



## The Challenge

COVID-19 has brought about unthinkable change in a short period of time. While OMB and OPM have provided guidelines (e.g. OMB-20-23, *Aligning Federal Agency Operations with the National Guidelines for Opening Up America Again*), agencies are still grappling with new challenging decisions that impact their workforce. One challenge that presents a special opportunity is telework. Transitioning from a workplace benefit to a business imperative, telework provides an impetus to evaluate new ways of working in all or parts of an organization. It also drives the need for organizations to build their capacity and agility to deliver services in new and/or different ways. This “new normal” must be addressed through data-driven decision-making to help organizations appropriately pivot, innovate and sustain their mission.

## Human Capital Considerations

Below are a set of short- and mid-term strategic and operational areas focused on specific workforce management considerations that can guide your agency through the “new normal.”

### Organizational Structure, Health and Performance

Teleworking is a short-term necessity that can lead to a long-term opportunity. Reviewing your organization’s strategic posture (e.g. organizational health indicators, performance measures, workforce analytics, and competencies) against the framework of telework can help identify a future structure and workforce composition that ensures your agency continues to function at a high level.



*Agencies are asking ...*

- *How successful is the agency in performing its mission?*
- *What parts of the organization work asynchronously?*
- *Are we equipped to ensure success in a continued telework or hybrid environment?*
- *How do we manage stress and burnout with a home-based workforce?*
- *How do we bring employees back to the office with minimum impact to our mission?*

### Data Analysis

OMB-20-23 stresses evaluating impacts of geography and occupations on future mission delivery. Your agency may need to collect quantitative or qualitative data from your stakeholders about the current conditions while operating under maximum telework capacity. Additionally, you may need to review policies and processes affected by the changing workforce conditions to determine impacts and conflicts.



*Agencies are asking ...*

- *What data should we analyze now to prepare for broader workforce implications?*
- *What are employees’ and managers’ experiences in a dispersed workforce/telework environment? How should this guide our transition planning and decisions?*
- *What are the implications on HR policies and processes in returning to work during or after the pandemic?*

### Capacity Building

Continuity of HR service delivery to your customers is critically important in times of crisis and is a key issue for agency leaders. In particular, Chief Human Capital Officers must ensure their dispersed HR team can meet the continual demand to fill vacancies with quality candidates in a timely manner.



*Agencies are asking ...*

- *How can we continue to manage surge vacancy workloads despite transitional disruptions in service?*
- *How can we ensure that HR specialists are productive and exceeding customer service expectations while working distantly or on rotational shifts?*

## Job and Organizational Design

The “new normal” will require assessments of jobs and how they are positioned inside organizations to ensure alignment and the continuity of the mission. You may need to review what competencies are needed for long-term telework, how positions deliver what was previously in-person customer service, and the potential impacts of deploying creative solutions (e.g. job or schedule rotations).



*Agencies are asking ...*

- *Are position structures still viable in the “new normal” to meet our mission?*
- *Is there work that is now more suitable for outsourcing?*
- *How will in-person customer service roles need to change?*
- *What competencies are needed for positions that we anticipate will transition to telework at a much higher level than before?*
- *Can our workforce structure adapt to rotational shifts in combination with telework?*

## AG’s Integrated Suite of Solutions

AvantGarde, LLC (AG) is an **8(a) certified and EDWOSB** located in Rockville, MD and Austin, Texas. Since our establishment in 2011, we have **executed 110+ federal contracts**, providing a holistic and integrated suite of services to meet the needs of clients. We also hold several procurement vehicles, including GSA’s Multiple Award Schedule. Using an agile “with you not to you” approach, AG delivers strategic and operational solutions that enable agencies to function successfully in the “new normal.”

### Examples of AG’s Strategic Human Capital Solutions

Deploying our proprietary platform, the **Workforce Management Office (WMO)** to align your workforce to your mission could be relevant in several ways:

- We can define and assess the competencies and behaviors that are essential for long-term telework in certain occupational groups and geographic areas
- We can evaluate the positions, organizational structure and competencies for front-line customer service delivery or job/schedule rotations that have been adapted to the “new normal”
- We can analyze your organization’s telework impact through key performance and organizational health indicators

Coupled with these comprehensive data analytics, our team also provides strategic planning, change management and implementation services that are employed agilely and aligned to long term outcomes.

### Examples of AG’s Operational HR Solutions:

- We can assess HR policy and process impacts of the continuation, reduction or removal of telework, or other pandemic-implemented practices, as well as provide recommendations on options to meet your agency needs based on the occupational groups, geographic areas or other demographic groupings
- We can evaluate performance management processes to recommend improvements, management tools or resources to maximize employee performance in a distributed environment
- We can deploy a remote Staffing Specialist Team to engage with your hiring managers and help manage the entire hiring process virtually using a proven model
- We can deploy our **specialized workload and action tracking system** which provides transparency for classification and staffing actions and reinforces the operational link between staffing specialists and hiring managers
- We can provide condensed, hands-on virtual training for your Federal HR teams through our proprietary **AG University**, a development program on HR foundations and Federal HR staffing.

