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TECH

How would you like to work from home 'forever'? Twitter is encouraging employees to do so

Jessica Guynn USA TODAY

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Twitter will allow some of its workforce to continue working from home indefinitely if they choose, CEO Jack Dorsey told his staff Tuesday.

Dorsey is the first to signal a new normal for a major technology company that could extend beyond the COVID-19 public health crisis.

The announcement comes as Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Google's Sundar Pichai urge employees to work from home if possible until 2021.

Twitter did not say which employees would be eligible for the work-from-home policy, but says the past months have illustrated that it can be done.

"Twitter was one of the first companies to go to a work-from-home model in the face of COVID-19, but we don't anticipate being one of the first to return to offices," Twitter said in a statement to USA TODAY. "The past few months have proven we can make that work. So if our employees are in a role and situation that enables them to work from home and they want to continue to do so forever, we will make that happen. If not, our offices will be their warm and welcoming selves, with some additional precautions, when we feel it's safe to return."

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Like other tech companies, Twitter began encouraging employees to work from home in early March as the coronavirus began to spread across the United States.

Twitter does not expect to reopen most of its offices or approve business travel until September. It has also canceled all internal events for the rest of the year and possibly into 2021.

"Opening offices will be our decision, when and if our employees come back, will be theirs," Twitter said in a statement.

The move to a more "distributed" workforce had been in the works with Dorsey commenting on more than one occasion that he no longer wanted a workforce concentrated in San Francisco.

On an earnings call in February, Dorsey told analysts "our concentration in San Francisco is not serving us any longer and we will strive to be a far more distributed workforce."

The shift to permanent telecommuting for some employees was first reported by BuzzFeed News, which obtained an email Dorsey sent to employees.