

TIPS & TOOLS

To Stay Engaged While Working Remotely



The EPA Employee Engagement Team offers the following tips for our increasingly mobile workforce. We want to hear from you. Contact us at Engagement@epa.gov

Make time for small talk and check-ins



While working remotely, you may think about the moments you miss in the office — like having direct access to team members to share a light moment or resolve an issue. **Go ahead and check in with fellow colleagues.** Use the "Meet Now" feature in Skype for "coffee talks." You can even virtually celebrate each other's birthdays and special occasions!

COLLAB-TOOLS

- Skype
- SharePoint
- Microsoft Teams

Modify Schedules as Needed

When working from home, different distractions from those encountered in the office may be present. Long-term telework can be a major adjustment for you, your colleagues, and your families. Take advantage of available workplace flexibilities.



Communicate Your Availability

Establish consistency and boundaries by updating your availability on Skype, MS Teams, Outlook, and other automated tools. This will help ensure efficiency and manage time.

Remember to Disconnect

Be sure to maintain work-life balance. A 2013 Gallup poll found that teleworkers log an extra four hours per week on average compared with their counterparts in the office.

- Step away from the computer; give your eyes and mind several breaks.
- Eat a real lunch.
- Practice good "work-at-home" etiquette. Set signals to housemates so they know when you cannot be disturbed.

Need SharePoint Help?

EPA has SharePoint [office hours](#). Look on the intranet for the calendar.

Communicate Often

While working remotely, you may feel out of the loop. Some of your colleagues may prefer to communicate verbally while others may want to put things in writing. Ask your co-workers for their communication preferences and share your own. Use a variety of communication tools -- emails, SharePoint, phone calls, MS Teams, or Skype. Don't feel confident about setting up a video conference or using document-sharing drives? Reach out to EPA's Information Services HelpDesk at 1-866-411-4372 (4EPA) or eisd@epa.gov.

Maintain Morale

At home, you may get less physical activity and social interaction than normal. It's important to understand how these factors affect your mood.

- **Recognition** - Kudos have been shown to increase engagement and morale.
- **Empowerment** - Take ownership of your assignments, performance, and career path. This results in higher confidence and greater commitment.
- **Innovation** - Create a safe space for taking calculated risks.



Self-Care

Get sunlight, regularly stand, stretch, and exercise. Ensure your keyboard, monitor, and chair is ergonomically correct. Take moments to breathe. Being physically isolated and feeling socially isolated are factors that may contribute to depression. Please ask for help if you think you need it. **EPA has a free, confidential Employee Assistance Program** with:

- Counseling,
- Mental Health Support,
- News Alerts,
- Webinars, and more.

Call 888-635-3202.

Get Trained Up in the Latest Tech

Visit One EPA Workplace for:

- FedTalent (online training courses),
- Teleworking Tools (phone and web conferencing support), and
- IT Training Program's schedule.

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Sources

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