

For employees: If your request to telecommute is denied...

Your supervisor has complete discretion in this matter, according to the IOP-TELECOMMUTING standard operating procedure. Telecommuting is not a “right”. However, one goal of the ITD telecommuting project is to provide a flexible working environment as much as possible while meeting the business needs of the unit. So if your request is denied, here are some things you can do to work for a change.

Your request to telecommute may be denied for a number of reasons, such as:

- Your supervisor may feel that your work tasks are better accomplished in the office
- The tasks or projects you are doing require face-to-face contact with people on-site
- Your performance may not be sufficient in one or more areas

What can you do if your request is denied?

These suggestions may seem basic, but since we're offering similar basic reminders to supervisors, we thought we'd mirror the advice to staff. We hope this way misunderstandings can be minimized.

1. **Listen to your supervisor's reasons.** Take a little time to think about them; don't immediately engage in an argument with your supervisor since this is likely to aggravate the situation.
2. **Make a plan to address each of your supervisor's reasons.** Think of positive suggestions to address each item, or other examples. Put it in writing.
3. **Make a plan with your supervisor.** Your supervisor may not feel comfortable now, but if your position is eligible, the tasks you do might work out from another site with some reasonable changes, and if your performance in any area of concern can be addressed, work cooperatively with your supervisor to create a plan that might enable you to telecommute in the future. Make a future appointment for reviewing the situation in the (usually 6 months.)
4. **Don't compare yourself to another employee.** The issue is about you, not about the other person, and your supervisor cannot comment about the performance of someone else (it's a personnel records issue, and you would probably not like your performance discussed with others either!).
5. **Avoid the “but it's not fair!” argument.** That will escalate the disagreement and won't help you make your case, since it doesn't address the issues. It doesn't give your supervisor a way to help you or to feel good about changing their mind. If you feel that your supervisor isn't seeing things correctly, explain what you think is missing.