**Considerations for Remote Onboarding**

In the absence of in-person onboarding activities it is important to put ourselves in the shoes of new hires and brainstorm the details that new employees won’t necessarily absorb while working remotely. It is ideal, and now even more than ever, important to have a detailed plan for onboarding remote employees to ensure that all topics related to the position are covered.  Below you will find several considerations when developing an onboarding strategy for new hires during the time of remote work arrangements.

**Position Expectations**

Most importantly, hiring managers should be making new hires aware of and comfortable with the expectations of the position.

* Clearly define the role by providing the new hire with a detailed position description on or prior to their start date.
* Identify the top 3-5 (or more) goals for this position utilizing the Goal Setting Worksheet (Manager Onboarding Toolkit) [found here](https://www.dartmouth.edu/hrs/profldev/performance_management/). This will provide the new hire with an accurate representation of purpose in their new role while also giving them tasks to begin working on right away. This will set the foundation, as well, for performance management.
* Schedule time on day one and ongoing to discuss the position description and goals for the position. Address questions, concerns and barriers regularly.
* Decide together on how best to communicate should there be questions related to job expectations.

**Video Conferencing**

Video conferencing has become the new norm. Zoom can be utilized to make the new employees comfortable with coworkers and begin building relationships. Instructions to use Zoom video conferencing should be provided as soon as possible to the new hire so they can begin getting acclimated to the use of this technology. More information for new hires on using Zoom at Dartmouth College can be found here: <https://dartmouth.zoom.us/>

**Manager Onboarding Toolkit**

As COVID-19 has altered new employees to start their new positions while working remotely, it is even more important to offer an organized onboarding plan. The Manager Onboarding Toolkit offers opportunities to customize an onboarding experience for new hires and leverage the flexibility of the documents. All items on the Master Onboarding Checklist can be completed electronically and shared with the new hire via email. The Manager Onboarding Toolkit includes the following:

* New Hire Checklist
* Welcome Letter
* Internal Welcome Email
* Onboarding Materials Checklist
* Onboarding and Transition Plan
* Check-In Questions
* Goal Setting Worksheet

*The additional guidance below provides ideas to strengthen your onboarding process and is not meant to be fully comprehensive. These will support enhancement to the toolkit that has already been provided.*

**Preboarding**

* Forward important communications to new hire’s personal email (while waiting for Dartmouth email to be claimed) such as those received by leadership regarding current COVID-19 announcements. This will support the new hire with understanding how decisions are being made and communicated across the institution and will prevent any surprises upon their start. Ensure the [COVID-19 Temporary Telecommuting Agreement](https://news.dartmouth.edu/sites/dart_news.prod/files/news/wysiwyg/temporary-telecommuting-agreement-2_0.pdf) is signed before by the new employee before the first day of employment.
* Ensure any office equipment such as company laptop, headset, etc.… are prepared in advance and a plan is in place for getting this equipment to the new hire keeping in mind social distancing measures.
* Share documents with the new hire in advance, such as the Onboarding and Transition Plan and/or New Hire Onboarding Checklist. This will assist them in preparing for their first few weeks.
* Updates should be made to any internal divisional handbook providing information around expectations, policies and unwritten “rules”. A link to the [HR policy handbook](https://www.dartmouth.edu/hrs/policy/) may also be helpful with acclimating to the culture of Dartmouth.
* Share the department organizational chart in advance and be sure to include contact information so the new hire can accurately determine who best to contact for work-related information.
* Send an announcement welcoming the new hire (internal welcome email).
* Consider sending links to [Dartmouth Admissions virtual tours of campus](https://admissions.dartmouth.edu/visit/virtual-tour) in lieu of new hire being able to have a physical presence.

**Onboarding**

* Ensure your new employee has access to all critical tools to do their job effectively.  This includes reviewing the Onboarding Materials Checklist to verify that the new employee has been provided with all the necessary supplies and materials.
* Set up success metrics, deliverables and key projects for completion during the first few months. Ensure you talk through the duties and particulars of the role in detail. Defined goals and clear guidance on how these will be assessed give your new hire focus and direction, while providing a benchmark to review performance at the end of a pre-determined timeframe.
* Arrange for “meet and greet” meetings over video so the new hires can establish more direct, personal connections with the teammates.
* Mentoring and/or “peer and buddy” programs are not a new concept for employee onboarding; however, adopting it as a practice for a remote workforce is an emerging trend. Check-ins with a designated “peer” has a great deal of possibility for remote-friendly workplaces.
  + Take 1-on-1 peer programs a step further and invite mentors and mentees to regular video conferences in which newer hires have a forum in which they can ask questions of mentors in real-time and within a group format. By listening to the questions and answers of peers, as well, new hires will likely shorten their own learning curve.
* Once the employee has started working remote, organizing regular weekly check-ins for the first several weeks should be carried out to answer any questions/concerns so the new employee feels included and valued as a member of the Dartmouth community.