VA Remote Access and Telework

This document was compiled by research personnel at Malcom Randall VA Medical Center and North Florida Foundation for Research and Education. If you notice issues with the instructions or if you would like to suggest revisions please contact davidclark@ufl.edu.

Definitions
- **Telework** is when paid employees spend part of their tour of duty at an offsite location and will be compensated for this time.
- **Remote access** refers to technology that enables employees to log into VA email and VA networks when offsite. Remote access is a prerequisite to telework. Remote access can also be used in the absence of a telework agreement, but with no compensation.

Instructions for Telework Approval
Telework must be approved by your supervisor(s). Employees who wish to telework must coordinate closely with their supervisor(s) to write a formal work plan that includes (a) duties to be performed during telework; (b) the method by which telework activity and productivity will be measured by supervisors; (c) deadlines and expectations for when work is to be completed.
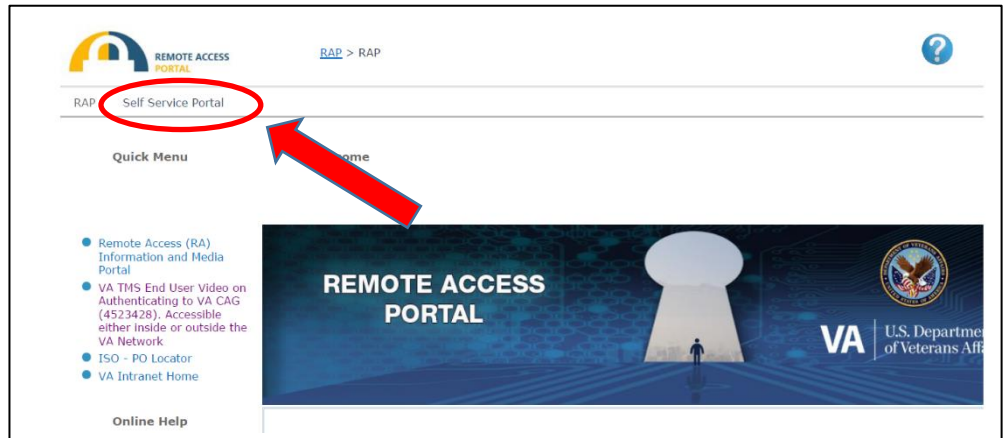Employees will also need to complete the following steps:
- Complete the form "VA0740 Telework Request Agreement" and submit to your supervisor.
- Complete training and obtain certificate for the following course(s):
  - TMS course VA1367006 - Telework training module for employees
  - If applicable: TMS course VA1366994 - VA Telework Training Module for Managers
- Send these to:
  Margaret.McCallum@va.gov (BRRC personnel), or
  Teresa.Smith11@va.gov (NFFRE personnel), or
  Annette.Johnson1@va.gov (research personnel not in a research center)

Instructions for Remote Access
Remote access must be approved through VA Information Technology. Complete the following steps:
- Complete training and obtain certificate for the following course(s):
  - TMS course VA Privacy and HIPAA Training *(most employees have already taken this course)*
  - TMS course VA Privacy and Information Security Awareness and Rules of Behavior *(most employees have already taken this course)*
- Know your VA email address and VHANFL username (usually first five letters of your last name plus first letter of first name)
- Sign into a VA computer and go to the Remote Access Portal :
  https://vaww.ramp.vansoc.va.gov/Pages/Dashboard.aspx

- Select **Self Service Portal** at the top of the screen.

- You will then be instructed to enter information into your user profile. Enter the requested information then click "Next" on each screen.

Screen-by-screen Instructions for Requesting Remote Access from Self-Service Portal

1. Create your Remote Access Account (**Active Directory Profile**). Verify that all the information entered in the fields is correct and supply an alternative e-mail and phone number for your profile.

2. Provide **justification** for remote access account requests. Wording does not have to be exactly as pictured below. Example: Telework capability to improve workflow in the case of office closures

3. Select the **state and facility**.

4. Select account type – **VA Employee**

5. Select your company and approving official. (Russell Bauer for BRRC; Teresa Smith for NFFRE; ACOS/R for research personnel who are not in a center).

Verify your profile information on the next screen. (Not shown here)

6. Once you have created a profile, the following request area should appear on your screen. Most users will select "Non-VA Device" and "CAG Access":

Remote Access Request

Please identify the device type(s) you will be using to connect to the VA remotely:

☐ VA-Issued Laptop / Desktop ⓘ
☐ VA-Issued iOS iPad or iPhone ⓘ
☐ VA-Issued Router ⓘ
☑ Non-VA Device ⓘ

Based on your selection, the below remote access methods are possible options. Hover over the information icons to learn more about each method.

Check all options required based on your connection needs: ❓

Primary connection method option(s):
☑ AVD (WVD) Access ⓘ
☑ CAG Access ⓘ

Submit

7. Your request will then be routed to the appropriate parties for approval. You can check on the status of your request through the Remote Access Portal at any time. When your account has been enabled, a welcome letter button will appear.

Remote Access User Menu

View User Summary   Request Access   Welcome Letter   Update Profile

Instructions for <u>optional</u> PIV exemption while awaiting a card reader
CAG access typically requires a PIV card reader connected to the USB drive of your computer. However, temporary exemptions can be made while you are awaiting delivery of a card reader. To login to CAG without your PIV card you must first request a PIV exemption. This will be valid for a temporary basis (e.g., 14 days). Card readers may be provided by the VA, or you may need to purchase a card reader for extended offsite access (see PIV Card Readers).

To request a PIV exemption either call the Enterprise Service Desk at 855-673-HELP (4357) OR send a message through **"Your IT"** from a VA computer. They will issue approval, but you have to contact them for the password.

Tip: Wait until your remote access is approved/enabled before contacting IT (i.e., after the "welcome letter" appears in your Remote Access User Window; see above). If calling into the phone line, you can call in and have them call you back when it is your turn in line instead of holding.

When remote access is approved, you will see this at the bottom of the Remote Access Portal Self Service Screen.

Remote Access Summary	
⦿ Enabled Settings ⭘ Disabled Settings	
SETTING	VALUE
METHOD: CAG .	
CATEGORY: CAG ACCESS	
CAG Status	Enabled
CAG Attribute	MULTI-FARM
CAG Last Accessed	3/19/2020
CATEGORY: CAG 2FA EXEMPTION	
Temporary CAG 2FA Exemption	Enabled
CAG 2FA Justification	Equipment Malfunction Preventing PIV Use (expires after 14 days)
	4/2/2020

You can now access a VA computer desktop from your personal computer via **Citrix Access Gateway** (CAG). The next page tells you how to set up your home computer or laptop.

Tip: It is recommended that you back-up any of your necessary web addresses and passwords to an accessible folder on your personal drive (U Drive). Outlook notes do NOT always work well using the remote desktop."

CAG Access from your offsite computer

The Citrix Access Gateway (CAG) is a virtual private network (VPN) based remote access platform that will allow you to login with a PIV card reader (see information below on getting a card reader) or using your **VHANFL username** from your personal laptop or home computer with either Microsoft or iOS operating systems. You will have access to your Outlook e-mails, CPRS, and network folders.

CAG URL: **https://citrixacess.va.gov/**   **(Tip: Save this to favorites or put on Desktop)**

To prepare your home computer: Take the following TMS course which gives instructions on how to load the Citrix program to your home laptop or computer. You won't have access until the remote access agreements are processed (and until PIV exemptions are issued if you are not using a PIV card reader).
- o *TMS course VA 4523428 VA CAG Remote Access Connectivity Video Walk Through*

Card readers for personally owned equipment

If you are using CAG on a personally owned device and are not PIV exempt, you will need a reader for your PIV card. If you are buying a reader (available online: Amazon, Best Buy, etc.) it must be FIPS compliant, Class 2 type reader. Some common readers include:

- SCR3310 and SCR3500
- ACR39U, ACR39U-N1, ACR39U-UF, ACR39U-H1, and ACR39U-ND from ACS Corp are PocketMate series readers
- OMNIKEY 3021 and OMNIKEY 3021 with Base from HID Global

⚠ Limitations

PIV will work on MacOS (OSX) 10.13 and greater. If you have an older version of the operating system, PIV will not work and you will require a PIV exemption.

CAG Desktops

When accessing CAG you are given the option to use several different desktops. In most cases you should use the one called "*1VA-General Desktop*" which has the basic functionalities needed for typical use. If you require access to the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) then you can use the Clinical specialty desktop.

For more information about telework and remote access visit:
https://www.oit.va.gov/resources/remote-access/

This page is accessible whether you are on or off the VA network. It includes instructions for getting started, as well as frequently asked questions for common problems you might run into at home—such as optimizing your internet connection. If you need additional help, the phone number for the Enterprise Service Desk is 855-673-4357.