Off-campus Access to UNC Computers

This documents how to access UNC computer resources from off-campus in a manner that meets UNC data security policies. ***Don't hesitate to request help from our IT Support group by submitting a Remedy ticket.***

Step 1: Install and configure VPN software on your off-campus computer: http://help.unc.edu/2502

Step 2: Map the server drive where your files are located (e.g. I: drive or M: drive). This can be a little tricky depending upon which UNC server you're trying to access. Seek help on mapping from our IT Support group if you're not comfortable with the procedure.

   a. Right click "My Computer" on the desktop and choose "Map Network Drive".
   b. For drive letter, choose I or M or whatever matches your workplace drive letter.
      Ex. To map the SPH server (M: drive): type in \\sph1.sph.unc.edu\myfiles
      Ex. To map the AFS server (I: drive): type in \\afs\isis.unc.edu\depts\epid\<project folder>
      Ex. To map your AFS personal space (H: drive): \\afs\isis.unc.edu\home\o\n\onyen where o is the first letter of your onyen and n is the second letter of your onyen.
   c. For User Name, type in your ONYEN as "AD\ONYEN" and enter your password.

If successful, you should now be able to read/write/process all of the files in your server folder using your off-campus computer. If all of your necessary files are on a server, ***you should be all set and can stop here***.

If you need access to the hard drive of your work place computer or if you do not have the necessary analytical software (e.g. SAS) installed on your off-campus computer, then ***you must continue on with the remaining steps*** by establishing a Remote Desktop Connection (RDC). RDC allows you to "take over" your work computer as if you were sitting at your work desk. RDC access is strictly controlled by University administrators in an attempt to minimize data security issues. You must secure special authorization from UNC administrators before you can use RDC. (Note that this is a University restriction, not an Epid decision.)

Step 3: Consider moving the necessary files from your work computer's hard drive to a server so that you don't have to proceed with more steps and/or consider installing the necessary analytical software on your off-campus computer so that you don't have to proceed with more steps.

Step 4: Send a Remedy ticket to IT Support requesting Remote Desktop Protocol registration and include your ONYEN and name of the computer you wish to remote into. Please allow several days for authorization to be granted by UNC administrators.

Step 5: Upon notification of authorization, you will be able to launch the RDC program from your off-campus computer and "take over" your work computer. Seek help from IT Support on how to get started. Note that you must also launch VPN prior to launching RDC.

Cons to using Remote Desktop Connection:

a) It is discouraged by University administrators due to data security concerns.
b) You may notice a discernable decrease in efficiency and speed.
c) Your work computer must be left on at all times, but protected by either locking the computer (ctrl+alt+delete, then choose "Lock Computer") or logging off your account. If your workplace loses power or someone shuts off your work computer, then you will be unable to access the machine from home. If you rarely use off-campus access, you may discover that you followed normal procedures by shutting down your work computer at the end of the day, but then had an unexpected emergency arise where you needed access from home.
d) When you have finished using RDC, you must properly exit RDC and then exit VPN. If VPN is allowed to just "time out", this can cause problems.

Again, consider moving your vital files, at least temporarily, to the server so that you can utilize the basic VPN connection without having to proceed on to the Remote Desktop Connection.