



# Office of Inspector General U.S. Government Accountability Office Report Highlights

July 15, 2019

## TELEWORK PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY

### Additional Controls Are Needed to Strengthen Compliance with Telework Act Requirements and GAO Policies for Certain Employees

#### Objective

This report addresses the extent to which GAO has established effective controls to comply with the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 (Telework Act) and GAO's policies regarding telework participation and eligibility requirements for certain employees.

#### What OIG Found

GAO telework policies provide for the use of management discretion in allowing telework for employees with unacceptable performance and misconduct rising to the level of disciplinary and adverse actions. Managers did not cancel all approved telework arrangements for 20 employees who received unacceptable performance ratings, demonstrated unacceptable performance, or were formally disciplined for misconduct in calendar year 2017, and most continued to telework to some extent. In addition to using managerial discretion, managers used established telework guidance to assist them in making decisions. However, established telework guidance lacks practical information to assist managers in their consideration of the appropriateness of continued telework participation in such cases. For example, several considerations could be addressed in the guidance such as

- **Competency(s) at the unacceptable level.** Performance problems in competencies may make it more difficult for the employee to plan, prioritize, and balance assigned work or produce quality, timely work while teleworking.
- **Impact of unacceptable performance and misconduct.** Individual performance problems and misconduct may affect unit and team goals and results.
- **Equitable and consistent application of telework eligibility policy.** If employees with documented or demonstrated poor performance or conduct issues are allowed to continue telework, it may affect the equitable and consistent application of telework eligibility policy.

In addition, GAO has not established or implemented eligibility criteria for re-employed annuitants, consultants, and senior managers participating in the telework program, as required by the Telework Act. Additionally, GAO lacked procedures for ongoing monitoring compliance with telework policy, which allowed some interns to participate in GAO's telework program.

#### What OIG Recommends

OIG made recommendations to address the controls that GAO needs to ensure that employees who telework are eligible to telework under the law and GAO's policies. GAO has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, our recommendations.