

An Evaluation of Federal Telework Policies: Summary Report

June 2010

Report presented by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to Participating Executive Branch Agencies

DISCUSSION DRAFT

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Background.....	3
Methodology.....	3
Checklist Development.....	4
Checklist Instrument.....	4
Evaluation Process.....	4
Results.....	5
Results by Checklist Objective.....	5
Objective 1: Policy Clarity and Usability.....	5
Objective 2: Policy Support for Effective Programs.....	7
Summary and Next Steps.....	13
Appendix A: Telework Policy Evaluation Checklist.....	15
Appendix B: Guidelines for Telework Policy Evaluations.....	21

Introduction

Recognizing that telework is good for agencies, employees, communities and the environment, Director John Berry, U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), announced an initiative in the spring of 2009 to increase the availability and effectiveness of telework programs throughout the Federal Government. As part of this initiative, Director Berry established an interagency Telework Advisory Group (a.k.a. advisors) in part to develop and lead a systematic evaluation of Federal telework policies. Executive Branch agencies were asked to submit their telework policies to OPM and 72 department-level policies were returned for review. The policies were evaluated through the combined efforts of the advisors, OPM's Work/Life and Wellness group, and Human Capital Officers. This summary report is intended to provide agencies with background and comparative highlights of results from the overall evaluation. Individual feedback reports, combined with results in this summary, will provide agencies with information to strategically target efforts to improve telework policies, providing the foundation for more effective telework programs.

Background

Telework is made available to many Federal Government employees largely as a result of its acknowledged benefits for agencies and individual employees. Examples of benefits include increased productivity, decreased stress, improved work-life balance, and attraction and reduced turnover of high-quality employees. The purpose of the telework policy evaluation was to assist agencies in their efforts to ensure that policies provide the foundation for effective telework programs, maximizing the potential for agency benefits.

Agencies are required to have telework policies by Public Law 106-346. However, policy content varies depending upon unique agency missions and cultures, and it is not possible to prescribe a situation that makes an exhaustive set of criteria relevant to all agency telework policies and programs. There are, however, specific factors that an effective policy should be expected to address. These factors are spelled out and included among criteria forming the Telework Policy Evaluation Checklist (Checklist) developed for the policy review.

Methodology

The Telework Advisory Group was initiated in June 2009 and is composed of recognized leaders in Federal telework. Advisors represent Cabinet-level and independent agencies, both large and small. Member agencies include the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, OPM, Department of Homeland Security, General Services Administration (GSA), Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Advisors engaged in a rigorous, systematic process to develop the Checklist with the primary goal of ensuring usable Federal policies that convey information essential to achieving effective telework programs. Development of the Checklist was guided and framed by two essential objectives:

- (1) *the policy must be clearly understood and easily used; and*
- (2) *the policy must incorporate criteria fundamental to the development and support of an effective telework program.*

Checklist Development

Development of the Telework Policy Evaluation Checklist began with an extensive review of policy evaluation methods and telework research, as well as examination of telework policy websites to identify local/State government and for-profit best practices. The Checklist was subjected to extensive review and revision throughout its development. OPM experts in telework policy and program implementation reviewed drafts of the Checklist, as did experts in agencies represented by advisors, including GSA and DoD. OPM leadership, OPM's Center for Workforce Relations and Accountability Policy, and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, also reviewed and commented upon drafts of the Checklist. After each review, suggested improvements were incorporated in the document.

Before being used to evaluate policies, the Checklist was also subjected to rigorous testing. Advisors tested application of the draft Checklist with four Federal policies. Test policies were selected to represent various types of agencies (small and large), as well as different types of policies (short, long, with computer links and with multiple appendices). OPM Human Capital Officers were also asked to test the Checklist against a Federal telework policy and submit any suggestions for review. Comments made after each test were used to improve the Checklist.

Checklist Instrument

The resulting Checklist instrument (see Appendix A) is comprised of 41 criteria organized to allow assessment of the two guiding evaluation objectives. Seven questions address telework policy clarity and usability (Objective 1). The remaining criteria allow evaluation of the extent to which policies address factors fundamental to the development and support of an effective telework program, such as sufficient information to effectively implement the telework program as well as sustain program success (Objective 2).

Each criterion in the Checklist is rated on a standardized scale with possible ratings of Low, Medium, High, Missing, and Not Applicable (N/A). The Checklist template in appendix A includes definitions of ratings. Completed Checklists include a summary of favorable scores, defined as a combination of Medium and High ratings. In addition, space for evaluator comments is included at the end of each section. During policy review, evaluators used the comment space to provide reasons for any low ratings, as well as suggestions for improvement.

Evaluation Process

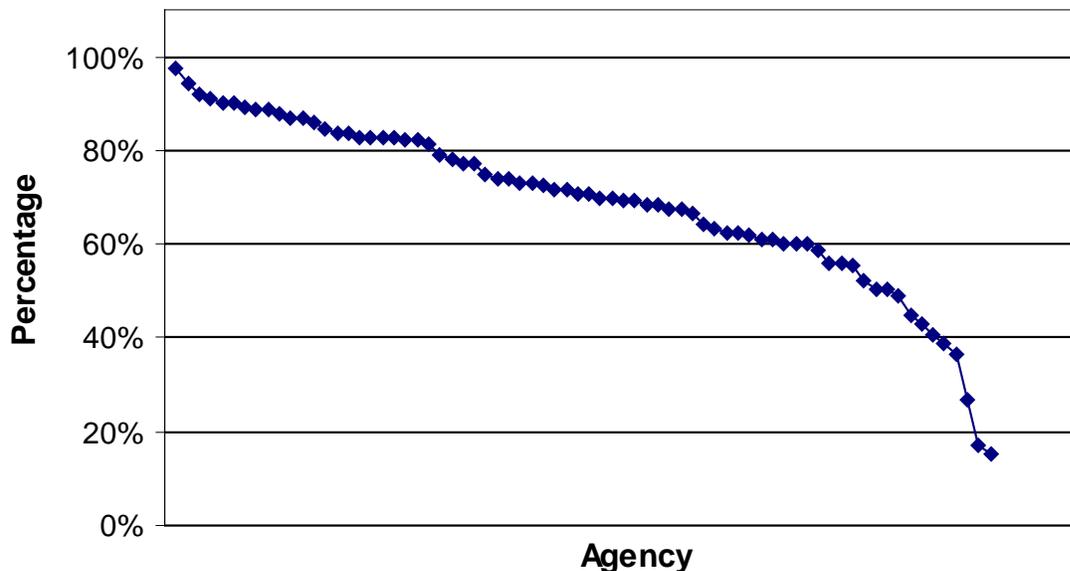
Evaluations were conducted by OPM's Human Capital Officers – practitioners skilled in Human Capital management assessment. They were trained in use of the Checklist through instrument review and a practice test. Developers of the Checklist were also available to answer any questions that arose throughout the review.

Results

Each policy could receive a maximum of 123 points on the Checklist. Total scores for completed evaluations ranged from a high of 120 to a low of 19, with an average of 84.75. Note that in some instances, the policies sent to OPM were actually memoranda or similar documents. Very low scores typically reflected the incomplete state of the submitted policy.

No policy received 100% of all possible points. However, several came quite close as shown in Figure 1. Percentage of total points awarded policies are shown in descending order and ranged from a high of 99% to a low of 15%. The average was 69%.

Figure 1: Score Percentages by Agencies



Results by Checklist Objective

Detailed results by objective provide a particularly useful comparative tool for agencies seeking Governmentwide benchmarks for understanding policy ratings. This section provides percentages of overall ratings within each score level (Low, Medium, High and Missing), as well as percentage of score levels for each criterion under each objective.

Objective 1: Policy Clarity and Usability

In developing the Checklist, advisors emphasized that an important first step toward building program participation was to ensure clear, usable and easily understood telework policies. Objective 1 of the Checklist includes criteria for assessing these aspects of policies. As demonstrated in Figure 2 below, 75% of the criteria in this section received a “high” rating for all policies. Very few received a “low” score (7%).

Figure 2: Distribution of Rating Scores for Objective 1

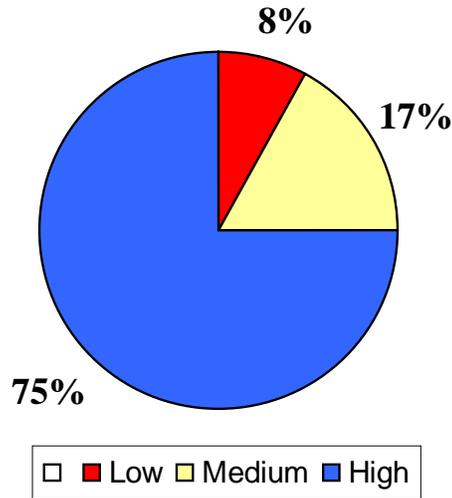


Table 1 details scores by each individual criterion included in Objective 1. Note that criteria numbered 1 through 5 received a greater percentage of “high” scores than did criteria 6 and 7. In fact, approximately 21% of all the scores for criterion 6 and criterion 7 were rated as “low,” suggesting that some Federal telework policies were not written or organized in a manner to provide a useful resource to teleworkers/future teleworkers or their managers.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Scores for Evaluation Criteria under Objective 1

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
1. uses concrete, familiar words, not jargon, unexplained abbreviations, or difficult terms.	Count		2	4	66
	Percent		2.8%	5.6%	91.7%
2. avoids ambiguous terms.	Count		1	6	65
	Percent		1.4%	8.3%	90.3%
3. avoids redundancies.	Count			11	61
	Percent			15.3%	84.7%
4. is organized logically.	Count		5	7	60
	Percent		6.9%	9.7%	83.3%
5. uses no more than three levels for organizing content.	Count	2		6	64
	Percent	2.8%		8.3%	88.9%
6. overall is constructed and written to provide a useful resource to the employee who wants to/does telework.	Count		15	25	32
	Percent		20.8%	34.7%	44.4%
7. overall is constructed and written to provide a useful resource to managers of current/future teleworkers.	Count		15	29	28
	Percent		20.8%	40.3%	38.9%

Noted above, percentage of favorable scores (*i.e.* a combination of Medium and High ratings) was summarized for both main sections and reported on each completed agency Checklist. In this instance, one agency (1%) received a favorable rating on just one criterion for this first objective. Fifty-seven agencies (79%) received favorable scores on all seven criteria.

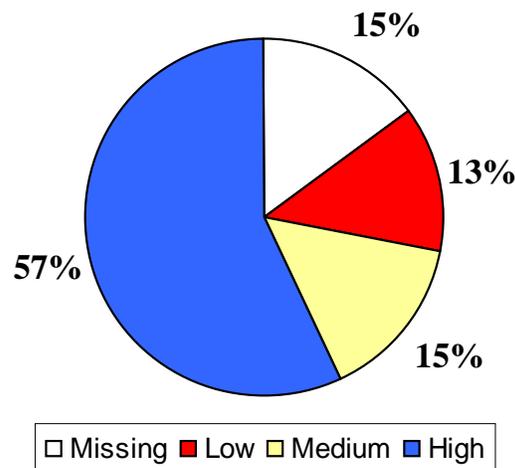
Objective 2: Policy Support for Effective Programs

Objective 2 criteria consider whether agency policies incorporate factors/information fundamental to the development and support of an effective telework program. The 34 criteria are divided into 3 subsections (2A, 2B, 2C). Results are presented by each subsection.

2A: Program Implementation Support

Section A under Objective 2 contains criteria designed to assess whether the information included in policies is adequate to support telework program implementation (e.g., definitions for program parameters, references to key source documents, standards for program eligibility). As shown in Figure 3, just over half (57%) of the 15 criteria developed to assess Objective 2A were rated as “high” for Federal telework policies. Unlike previous Objective 1 scoring, several Objective 2A criteria were assessed as “missing,” indicating that some criteria were completely unaddressed in the policies, although evaluators perceived them to be relevant (and consequently not scored “N/A”). Additionally, it should be noted that a greater percentage of rated policies received a “low” score for Objective 2A (13%) as compared with Objective 1 criteria (8%).

Figure 3: Distribution of Rating Scores for Objective 2A



Examining the score spread for individual criteria listed in Table 2 is instructive. While a fairly large percentage of criteria in Objective 2A were assessed favorably (*i.e.*, 92% received a “high” or “medium” score), there are several instances in which information critical to program success were rated “low” or “missing.” For example, more than 20% of policies did not clearly emphasize that telework is an “arrangement established first and foremost to facilitate work,”

and more importantly, inadequately identified “aspects of the employment arrangement that may change as a result of full-time telework arrangements (e.g., salary, benefits).”

Some of the missing information is vital to program implementation and even, ultimately, agency success. For example, the critical relationship between Continuity of Operations (COOP)/pandemic and telework is not clearly referenced in over a third of policies. Also, telework is a reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities, and more policies should address this fact.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Scores for Evaluation Criteria under Objective 2A

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
1. includes a statement of purpose.	Count	2	12	14	44
	Percent	2.8%	16.7%	19.4%	61.1%
2. contains clear definitions: telework, eligibility, official worksite/duty station, alternative worksite/location.	Count	2	12	21	37
	Percent	2.8%	16.7%	29.2%	51.4%
3. references governing telework statute (Public Law 106-346).	Count	19	2		51
	Percent	26.4%	2.8%		70.8%
4. provides access (e.g., link) for references made to internal or external sources.	Count	9	13	14	36
	Percent	12.5%	18.1%	19.4%	50.0%
5. identifies who is covered.	Count	2	7	11	52
	Percent	2.8%	9.7%	15.3%	72.2%
6. states that, except under special circumstances (e.g., emergencies), employee participation in a telework arrangement is voluntary.	Count	8	4	10	50
	Percent	11.1%	5.6%	13.9%	69.4%
7. emphasizes that telework is an arrangement established first and foremost to facilitate work.	Count	1	16	17	38
	Percent	1.4%	22.2%	23.6%	52.8%
8. includes information about how to identify telework eligible positions.	Count	6	8	13	45
	Percent	8.3%	11.1%	18.1%	62.5%
9. references agency emergency policies (e.g., COOP, pandemic).	Count	25	10	13	24
	Percent	34.7%	13.9%	18.1%	33.3%
10. references agency IT guidelines.	Count	10	11	11	40
	Percent	13.9%	15.3%	15.3%	55.6%
11. references Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA).	Count	14	1	3	54
	Percent	19.4%	1.4%	4.2%	75.0%
12. includes information about using telework as a reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities - Rehabilitation Act, 1973.	Count	31	12	6	23
	Percent	43.1%	16.7%	8.3%	31.9%

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
13. highlights importance of employee safety while working at an alternative worksite/location.	Count	4	9	12	47
	Percent	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%	65.3%
14. identifies aspects of the employment arrangement that do <u>not</u> change as a result of participation in telework (e.g., leave, hours of duty).	Count	5	7	8	52
	Percent	6.9%	9.7%	11.1%	72.2%
15. identifies aspects of the employment arrangement that may change as a result of full-time telework arrangements (e.g., salary, benefits).	Count	23	12	13	11
	Percent	39.0%	20.3%	22.0%	18.6%

For comparative purposes, percentage of favorable scores was again calculated for this subsection 2A. Three agencies (4%) received favorable ratings on 2 criteria, and 9 agencies (12.5%) received favorable ratings on all 15 criteria.

Objective 2B: Clarity of Participant Responsibilities

Criteria under Section B for Objective 2 are intended to assess whether policies adequately outline the responsibilities of telework program participants. Criteria address the extent to which the roles of stakeholders necessary to the success of telework programs (e.g., managers, employees, telework coordinators) are clearly defined.

As shown in Figure 4, 64% of Objective 2B criteria received a favorable score of “high” or “medium,” with 17% rated as “low.” In this instance, the percentage of criteria scored as “low” or “missing” shows an increase when compared with prior Objective 2A criteria (low scores: 17% vs. 13% and missing: 19% vs. 15%).

Figure 4: Distribution of Rating Scores for Objective 2B

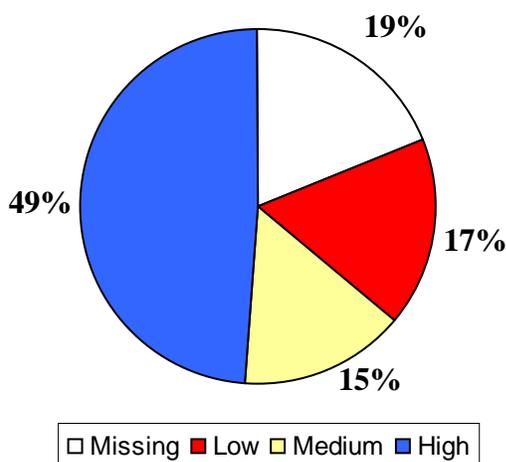


Table 3 reveals that relatively few Federal telework policies define coordinator responsibilities, important information for managers seeking to fully understand program resources. A relatively large percentage of policies (36%) also fail to clearly outline responsibilities for critical record keeping and reporting functions. Further, an essential ingredient to the success of any program is a clear understanding on the part of teleworkers of their responsibility to ensure that “the arrangement does not have any negative impact on the work of other work group members (e.g., coworkers, managers).” This information is either missing or poorly communicated in 43% of reviewed Federal telework policies.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Scores for Evaluation Criteria under Objective 2B

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
1. defines responsibilities of supervisors/managers.	Count	4	11	14	43
	Percent	5.6%	15.3%	19.4%	59.7%
2. defines responsibilities of teleworking employees.	Count	4	7	10	51
	Percent	5.6%	9.7%	13.9%	70.8%
3. defines responsibilities of telework coordinator/ telework program manager.	Count	30	10	6	22
	Percent	44.1%	14.7%	8.8%	32.4%
4. emphasizes teleworker responsibilities to ensure the arrangement does not have any negative impact on the work of other work group members (e.g., coworkers, managers).	Count	14	17	9	32
	Percent	19.4%	23.6%	12.5%	44.4%
5. outlines what support/materials/equipment the agency <i>may</i> provide for teleworkers (e.g., computer, phone, supplies).	Count	6	13	12	41
	Percent	8.3%	18.1%	16.7%	56.9%
6. outlines what support/materials/equipment the agency <i>will not</i> provide for teleworkers (e.g., computer, phone, supplies).	Count	9	13	13	37
	Percent	12.5%	18.1%	18.1%	51.4%
7. assigns responsibilities for record keeping/reporting requirements for overall program (for example, annual telework report to Congress).	Count	26	12	13	21
	Percent	36.1%	16.7%	18.1%	29.2%

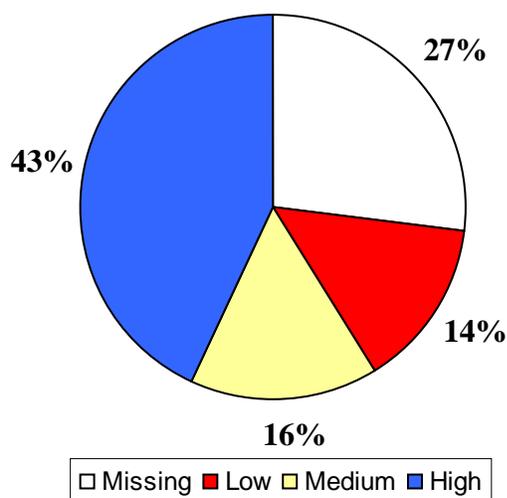
Again for sake of comparison, percentage of favorable scores was calculated for subsection 2B. Six agencies (8%) did not receive a favorable rating on any of the subsection criteria, while nine agencies (12.5%) received favorable ratings on all seven criteria. The largest percentage of agencies, 33% (24), received favorable ratings on 5 criteria in 2B.

Objective 2C: Telework Program Operations Support

Section C under Objective 2 assesses the extent to which policies fully support program operations. Criteria detail day-to-day activities and information needed to sustain effective telework programs (e.g., details procedures for establishing a telework agreement, outlines expected communication practices, describes any training requirements).

Evident in Figure 5, criteria listed under Objective 2C received the lowest percentage of favorable scores, and more than a quarter of listed criteria are not addressed in Federal policies. This is a critical point given responses to a January 2010 blog established to examine barriers to telework and hosted on www.telework.gov. A number of Federal managers reported unsuccessful attempts to obtain necessary daily operations information as a major barrier to establishing and maintaining successful telework programs. Given this finding, it is important that agencies improve policies and more thoroughly address day-to-day operations.

Figure 5: Distribution of Rating Scores for Objective 2C



As expected, review of scores on individual criteria show a high proportion of "missing" scores. Evident in Table 4, a large percentage of policies failed to:

- describe an appeals process for telework denials (47%);
- emphasize the importance of equal work treatment/opportunities for teleworkers (46%);
- identify agency training requirements for teleworkers (51%) or teleworker managers (53%);
- identify procedures for changing telework agreements (22%); or
- require any periodic review of telework agreements (32%).

Further, continuous feedback mechanisms such as evaluation, are critical to the effectiveness of any type of program. Notably, over half of policies either failed to include (21%) or made inadequate provision (30%) for "record keeping/reporting/evaluation" of their telework programs.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage of Scores for Evaluation Criteria under Objective 2C

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
1. describes procedures for establishing a telework arrangement (e.g., application, approval levels).	Count	2	6	12	50
	Percent	2.9%	8.6%	17.1%	71.4%

<i>The telework policy ...</i>		Missing	Low	Medium	High
2. describes appeals process for telework denial (e.g. normal grievance or separate procedures).	Count	32	6	5	25
	Percent	47.1%	8.8%	7.4%	36.8%
3. establishes that the performance of teleworkers will be evaluated consistent with the agency's regular performance management system.	Count	12	8	13	38
	Percent	16.9%	11.3%	18.3%	53.5%
4. emphasizes that teleworkers will receive the same treatment/opportunities as non-teleworking employees (e.g., work assignments, awards and recognition, development opportunities, promotions).	Count	33	19	12	7
	Percent	46.5%	26.8%	16.9%	9.9%
5. addresses telework communication.	Count	5	14	12	40
	Percent	7.0%	19.7%	16.9%	56.3%
6. identifies agency requirements for teleworker/employee training.	Count	36	8	5	22
	Percent	50.7%	11.3%	7.0%	31.0%
7. identifies agency requirements for supervisor/manager training.	Count	38	7	6	20
	Percent	53.5%	9.9%	8.5%	28.2%
8. addresses unexpected contingencies that could impact the telework arrangement (e.g., emergency closure at worksite, illness).	Count	8	4	14	45
	Percent	11.3%	5.6%	19.7%	63.4%
9. identifies procedures for changing telework arrangements (e.g., schedules, locations).	Count	16	9	12	34
	Percent	22.5%	12.7%	16.9%	47.9%
10. requires that the telework agreement be reviewed at regular intervals.	Count	23	9	9	30
	Percent	32.4%	12.7%	12.7%	42.3%
11. describes procedures for terminating or withdrawing from a telework agreement.	Count	7	10	17	37
	Percent	9.9%	14.1%	23.9%	52.1%
12. includes record keeping/reporting/evaluation requirements for overall telework program.	Count	15	21	17	18
	Percent	21.1%	29.6%	23.9%	25.4%

Again, an examination of favorable ratings for 2C shows that no criteria received a favorable rating in four agencies (6%). Six agencies (8%) received favorable ratings for all twelve criteria.

Summary and Next Steps

Results at several levels provide an encouraging picture of the state of Federal telework policies. Policies overall tend to provide clear and understandable tools for communicating telework program parameters, and a number of individual agency policies received consistently high scores overall. In fact, a few agency policies may be considered “models” in that they include nearly all of the factors judged as fundamental to telework program success.

However, the results also indicate that a number of policies fail to offer the useful, practical guidance needed and expected by teleworkers, future teleworkers and their managers. A detailed analysis of sections and criteria under the two primary Checklist objectives reveal a number of common trouble-spots in agency telework policies. In particular, evaluators noted inadequacies in the extent to which policies provide the details and guidance that managers need to effectively establish and support daily program operations. This finding is noteworthy when considered together with results of the recent *Ideation Challenge* (i.e., a structured blog hosted on www.telework.gov) for which a number of participating managers described inadequate guidance for program implementation and maintenance as chief barriers to telework. To address these concerns, agencies should insert content into the policies for evaluation criteria rated as “missing” or improving those rated as “low” in subsections 2B and 2C of the Checklist.

For agency leaders and telework coordinators seeking to improve their own telework policies, next steps should include a review of the individual agency’s policy evaluation results. Compare the overall ratings received for each group of criteria with Governmentwide scores provided in this summary report. Decisions on where to concentrate improvement efforts might begin with a focus on those sections where comparison reveals that the agency received lower overall scores than shown in Governmentwide benchmarks.

A review of results for overall sections can suggest broad policy improvements. Determinations for *specific* policy changes should be guided by scores on individual criteria in the Checklist. The interagency group that assembled the Checklist (i.e., the advisors) agreed that criteria reflect fundamental elements that should be included in any good telework policy and, by extension, form essential guides to eventual telework program success. In particular, agencies should consider adding to their policies the information described in those criteria rated as “missing.” For any criterion scored as “low,” evaluator comments should be consulted since these provide guidelines and suggestions for specific policy improvements.

Remember that the primary purpose of the telework policy evaluation is to suggest general improvements to agency policies. The Checklist was developed to provide a universal tool, without regard to individual agency circumstances. There may be aspects of agency culture, practice, or even other policies that prevent implementation of some of the specific suggestions made in the telework policy evaluations. With this in mind, it is important to understand that evaluation results should be used as general guidelines, not as strict rules for policy change.

Given OPM staff limitations, evaluations could only be conducted for department-level telework policy submissions. Doubtless, there are sub-agency telework policies that also would benefit from evaluation. To support agency improvement efforts, the actual telework policy evaluation

Checklist is in Appendix A. Directions and guidelines for conducting policy evaluations are included in Appendix B.

Finally, remember to take action and engage in the next step: program improvement. Policy provides the foundation for an effective program, and improvements suggested by the policy evaluation can and should be translated into telework program and practice improvements.

Appendix A: Telework Policy Evaluation Checklist

Agency or Department name: _____

Sub-agency name (if applicable): _____

The following scale is used to score each criterion statement for both Objectives 1 and 2. Goals for the assessment include complete and consistent policies that cover fundamental aspects of telework. Most importantly, policies should be usable by stakeholders (e.g., managers, employees, coordinators) for the achievement of effective programs. *Ratings and scoring are simply meant to provide useful and systematic feedback to agencies seeking to improve their telework policies. They will not be used to rank or compare agency policies.*

Rating Option	Definition	Score
High	The criterion is addressed so completely, appropriately and sufficiently as to provide excellent guidance/information to intended stakeholder(s).	3
Medium (Med)	The criterion is addressed adequately but needs to be more complete, appropriate, and/or sufficient in order to provide useful guidance/information to stakeholders.	2
Low	The criterion is addressed weakly, and in too incomplete, inappropriate or insufficient a manner to provide any but minimal guidance/information to intended stakeholder(s).	1
Missing	The criterion is not addressed at all.	0
Not Applicable (N/A)	Conditions established in the policy may preclude the need for topics addressed in other items. In such cases, those other items will not apply and should be marked N/A (instead of 0 for missing). For example, if the policy forbids full-time telework, item 15 under program implementation (<i>identifies aspects of the employment arrangement that may change as a result of <u>full-time</u> telework arrangements</i>) does not apply. It should be marked N/A.	N/A

Objective 1: The policy can be clearly understood and easily used.

Criteria for evaluating the clarity, readability and overall usability of the policy appear in the table below. For this section of the evaluation, focus less on content than on how easy the policy is to understand and use.

<i>The telework policy...</i>	High (3)	Med (2)	Low (1)	Miss (0)	N/A (n/a)
1. uses concrete, familiar words, not jargon, unexplained abbreviations, or other difficult terminology.					
2. avoids ambiguous terms.					
3. avoids redundancies.					
4. is organized logically (for example, does not skip around from topic to topic).					
5. uses no more than three outlining levels for organizing content.					
6. overall is constructed and written to provide a useful resource to the employee who wants to telework or does telework.					
7. overall is constructed and written to provide a useful resource to managers of teleworkers and/or future teleworkers.					
Column Total					

Evaluator Comments

Please describe the reason for any low rating given for any Objective 1 assessment statement (identifying specific criterion).

Include additional notes or comments about assessments for Objective 1 criteria here. Notes describing overall impressions of the readability and/or usability of the policy are especially helpful.

Objective 2: The policy incorporates criteria fundamental to the development and support of an effective telework program.

Criteria included in this section assess the extent to which content critical to the success of the program is addressed in the telework policy. Criteria statements cover three topics with the described objectives:

- A. Program *implementation* criteria: assess whether supplied information is sufficient to support effective program development.
- B. Participant *responsibility* criteria: address whether roles of managers, employees and other stakeholders necessary to the success of the telework program are clearly defined.
- C. Program *operations* criteria (e.g., employee performance review, program evaluation): detail the day-to-day activities/information necessary to support program success.

A. Program Implementation					
<i>The telework policy...</i>	High (3)	Med (2)	Low (1)	Miss (0)	N/A (n/a)
1. includes a statement of purpose (e.g., identifies intended benefits and outcomes such as emergency preparedness, workforce efficiency, quality of life, cost savings).					
2. contains clear definitions of (a) telework (or other similar term such as telecommute, remote work, distributed work, flexiplace), (b) eligibility, (c) official worksite/duty station, and (d) alternative worksite/location (<i>policies rated “high” must include a definition of all 4 listed terms</i>).					
3. references governing telework statute (Public Law 106-346).					
4. provides access (e.g., links, citations, appendices) when reference is made to internal or external sources (authorities, documents, related policies).					
5. identifies who is covered by the policy.					
6. states that, except under special circumstances (e.g., emergencies), employee participation in a telework arrangement is voluntary.					
7. emphasizes that telework is an arrangement established first and foremost to facilitate work accomplishment.					
8. includes information about how to identify telework eligible positions (e.g., based on work tasks).					
9. references agency emergency policies (e.g., COOP and pandemic).					
10. references agency IT/cybersecurity guidelines.					
11. references Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA).					

A. Program Implementation					
<i>The telework policy...</i>	High (3)	Med (2)	Low (1)	Miss (0)	N/A (n/a)
12. includes information about using telework as a reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.					
13. highlights importance for employee safety while working at an alternative worksite/location.					
14. identifies aspects of the employment arrangement that do <u>not</u> change as a result of participation in telework (e.g., leave approval, hours of duty).					
15. identifies aspects of the employment arrangement that may change as a result of full-time telework arrangements (e.g., salary, benefits, travel, RIF).					
Column Total					

B. Participant Responsibilities					
<i>The telework policy...</i>	High (3)	Med (2)	Low (1)	Miss (0)	N/A (n/a)
1. defines responsibilities of supervisors/managers.					
2. defines responsibilities of teleworking employees.					
3. defines responsibilities of telework coordinator/telework program manager.					
4. emphasizes teleworker responsibilities to ensure the arrangement does not have any negative impact on the work of other members of the work group (e.g., coworkers, managers).					
5. outlines what support/materials/equipment the agency <i>may</i> provide for teleworkers (e.g., computer, phone, supplies).					
6. outlines what support/materials/equipment the agency will <i>not</i> provide for teleworkers (e.g., computer, phone, supplies).					
7. assigns responsibilities for record keeping/reporting requirements for overall program (for example, annual telework report to Congress).					
Column Total					

C. Program Operations					
<i>The telework policy...</i>	High (3)	Med (2)	Low (1)	Miss (0)	N/A (n/a)
1. describes procedures for establishing a telework arrangement (e.g., application, approval levels).					
2. describes appeals process for telework denial (e.g., normal grievance or separate procedures).					
3. establishes that the performance of teleworkers will be evaluated consistent with the agency's regular performance management system.					
4. emphasizes that teleworkers will receive the same treatment/opportunities as non-teleworking employees (e.g., work assignments, awards and recognition, development opportunities, promotions).					
5. addresses telework communication (e.g., between teleworkers-managers; teleworkers-coworkers; teleworkers-customers).					
6. identifies agency requirements for teleworker/employee training.					
7. identifies agency requirements for supervisor/manager training.					
8. addresses unexpected contingencies that could impact the telework arrangement (e.g., emergency closure at worksite, emergency closure at telework site, illness, substitution days, recall during a telework day to duty/work station to meet business needs).					
9. identifies procedures for changing telework arrangements (e.g., schedules, locations).					
10. requires that the telework agreement be reviewed at regular intervals.					
11. describes procedures for terminating or withdrawing from a telework agreement.					
12. includes record keeping/reporting/evaluation requirements for overall telework program.					
Column Total					

Evaluator Comments

Please describe the reason for any low rating given for Objective 2 assessment statements (identifying specific criterion).

Include additional notes or comments about assessments for Objective 1 criteria here. Notes describing overall impressions of the readability and/or usability of the policy are especially helpful.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B: Guidelines for Telework Policy Evaluations

Selecting Evaluators

Assessments should be completed by individuals familiar with policies and their implementation (specifically, telework policy). Evaluators should also be capable of maintaining objectivity, preferably without history of overly negative or positive experiences with telework or the agency sponsoring the telework policy under evaluation.

Conducting the Evaluation

Prepare: To conduct a useful policy assessment, ensure thorough familiarity with both the Checklist and telework policy under review.

- Before beginning the evaluation, read each criterion statement in the Checklist.
- Likewise, read each telework policy through in its entirety. Criteria are likely to be ordered differently in the policy versus the Checklist and familiarity with the policy will save time.

Assess: Once the list of criteria and policy are completely understood, assess the policy content against criteria in the checklist.

- Score criteria using the scale provided in the Checklist (Low, Medium, High, Missing, and Not Applicable). Remember to rate the first set of criteria under Objective 1 immediately upon reading the policy to capture useful broad impressions of policy usability.
- Add the scores for all criteria in each section. Place the total figure for each group in the row marked *Column Total*. Divide this total score by the total possible points for each section to determine an overall percentage.
- Check scores for accuracy.
- Provide feedback for any “low” scores by providing recommendations for changes for improving the policy. (Note: *the reason for “not applicable” [N/A] marks should be self evident and do not require explanation.*)
- Repeat above steps until each section of the Checklist has been scored.

Review: Examine scores and comments to determine how best to target policy improvements.

- Compare totals across sections to guide determinations of where best to focus improvement efforts. Pay close attention to sections with scores that are lower than other sections.
- Consider individual scores; concentrate improvement efforts on those criteria that received the lowest scores.
- Read any comments to consider strategies for improving the policy.

Take Action: Policies provide the foundation for programs. Suggestions for changes to policies made in the policy evaluation can and should be translated into actual telework program improvements. The following criteria can be used as the basis for prioritizing program changes:

- Relevance – is it related to program success in the agency?
- Feasibility – can it be addressed?
- Control – can that aspect of the program be changed?
- Potential Benefits – will the change add value?