



# Coronavirus Update

March 23, 2020

## Adapting business operations for a remote workforce

Businesses are having to make revolutionary changes. For some industries this means adapting to a remote workforce. Managing a remote workforce can be challenging, especially when forced to do so almost overnight. The list below provides ideas to consider and links to additional resources.

[Gallup's Guide for Leaders](#) provides additional thoughts for leadership as they prepare for an extended period of managing a remote workforce.

### Employee communications

Regular communications are key to helping employees feel connected and motivated.

- Build a schedule for regular corporate-wide communications.
- Provide guidance to managers on how to communicate and how often.
- Explore technology options that will help teams collaborate and connect. Examples include Slack, Microsoft Teams or [free collaboration tools](#).

### Technology

Ensuring all employees have the equipment they need with limited time to coordinate can be challenging.

- Create a [technology checklist](#) to determine required hardware and software.
- Document receipt and expectations for use of equipment.
- Educate employees on proper use of technology to prevent interruptions.
- Educate employees on [cyber risks](#).

### Teleworker plan

Providing guidance to employees during this time of change can help employee adapt and excel.

- Set expectations to help employees stay motivated. Resource: [Gallup's How to Manage Remote Employees](#) and a sample [work from home agreement](#) from ThinkHR.
- Proactively address issues and expectations around schedule, childcare, pets, etc. Remember to be flexible where possible.

- Provide information on home office safety setup regarding work station ergonomics ([seated](#) and [standing](#)) and laptop tips.
- Encourage frequent stretch breaks, change in environment (e.g., walking outside), and separating work from personal time.

## Promote resources

- Social isolation: Help employees adapt to feelings of isolation. Resource: Gallup's [How to manage loneliness and isolation for remote workers](#)
- Telehealth: Continue to direct employees to use telemedicine. If you don't currently offer this benefit, there are companies offering direct to consumer options to consider.
- Behavioral health: Consider extending telemedicine to behavioral health.
- EAP: Remind employees of the support their employee assistance programs can provide.
- Caregiver support services: Understand how vendors can support your workforce as schools and day cares close.
- Financial well-being support: Review your retirement vendor's offering and direct employees to resources. Refer to these employee communication pieces from Lockton:
  - [How to survive a volatile stock market](#)
  - [Your plan has an auto-defense against market volatility: Dollar cost averaging](#)
  - [Plan for the best, be ready for the worst](#)

## Workers' compensation

- Workers' compensation claims can arise from a remote workforce, even though the employer is not in control of the employee's environment. Telecommuting guidelines can be a useful strategy for employers to proactively manage exposures. For more information, [click here](#).
- The home safety checklist for telecommuters includes ideas to maintain a safe workspace at home.