

WORKING FROM HOME



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WORKING FROM HOME IN TIMES OF QUARANTINE

by Beth Warren & Oriana Maghoney

Traditionally, in-person service has always been our model at San Joaquin County for supporting and providing services to the various members within our community. In response to COVID-19, San Joaquin County has implemented social distancing strategies as part of the direction provided by our Public Health Department. One of the many precautions and strategies that we have enacted is the ability for some staff to work remotely. With many employees working from home, there are many things to consider.

Working from home is not as easy as “just stay home and do your job”. When organizations and employees are not used to teleworking, it can be difficult to create proper processes and generate the workflow for employers and employees. We are all in this together and with this temporary way of working, we need to ensure that we are doing our part to support the staff who may have questions in this process.

We have put our heads together to come up with some ideas you might find helpful.

FOR TELEWORKERS:

- Working from home may require more discipline from you than you might have expected.
- You may need to get used to using technology that you may not have previously used.
- You have to be able to ignore distractions in your home environment.
- You have to set and keep hours that keep you in sync with your co-workers (teleworking and onsite).
- You are also going to need to communicate with your team in new ways, which you may find is key to your being productive in this new environment.

By teleworking, some people may be impacted in ways that we do not often think about. Working from home can get lonely, and that can have an impact on your productivity and effectiveness. If you find that you are having difficulty working alone, perhaps reach out to someone via phone as opposed to sending an email. Sometimes the sound of someone’s voice can give us an energy boost with that minimal level of human interaction.

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OFFICE 365 IS COMING!

What is the Office 365 e-mail migration?

The County is moving our e-mail to the Cloud.

What does this mean?

Once e-mail is in the Cloud, when you need to send an e-mail to someone in the County you will be able to easily locate their address. We will also have enhanced security and are enabling enhanced mobile access.

What will be different for me?

For most users, their experience in the Office should not change from their current experience.

When is this happening?

We are expecting the migration to begin in May 2020.



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LOGISTICAL TIPS:

If you are going to be a teleworker there are a few things that you can do to ensure you are as successful as possible.

- Make sure that you have set aside a place that is your designated “work location”. You need to be able to establish boundaries for others who are at home and make sure that you do not allow friends/roommates or family to just “stop in” for a chat or a visit while you are working. You have to treat it just like your office and remember that frequent breaks with family members or friends is not something you would typically be doing while at work.
- Remember that you should be following social distance guidelines and staying in compliance with the social distancing order leaving only for essential reasons.
- Set up scheduled breaks and lunches to keep a routine that will let people know when you are available for conversation and interaction. Ask what documents can be signed electronically or what can be sent in a fillable form so that you do not have to worry about printing and scanning documents that require signatures.
- Your home office should be a private space that is comfortable *(and does not allow you to get distracted by things going on around the house!)*. You should make sure that you have everything you need at hand, and that it is as ergonomically friendly as possible. Pay close attention to your chair and desk height.
- Ask your manager or supervisor for feedback on how they view your performance as a teleworker. Do you have a clear idea on what their expectations are while you are teleworking? You want to make sure that you understand and are meeting expectations and that you are checking in as needed. Keeping a daily log of what you are working on can be really helpful when letting others know how your day is going.
- Understand and meet important deadlines. The option to telework is a privilege that not everyone has, we want to make sure that the work is being done timely and meets normal expectations.
- Make sure you stay in touch with co-workers even if it is just a quick chat on the phone to catch up on how things are going. You want to make sure you are aware of changes that may be happening at the office *(or with other teleworkers)*. It also helps to eliminate some of the isolation that everybody is experiencing during this time.
- Make sure you keep your email open and check it frequently, as many people will be using email primarily to communicate with you and, even more importantly... respond promptly.

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SOME TIPS FROM OTHER TELEWORKERS:

- Headphones or a phone stand are ideal so you can continue to work “hands free”
- Video conferences require a camera; if you do not have one make sure audio conference only is okay with other meeting participants
- Get up and get ready for work just like you are going to the office; you will be better prepared for the day (*especially if an unexpected video conference pops up on your calendar!*)
- Keep a log of activities during the day
- Know what is expected of you when teleworking
- Have a routine and stick to it
- Stand and stretch frequently
- Mute your phone when participating in an audio conference (*to avoid barking dogs or ambient house sounds being broadcast*)
- Do not be tempted to do chores while working at home; even though you are teleworking – you are still working
- Make sure it is as transparent as possible that you are not in the office

COVID-19 RESOURCE WEBSITES

San Joaquin County knows that an informed community is a safe community. We want to ensure that everyone has the most up to date information at their disposal. Several websites have been created to ensure that timely information becomes available to members of the community, as well as County employees.

Please find a list of the current websites that are continually updated with information regarding COVID-19:

<https://www.sjgov.org/covid19>

This website is the San Joaquin County COVID-19 resource page where you can get the most up to date information on the County's actions in relationship to COVID-19. This website is designed to inform the public of the most recent information.

<https://www.sjgov.org/covid19/employees>

The San Joaquin County Human Resources employee information page is designed with the employee in mind. This information gives the most up to date and accurate information for County employee resources.

<http://www.sjready.org/events/covid19.html>

The SJREADY.gov website is operated by the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services and has all of the latest information as it becomes available as it pertains to disaster preparedness. This website is tailored to provide information to all County residents.

<http://www.sjcphs.org>

The San Joaquin County Public Health page has information in both English and Spanish and is continually updated with the latest information on COVID-19. This website is designed for the eyes of the public to inform the community of all of the health topics surrounding COVID-19.



Keep sending in those questions!

FIVE TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME SECURELY

1. Identify and avoid social engineering attacks.
2. Secure your home's wireless network (WiFi).
3. Replace your password with different strong passphrase for all accounts; use 2-factor or multifactor authentication wherever possible.
4. Ensure your device, programs, and apps are running the latest version of software.
5. Don't let anyone else use your work devices.

See more tips at <http://sjchome/information-security>
(Note: SJCHome is only accessible from the internal San Joaquin County network)

QUESTION

San Joaquin County seems like it is really concerned about cyber security. Why do the cyber criminals do this?

ANSWER

You are right! San Joaquin County takes cyber security very seriously. And, your question is one that baffles a lot of us.

According to the FBI Cybercrime Division, billions of dollars are spent every year just repairing systems and personal records of victims of cyber-attacks. And the reasons behind these attacks can be as varied as criminal rings that want to steal your personal information and sell it on the black market, or a computer geek looking for bragging rights on the dark web, to businesses trying to gain an upper hand in the marketplace.

Unfortunately, financially driven motivation fuels over 90% of these attacks. Data breaches are the source that fuels identity theft, providing criminals the information they need to take over someone's identity.

These criminals are well-organized and operate on a commercial basis – there is a supply chain, those that steal data are unlikely to be the same criminals who commit the identity theft and fraud. The dark web provides a market place for stolen credentials – with those that have stolen personal data selling it to those who wish to commit the fraud.

Keeping data safe, at work and at home, has become more important than ever. Working together we can help stop these criminals at the door.

WE WANT YOUR TIPS AND QUESTIONS!

Have a tip on how to work more quickly or efficiently with your computer or computer applications? Send it to us (shortcircuits@sjgov.org)

Do you have a question or are you looking for a solution to a software application problem? Send those questions to us and we will get you the answers you need!

