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Remote Work Tips

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Remote Work Tips

This guide is designed to support you and your colleagues when working away from the office. As the COVID-19 situation develops, your leadership team will regularly review the need to continue remote working in line with local government guidelines.

Our priority is your wellbeing. Your institution wants to ensure your transition to remote work is seamless and your work is performed securely.

Create a dedicated workspace

When you have a space dedicated for work, you're less likely to be distracted. Arrange your workspace any way that makes you comfortable — just make sure it is distinct from your normal at-home space. Avoid distractions (TV, social media, etc.) as you would at the office.

Plan your day using Outlook calendar — not just for meetings

Staying focused can be more difficult at home than in the office, so it's important to plan your day. Use your Outlook calendar to remind yourself to switch tasks, prepare for any virtual meetings you may have or even take a break to eat lunch. Create Outlook calendar items for each thing you need to accomplish during your day. Using Outlook can help you plan an effective workday and remind you to take time to relax.

Your wellbeing

Here are five simple things that medical experts recommend to help yourself during this period:

1. **Maintain regular contact with family and friends**
 - Social interaction is important; technology can help us all stay close
2. **Stay connected to your colleagues**
 - Have a virtual coffee
 - Set up a buddy system and check in daily
3. **Limit media exposure, and use only reliable sources**
 - Keeping informed is good; non-stop news is not
4. **Take care of yourself to reduce stress and increase immunity**
 - Get enough sleep, eat well and exercise if you can
5. **Share your strength ... and your concerns**
 - If you feel great, help someone out; if you do not feel great, accept help
 - Speak to someone: a friend, a colleague, your manager or HR

Take advantage of the **Employee Assistance Program** (EAP), a resource that is available to you and your family. EAP counselors are ready to listen and assist you in this difficult time. Most EAP providers have also shared COVID-19 related information and resources on their web sites, and you will find links to those on the main EAP site.

Stay connected with your team (Microsoft Teams is a great way to do that)

Touching base with your team is important for all employees, but especially when working from home. Without your physical presence, staying aware of new developments or initiatives may be more difficult. Make sure your team can contact you, whether through Skype, Teams, Zoom, or email.

The Skype for Business and Teams mobile apps can also help you stay connected.

You can also help ensure that colleagues and teammates can reach you more easily if you:

- Include your phone number and other contact details in your Auto signature in Outlook.
- Use Skype for Business to personalize and share contact information.

Maximize your bandwidth

- If you use VPN to access your work computer and shared network files, and traffic levels are higher than usual, your connection may be refused. If this occurs, try connecting to VPN outside high usage periods, or pull materials to work with offline during peak usage.
- You may not need VPN in order to work. You can access email through web access, and you can work offline and connect only to transmit materials as needed.
- During Skype or Zoom calls, avoid network activities that require a lot of bandwidth, such as downloading files and streaming.
- If you experience quality issues in Skype or Microsoft Teams, please remember that all services running on your network are consuming bandwidth. This includes any online gaming or video streaming that may be taking place over your home internet connection.
- Using a LAN cord to connect your computer to your modem/router will provide a stronger signal than using your home Wi-Fi. This is particularly helpful for Skype calls.
- You can use Microsoft Teams to schedule internal conference calls and call work colleagues. If Skype is not performing well with your connection, use Microsoft Teams for internal conferencing instead (it works better on low network bandwidth).

Practice good security habits online

Cybersecurity can seem overwhelming, but by following some basic steps, you can help keep your institution and your students' information secure and protected. These tips will also help you protect your family and personal information as well. Cybercriminals like to take advantage of remote working to steal sensitive data and being proactive is the best way to protect your information and assets.

- Communicate with students using your institution's email and LMS. Let students know that you won't respond to messages from personal accounts which may not be valid.
- Do not click links in unknown emails, websites, text messages or third-party application requests (such as WhatsApp or Messenger links). Cybercriminals use leading news stories to trick you into clicking links that may be malicious and damaging to your PC.
- Be on alert for COVID-19 phishing attempts.
- Use strong passwords that contain a minimum of eight characters with a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters as well as numbers and special characters (#, % or \$). Consider using a passphrase (including spaces and punctuation). Use different passwords for different websites.



Staying healthy

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends cleaning surfaces, followed by disinfection, as a best practice for the prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

Follow manufacturer guidance for regularly cleaning and disinfecting your device.

Understand your institution's policy

Whether or not you work at home is based on guidance from your local leadership and direct manager. If you do work from home, be sure to familiarize yourself with your institution's policies.

Safeguard devices and sensitive information

- Use the shortcut **Windows Key + L** to lock your DXC computer (**Command + Control + Q** for Mac) before leaving it unattended, even in your home.
- **Store devices and printed information in a secure location, such as a locked room or desk drawer, when you're not using them.**
- Never allow friends or family members to use your employer-provided PC or laptop.
- Student and institutional information should remain on employer-issued devices and should not be emailed or transferred to your personal computer or personal email account.
- Immediately report a lost, misplaced or stolen device.

Visit the [FBI Coronavirus](#) page to learn more about being cybersecure at home and to read an alert about how cybercriminals are capitalizing on the COVID-19 outbreak.

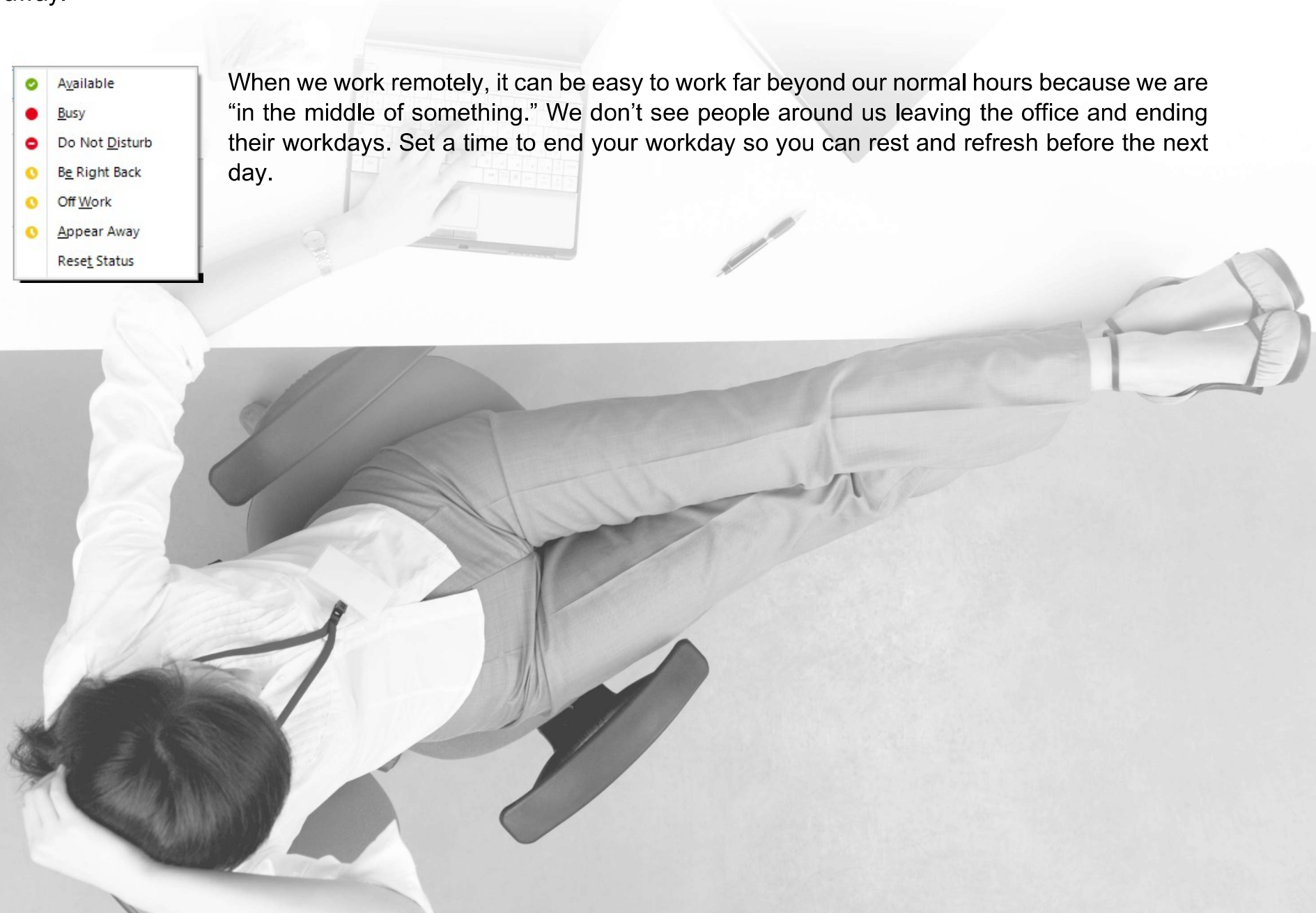
Know how to get IT help

Visit your institution's IT page and monitor your email for updates from IT on phishing and other security issues.

Take breaks and know when to end your day Everyone needs a break now and then. When we're in the office, it's easy to take a minute to chat with a co-worker or grab a coffee. When we're working from home, it's more difficult to set time for breaks. Give yourself room to take a breather, grab a snack or go for a walk so you can return to your work recharged and focused. Use your Skype presence to indicate to colleagues when you are away.

- Available
- Busy
- Do Not Disturb
- Be Right Back
- Off Work
- Appear Away
- Reset Status

When we work remotely, it can be easy to work far beyond our normal hours because we are "in the middle of something." We don't see people around us leaving the office and ending their workdays. Set a time to end your workday so you can rest and refresh before the next day.



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