

deskpass

Health



safety

and



checklist



**for Employees
Working Remote**



A lot has changed in the past year and we know that it can feel as though you'll never catch up.

The truth is, many companies are still discovering how to navigate this ‘new normal’ and what that means for remote work.

Music streaming company Spotify recently announced that, similar to Salesforce and Slack, all employees can permanently work remote, whether it’s from home or from a coworking space. Other companies, like Google, Twitter and Facebook are extending their timeline for employees to return to the office.

With change comes opportunity and while this new normal might not be what you envisioned for your company, there are so many benefits that come with it. From communication tools to cybersecurity protocols, there’s a lot to consider.



Flexibility

Flexibility means different things to different companies, so it's really about finding your 'new normal' and making the transition as smooth as possible.

Below are 5 types of flexible work arrangements to consider:



Partial work from home

According to Global Workplace Analytics, more than 90% of survey respondents are in favor of a partial work-from-home policy. Maybe an employee works three days from a coworking space and the remaining two days from home.



Fully remote/work from anywhere

Few companies have always had a fully remote model in place, but for many, COVID-19 safety restrictions have been a big driver for organizations going this route. Microsoft, for example, is allowing employers to remain working from home permanently on a case-by-case basis.



Extra or unlimited PTO

Studies show that 'unlimited vacation' packages actually have the opposite effect. It sounds great on paper but can be tricky to navigate. If nobody is seen using these unlimited days, it discourages others from using theirs. As a result, very little vacation is taken, sometimes less than the standard 10-days.

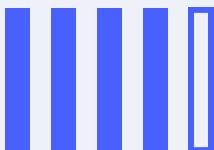
So far, Buffer's 'mandatory minimum vacation' is a smart solution. The minimum amount of vacation days employees are required to take each year is 15 days (three weeks) and there is no cap, should they choose to extend.



Customized work hours

With dispersed teams, it's not uncommon that your team will be working across different time zones. For companies with an international presence, this becomes even more pronounced. The time difference between Los Angeles and Hong Kong is 16 hours, and eight hours between London and San Francisco.

What is working for many national and international companies is defining core hours. This asks that all employees be online during a set amount of hours during each working day. It propels productivity due to short response times and lets team members build a schedule that suits their lifestyle. A win-win all around.



Compressed workweeks

In this scenario, employees compress a five-day workweek into four. This usually translates into working 10-hour workdays, four days a week. Many companies are already testing this model and studies show that three-day weekends reduce stress and burnout while increasing happiness and overall productivity.



Does your company offer a 'work from home' option?



Does your employee have flexible working hours?



Does your company offer condensed workweeks?



Does your employee have access to offices in which to work (such as a coworking network like Deskpass)?



Location



A big perk of remote and hybrid work is increased productivity.

By opting for a fully remote/work from anywhere setup, employees can choose offices and coworking spaces that are convenient for them, based on location and how a space makes them feel.

ACCORDING TO GWA

95%

of employers say remote work has a high impact on employee retention

36%

of employees would choose it over a pay raise



Does your employee have a means of transportation?



Is the office convenient for the employee?

(How fast is the Wi-Fi? Is there parking? Is it accessible via transit?)



Do you have an established policy for remote and hybrid work?

(How many days is your employee required to be in office? What hours?)



Workstation

Working from home can be a source of distraction, partly because your home simply isn't designed to be an office.

Coworking empowers workers to find spaces that are convenient, inspiring (mood does affect productivity) and requires little setup. Unlike a home office, coworking spaces offer meeting space and are equipped with printers, projectors and other technical equipment.

The Deskpass network gives teams and individuals access to thousands of workspaces and there are twenty filters to help narrow down your search, ranging from Standing Desks and Monitors to Shared Printer and Weekend Access.



Does your employee have a dedicated desk/office?



Do they have enough leg room?



Does your employee have all the necessary IT equipment they need?



Is their computer screen(s) well positioned?
(top of the screen is at eye level)



Is their chair comfortable?
(is it adjustable, is it supported by a backrest?)



Floors are cleared and easy to navigate



Workspace is kept clean and trash-free



Communication

With the COVID-19 pandemic driving major changes in how teams work, clear and direct communication is key. What you don't want is ambiguity. It's important to tell your team exactly what to expect and to communicate this often.

As with any structural change, there will be a learning curve. The good news is that technology is more interactive than ever. Helpful communication tools for video conferencing (Zoom, Google Meet for example), messaging (Slack, GitHub) and project managing (Asana, Notion, Airtable) are available and easy to integrate into your team's workflow.

Another way to invest in better communication is to create a leadership role within your company that specifically caters to remote staff. This ensures that their needs are met in a timely manner.



You might also want to outline what type of communication and tools are appropriate for different issues. Some things should be written and sent and others some require real time conversations. Making distinctions on how and where to communicate provides extra clarity to remote team members.



Does your employee have a defined point of contact within your company?



Are their regularly scheduled check-ins? What does this flow look like?



Is your employee set up with the necessary tools for communication (Slack, Zoom, etc.)?



Do you offer training for these platforms?



Ambiance



Happiness and productivity look different for different team members. At Deskpass, we've included filters and 'moods' that allow members and teams to curate the best spaces for their particular work styles. It gives you the flexibility to choose a space based on the layout, the location or the overall atmosphere.

A network of coworking spaces like Deskpass allows your team to create their ideal work environment. Employees can cherry-pick aspects they want or don't want (a quiet atmosphere, or the place that always stocks your favorite kind of tea).



Does your employee have their desired level of light?



Is your employee warm enough?



Does your employee have the desired noise level?



Are their designated break rooms?



Is there the ability to signal that you are focusing and are not to be disturbed unless urgent?



Is there outdoor space?



Amenities



Amenities can do wonders for keeping your team motivated. If you think about how many hours you spend at an office each week, it's only natural that your employees should feel inspired to do their best work.

In our commitment to seek out and take action in order to better serve undersupported and underrepresented members of our community by promoting and amplifying their businesses on Deskpass we added filters for Women and BIPOC-owned spaces.



Workstation:

Monitors, shared printer, standing desks, private areas



Kitchen:

Coffee provided, refrigerator, microwave



Parking:

Cars, bikes



Women:

Mother's room, shower, women-owned



Space:

Private areas, phone booths, outdoor space



Employee Health and Safety

For better or worse, COVID-19 has illuminated a growing need for prioritizing mental health. There are so many added stressors during a pandemic, and sometimes getting through the day feels like a feat.

Think of the health and safety of your staff from a 360-degree vantage point. Look for blind spots. For example, are their new moms on your team that are breastfeeding? Support them by providing a mother's room or allowing extra breaks. Try to get ahead of potential challenges and focus on forming solutions.

AS REPORTED BY
MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA:

77% of people surveyed said flexible work options would help them be healthier

Another study found that “employees in unhealthy workplaces are likely to experience higher stress and lower engagement and these feelings actually spread throughout the workplace, negatively affecting workplace culture.”

(MHA)



Do you have an established ‘work from home’ policy when employees are unwell?



Do you offer flexible work plans for parents of young children?



Do you offer mental health check-ins and resources for employees?



Are employees educated on posture, communication, and screen breaks?



Does your employee know how to handle a fire-related emergency?



Cyber Security

One reason why companies might not want to switch to a remote and hybrid work centers around perceived security risks. The image of an employee accessing company data on public wifi from a coffee shop is a bit unnerving, but it's important to find safe solutions to working remotely. As Doist notes, your company's data is only as secure as the weakest individual link.

Thorough onboarding is extra important here, because some employees will be naturally more tech-savvy than others. Ongoing maintenance of the safety checks should be prioritized as well. Encrypting your devices, using supported versions of your device's operating system and keeping the operating system and software up-to-date should be enforced.



Implement Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)



Implement a VPN for accessing your internal network if/when needed



Regularly audit and assess strength of authentication mechanisms



Develop standards for remote workstations that include anti-malware software



Secure cloud-based applications and SaaS applications



Provide education and training to employees about security awareness



Remind employees to be Wi-Fi wary and to turn off file sharing when not on home network



Encourage the habit of 'logging out'



COVID-19 Precautions

At Deskpass, we decided early on that the safety of our members was top priority. We partnered with our spaces to develop a Safety Pledge Program, a voluntary pledge that our spaces take to ensure that their space meets our requirements for health and safety excellence.

Rules and regulations surrounding COVID-19 are always changing and evolving, but we've rounded up a few precautions that will help your team stay safe.



Are employees required to wear masks?



Does your employee have 6-feet of distance between workstations?



Are there dividers between workstations?



Does your employee have access to hand sanitizer?



Does your employee have access to disposable workstation covers or disinfecting wipes?



Is there regular cleaning and disinfecting of common surfaces twice per day?



Is there access to safe food and beverage service?



Do you offer HVAC filters and fresh air circulation?



Do you offer a COVID-19 education program?



The Bottom Line

Deskpass is a Work From Anywhere solution for companies with remote or distributed teams. Through our network of thousands of workspaces across the US and (soon) the world, we provide on-demand desks, meetings rooms and offices by the hour, day, week and month. There's no setup or monthly fees—it's purely pay as you go.

Remote employees love Deskpass because they enjoy freedom to choose where their best work happens, from thousands of inspirational, productivity-boosting workspaces.

If you want to learn more about how other companies are making the switch to remote work, feel free to email us at teams@deskpass.com. We also put together an interactive calculator that shows how much you'll save on real estate costs with Deskpass.