy to share your screen and collaborate with any platform. It's great for highly collaborative teams.

5.4 Prepare Well for Video Communication

Work from home largely involves having video conversations with your team or customers. This means, people will see you, which is great as it helps to create the same environment as you would have at your workplace. But you should be prepared for it. Get the most feasible equipment to make disruption-free video calls such as a good quality webcam and headset, enough lighting to ensure a clear view of your face, and as mentioned above a decent virtual background.

6. To-Do lists and Calendar Blockers

More than the workplace, making to-do lists and calendar marking is important when you are working from home. That's because you are all by yourself and have more responsibilities on your shoulders. So, ideally, your day should start with reviewing your to-do list and marking your tasks of the day on the calendar. This will help you stay focused and work more purposefully.

7. Communicate your availability

Publish your calendar so others can see it and quickly understand your commitment. You can block off time for work on projects, set reminders for important tasks, and even reserve a time to get dinner started.

8. Eliminate distractions

Shut the door to give yourself some privacy and separation, especially at home. Even hanging a curtain to separate your space can help. You'll also want to close tabs and pause notifications so you're not tempted to constantly check social media. Even setting a 10-minute meeting or two throughout your day to specifically check your feeds can give you a break and something to look forward to.

9. Dressing professionally

Don't give yourself the liberty to dress too casually or informally considering you are at home and not the workplace. As I mentioned above, it is all about perception. In the morning, dress up professionally as if you are going to the office. It is particularly important when having video calls as it will help you look professional. More importantly, it will put you in the right mindset and you will be able to focus better on the job.

10. Give yourself a Break

Believe it or not, working from home can take a toll on your nerves and energy levels. You have to be constantly available online to have video calls, attend virtual meetings, send out emails timely, and ensure everything works perfectly. Working from home is a lot more intense; you will miss the brief interactions with your colleagues at the coffee machine, which help you feel relaxed. To deal with this, you need to give yourself a break at regular intervals. Free your mind and take the dog for an extra walk (your dog will love it!), put in that load of laundry, or spend 15 minutes with the kids (they'll love it, too!).

11. Stretch!

Stop your video and stretch yourself a little bit every hour. Take a lap around the kitchen in between calls or use a lacrosse ball or massager on your back to stave off the kinks. Or make it more fun and use a virtual video workout background and get your reps in during a meeting!

12. Avoid isolation & loneliness

Many people need that personal contact with their team, so it's helpful to have daily team stand-ups and check-ins. You can even set up a "group lunch" with your colleagues over any platform. Talk live or disable the audio and chat with the group or 1-on-1 privately, whatever helps you get the conversation and connection you need.