Things You Can Do Now

Here are some basic steps to prepare if some day you suddenly find you need to work from home for an extended period because the university is closed, your building will undergo renovation, or if a significant percentage of people need to remain at home for some other reason.

1. Laptop
   If you have a laptop make sure it is up to date on any software you rely on. If you find you have been dismissing messages that prompted you to update some software, then allow those updates to run the next time. If the laptop you will use is just a spare you have not powered up in a while, then boot it up now and ensure any needed updates run. Consider taking your laptop home with you each day. If your laptop is in a docking station and you normally remote into it from home, consider that a VPN connection might not always be available if everyone else is also at home trying to connect in at the same time. The VPN service might not completely go down, but you may need to keep trying for a while to make a connection. If you do not have a laptop, talk to your supervisor about requesting a loaner from Computer Services or Media Services.

2. UTBox or OneDrive
   If you have a UT Box drive or Office365 OneDrive, then ensure all of the files you normally rely on exist there. This will be less of a concern if the files also exist on your laptop and you have your laptop with you, but UTBox and OneDrive also acts as a backup, and it provide the ability to share files. These files can also be accessed without requiring a VPN connection. If you have files on Austin Disk you should consider moving or copying the files you expect to need to UTBox or OneDrive. Unlike these cloud services, Austin Disk is an on-campus file server and it will require you to have a VPN connection to access. A VPN connection might not always be available if everyone else is home trying to use it at the same time.

   For more information about UTBox please visit [https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/utbox/UTBox+FAQ](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/utbox/UTBox+FAQ).
   For more information about OneDrive please visit [https://office365.utexas.edu/OneDrive](https://office365.utexas.edu/OneDrive).

3. Phones
   Decide how you want to handle your office phone. You have three main options:
   1. Forward calls from your office phone to your home phone or mobile phone
   2. Let calls to your office number go to voicemail and check it periodically
   3. Configure Microsoft Teams on your computer and or mobile device to accept calls for your office phone number

   You can find out more about the firsty two options at [https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/UT+Phone+Forwarding%2C+Voicemail%2C+and+Teleconferencing+for+remote+work](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/UT+Phone+Forwarding%2C+Voicemail%2C+and+Teleconferencing+for+remote+work). The advantage of these options is that they can be easily configured and removed as needed.

   The main disadvantage is that when you need to make a call you must use your personal home or mobile phone and reveal that number.

   The third option of using MS Teams associates your phone number with that app. When someone calls your office, both your office phone and Teams can ring. When you make a call using Team, the receiver sees the call as coming from your office phone number. One that is in Teams. To find out more about this option and to request service please visit [https://ut.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article&number=KB0018666](https://ut.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article&number=KB0018666).

4. Group Chat and Online Meeting Software
   Decide how your workgroup will communicate among yourselves if all of you need to work remotely for an extended period. Email may work in many cases, but several free and easy options exist for group chat and online meetings. If your group already uses a particular solution then ensure everyone in your group has the latest version installed and knows how to use it. If you do not already have a solution, we recommend Microsoft Teams. It is an Office 365 based application that integrates with your Office 365 account, including your McCombs mailbox. If your workgroup chooses Teams, then you should install it on your laptop now.

   You can find more about how to install and use Teams at [https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Microsoft+Teams+for+remote+work](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Microsoft+Teams+for+remote+work).
   Note: Since Teams meetings also have dial-in numbers they can also be used for telephone conference calls (the phone number and conference code appear in the meeting details)

5. Duo
   Since many online services at UT require Duo second factor authentication, this could be a problem if you configured Duo to only use your Office landline as the second factor. You should register your home landline as an additional second factor device if you do not want to use a mobile device for this. Even if you already have it configured for your mobile phone, you should set up your home landline or an old mobile phone as a secondary device. If you lose your primary mobile phone, you may not be able to visit the ID Center to Duo enable a replacement for it.

   You can reconfigure your Duo settings at [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/duo/register/](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/duo/register/).

6. VPN
   While off campus some resources available on the campus network can only be reached by connecting through the university’s Virtual Private Network (VPN) service. Even though it is possible the VPN may be busy at times in the case of a full campus closure, you will still need to use it eventually if you need to connect to certain on campus resources such as the mainframe or Austin Disk. If you have never used a VPN connection from your laptop you should verify it is working by connecting in the next time you are at home.

   You can find instructions for setting up and using the VPN at [https://wikis.utexas.edu/pages/viewpage.action?spaceKey=networking&title=Connecting+to+the+UT+VPN+Service](https://wikis.utexas.edu/pages/viewpage.action?spaceKey=networking&title=Connecting+to+the+UT+VPN+Service).

   More information about working remotely can be found at [https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Resources+for+Remote+Work](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Resources+for+Remote+Work).