

Voice and Data Connections from Home
Suggestions for All Staff and Equipment for Key Staff
Influenza Working Group
Save the Children (US)
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It is very likely that many staff members will want or need to work from home during the next pandemic. The first part of this document provides guidance to staff on options they may wish to explore to allow them to work from home efficiently, if suggested services are available in their home communities. The second section describes the essential equipment that key staff (worldwide) will need in the event of a global emergency. Proper training must be given to any staff that is issued the recommended equipment. If you have any questions, please contact the helpdesk in the US: pchelp@savechildren.org, +1-203-221-4158.

1. Suggestions for All Staff on Voice & Data Connections to Facilitate Working from Home

Internet Communications

- **Dial-up** service should not be used when attempting to work from home and trying to access email, AS/400, or any other Save the Children web-based application. Although dial-up will work, it is extremely slow and may cause the applications to be inefficient. Dial-up is only intended for use when there is no faster option.
- **High-speed or broadband** service is the preferred method for staff who want to work from home. Most cities now offer some type of “DSL” (from phone companies) or “Cable” service (from cable TV providers). When provided with a choice, it is always best to try “Cable” internet service first.
- When you use DSL or Cable internet service, your service provider will give you a “modem”. A cable called “Ethernet Patch Cable” will plug into the modem and the back of your computer, connecting both to each other.
- It is strongly recommended that users of DSL or Cable service purchase a “router”. A router is a device that offers some degree of protection against internet hackers or, people who make attempts to get at your information. There are many types of very affordable routers on the market and they are very common in the marketplace. Some recommended name brands are: Linksys, Netgear, 3COM and D-Link. Routers are very easy to install and should not require any outside assistance.

Voice communications

- If you make phone calls from your home for SC business, your supervisor may be willing to reimburse you for the costs. In most cases, it is recommended that you use your normal phone service and fill out an expense report for the appropriate Save the Children related charges when you receive the phone bill.

- For staff located in the US, Save the Children now has another option for voice communications from the home called, “Teleworker phone”. This phone operates over the internet and requires that you have high-speed internet service as well as a router. The phone works just as if you are sitting in the Westport or DC office which means you can dial anyone in those offices by using their four digit extension only. The Teleworker requires your AVP’s approval and that your department pay to purchase it. Any calls you make from the Teleworker phone will be billed to your department.

2. Equipment and Training for Key Staff to Facilitate Working from Home

- **Laptop** – All key staff should have and know how to use a Laptop. This is to include understanding the difference of information that is located on the Laptop versus a network server and, how to backup the Laptop information.
- **Cell Phone** – A cell (mobile) phone is critical to keeping voice communications going during an emergency. A “PDA” type device that also receives email is strongly recommended to facilitate communications with the individual should their Laptop not be available and documents need to be reviewed.
- **Satellite Phone** – Key staff should also have a Satellite Phone in the event that conventional and cell phone services become congested and/or unusable. Such was the case in the electrical blackout of August 2003.
- **BGAN** – A BGAN is a portable, laptop size, satellite device that provides high-speed access to the Internet. This unit is very valuable in the event conventional broadband provider networks become unusable. BGANs are used in some of our field offices where there is no other alternative for gaining Internet access.
- **Power** – In the event of a power failure, it is recommended that critical staff be trained on alternate means of energy and how to use them.