

TELEWORK GUIDELINES

1. PURPOSE:

The University recognizes that it may be appropriate for management to permit employees to request to telework as it could potentially have positive impacts for both the University and the employee.

Telework, for the purposes of these guidelines, means to work from home or from an approved remote location, away from the University's premises normally designated to perform the work. The use of the word telework is intended to encompass other similar expressions often used such as telecommuting, remote work, mobile work, and working remotely.

These guidelines have been released as a pilot project from January 4, 2022 to December 31, 2023. The pilot project period will be utilized to determine how telework will be implemented long-term. Throughout the duration of the pilot project, the guidelines may be changed or modified by Human Resources from time to time. Management and employees are responsible for checking these guidelines and ensuring that they consult the most recent version available on Human Resources website.

2. INTERPRETATION AND CONTACTS:

The Associate Vice-President of Human Resources is responsible for interpreting these guidelines.

For any questions regarding the guidelines, contact your manager or HR Representative.

3. SCOPE & APPLICATION:

3.1 Eligibility

These guidelines apply to administrative and support staff in the PIPSC and SSUO bargaining units and to employees in non-unionized positions, including temporary and contractual employees. The guidelines do not apply to employees in the following unions: OPSEU, CUPE- Lifeguards, IUOE 772 a) and b), CUPE- Housing, APUO, APTPUO, CUPE 2626 members.

The manager or Head of Unit of a new employee may require the new employee (or an employee in a new position) who would otherwise be eligible for a telework arrangement to successfully complete a certain number of months of continuous service or onboarding activities before approving a request to work remotely for that individual.

Where applicable, the provisions of any collective agreement shall continue to apply and these guidelines do not replace or supersede existing [collective agreement](#) provisions.

3.2 Direction to work from home

If the University directs staff to temporarily work remotely from home due to special circumstances to ensure business continuity, a telework agreement would not apply. However, the employee would be expected to respect the employee responsibilities outlined in section 4.3 2) to 7) and the security of University property, IT security and confidential information provisions in section 9 of these guidelines throughout the temporary remote work period. Examples of special circumstances are situations, such as, an emergency, a pandemic, a fire, a flood, or a building closure.

3.3 Ad hoc telework

Ad hoc telework arrangements to work from home for a single day must be submitted by the employee to their manager by e-mail twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the date when the employee is requesting to telework and can be reviewed and either approved or denied by the employee's manager on a case-by-case basis without the necessity of having to follow the request to telework procedure under these guidelines. A manager may waive the requirement for twenty-four (24) hours advance notice at their discretion in exceptional circumstances.

3.4 Separate request procedure for accommodation

These guidelines do not apply in situations where an employee has a demonstrated need to be accommodated because of a protected ground under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) ("Code").

Employees requesting to telework as an accommodation measure due to a protected ground under the Code must follow specific procedures outlined below, separate from a request to telework under these guidelines:

- If an employee has a disability as defined by the Code and requires accommodation, such requests should be directed to Health and Wellness, who will assess the request in accordance with the established accommodation procedures. See the University [Guidelines on the Provision of Accommodation Measures to University Staff](#).
- Employees should address all accommodation requests related to other grounds recognized by the Code to their manager.

3.5 Other leaves of absence

These guidelines do not apply and are not to be used as an alternative for sick leave, family obligation leave or any other types of other [job protected leaves](#) as outlined under the Ontario *Employment Standards Act, 2000* or leave under collective agreements, as applicable.

4. PRINCIPLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

An employee must make a request to telework. An employee's request to telework is always subject to the right of the employee's manager and Head of Unit to review and decide whether it is appropriate in the circumstance and will not negatively impact the University's operational needs. In that sense, telework is a privilege and is not an employee right.

The employee's request to telework and the proposed telework arrangement must be approved by the employee's manager and by the Head of Unit.

"Head of Unit" for the purposes of these guidelines means the University employee who holds a University position, regardless of its title, with the highest level of managerial authority over the employee making

the request and of a faculty, service, office or other unit. Examples of Heads of Unit include, President, Vice-President, Vice-Provost, Deputy Provost, University Librarian and Vice-Provost, Dean, Associate Vice-President, Director, or such other similar positions and levels of managerial authority. In cases whereby there is a Dean or Associate Vice-President in the Unit structure, they shall have the final authority to approve a telework arrangement.

An employee's request to telework may be approved in whole, in part, or with a schedule modification by the employee's manager with approval of the Head of Unit.

Any changes to an approved telework arrangement must also be approved by the employee's manager and Head of Unit.

A telework arrangement may be terminated at the sole discretion of the employee's manager.

At all times, the official place of work of the employee is at the University of Ottawa in the City of Ottawa (or at the University's campus in Windsor or Toronto, as applicable).

4.1 Telework guiding principles include the following:

4.1.1 Maximum number of days, duration, review, and dedicated workspace

- The maximum number of days an employee can telework in any given week is two (2) days. Exceptions to this maximum should be limited to extenuating circumstances and may only be granted with written consent of the Vice-President of the unit at their sole discretion.
- If an employee teleworks two (2) days per week, the employee may not be able to retain an assigned dedicated office space. Note, this may not be applied at the outset of the pilot project but may be a condition of telework at a later date.
- The maximum duration a telework arrangement may be approved for is for a period of one (1) year. If an employee would like to request a renewal of their telework arrangement at the end of the one (1) year period they must submit a request in writing to their manager. If permitted by the employee's manager and by the Head of Unit, the telework agreement must be re-executed by the employee, the manager and the Head of Unit.
- The telework arrangement shall be reviewed every six (6) months by the employee's manager who will consult with the Head of Unit as needed.

4.1.2 Telework location

- The telework location is subject to approval by the employee's manager and the Head of Unit.
- Teleworking outside of the country shall not be permitted.
- The University will not permit telework arrangements for remote work locations outside the Province of Ontario, with the exception of employees residing in the National Capital Region (NCR) or within commuting distance to the University.

4.1.3 Service delivery standards and operational requirements

The following factors shall be considered by the employee's manager and the Head of Unit when determining whether teleworking is permissible for a specific position:

- Teleworking may be permissible for positions where face-to-face interaction with clients and colleagues (internal and external) is not critical to the role or does not form a significant portion of the employee's employment duties.
- The University's operational needs will be met or exceeded and service delivery to students, colleagues and others will not be negatively impacted.
- Completion of work away from the University's premises will not impact the completion of the employee's duties or those of other employees or stakeholders.
- A telework arrangement may not be appropriate during peak or critical periods throughout the year when employees are required to be on campus.
- The collaboration required by the employee with their supervisor, manager, colleagues and clients will not be negatively impacted.
- Managerial and supervisory responsibilities, as applicable, can continue to be carried out by the employee, including managing day-to-day client/customer service operations, and staff.
- Completion of work away from the University's premises is technically and operationally workable and suitable.
- In-person meetings with co-workers and/or external clients for University business shall not be held at the telework location or employee's home.
- The employee's manager may require the employee to report to work at the University's premises on a day they would have otherwise been teleworking. Advance notice of a requirement to report to the office will be given by the manager to the employee when practicable.
- The University will not incur significant additional costs.
- The University's property, IT resources and assets will remain secure.

4.1.4 Performance

- The overall quality and quantity of work can be maintained and will fully meet the employee's performance objectives and manager's expectations.
- For an employee's telework request to be considered by the manager and the Head of Unit, the employee must have previously demonstrated the ability to work independently, self-motivate, manage workload efficiently and complete work on time.
- The quality of the employee's performance, in the past, present, and while teleworking should be taken into consideration. If an employee's performance is under review or is being monitored by the manager for improvement, telework is not permitted.

4.1.5 Administration

- All of the employee's employment duties, obligations, responsibilities and terms and conditions of employment continue to apply while the employee is teleworking. The [University's policies](#), administrative procedures, [collective agreements](#), and guidelines, as amended from time to time, shall continue to apply during the telework arrangement and must be respected.
- Any violation by the employee of these guidelines or the telework agreement may also be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with the relevant policies, collective agreement or the employee's employment contract.
- If a telework arrangement is approved, it is not the employee's new permanent working arrangement. The University reserves the right to require the employee to return to work at the University's premises.

4.1.6 Termination of a telework agreement

- The employee's manager or employee, as applicable, must provide ten (10) working days of advance notice, where practicable, to the other when terminating a telework arrangement. It must be done in writing, utilizing the form in Appendix B. When the reasons for terminating the telework arrangement are related to performance issues or discipline it may be terminated without notice.
- The telework arrangement terminates upon the employee's transfer to another position. A new request to telework must be submitted by the employee to the manager responsible for that other position if the employee wishes to telework.

4.2 The employee's manager is responsible for the following in support of a telework arrangement:

- 1) Ensuring that the employee is informed of applicable policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 2) Ensuring that the employee has a computer provided by the University, respecting all the security standards, and only using approved applications.
- 3) Determining which University systems should be utilized during the telework arrangement (Teams, e-mail, phone, etc.).
- 4) Ensuring that colleagues of a teleworker are informed of applicable telework processes and procedures in place for the employee who is teleworking (ensuring a virtual link is available for meetings, communication channels are adapted, etc.).
- 5) Ensuring that employees who telework are included in meetings and other work events.
- 6) Ensuring that employees complete work priorities, deliverables, and meet objectives.
- 7) Communicating with employees who telework on a regular basis to discuss work priorities, objectives and deliverables.

4.3 An employee is accountable for the following:

- 1) Requesting a telework arrangement, in accordance with the processes and procedures outlined in these guidelines.
- 2) Ensuring their remote work set-up complies with these guidelines.
- 3) Protecting and managing records and other confidential or sensitive information stored on devices and ensuring that when accessing the University's information systems they are doing so in the manner designated by the University (including without limitation through virtual private network (VPN), multi-factor authentication (MFA)), and for keeping University property and information safe, secure and separate from their personal property and information while they are working at their telework location.
- 4) Informing their manager, IT, and/or Protection Services, as appropriate, immediately in the event that any information or assets are lost, compromised, stolen or damaged.

- 5) Devoting their full time and attention to their work for the University during the telework working hours and not performing unauthorized work during the telework working hours.
- 6) Making appropriate arrangements for care of dependants during work hours.
- 7) Respecting the relevant terms and conditions of their employment, their collective agreement, legislation, and uOttawa policies while at the telework location.
- 8) Informing their manager immediately should they require an amendment or revision to their telework arrangement (for example if their telework location or the telework days should change).

5. REQUESTS TO TELEWORK

A request to telework must be submitted in writing utilizing the form provided in Appendix A and is to be submitted to the employee's manager and to the Human Resources Business Partner or Human Resources Manager supporting the Faculty or Service. The request shall be submitted at least thirty (30) days in advance of the proposed start date. A telework request should set out sufficient information to allow the employee's manager and Head of Unit to assess the suitability of the request. When a request is denied, the employee may re-apply to enter into a telework arrangement only if the requirements of their position substantially change, they change positions, or their circumstances change substantially.

6. CONSIDERING A REQUEST TO TELEWORK

Upon receipt of a request to telework, the manager will consider the request to telework, review the request to ensure compliance with the telework guiding principles, responsibilities, and accountabilities, outlined in the telework guidelines (Section 4: Principles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities), and will submit the request to their manager and Head of Unit to approve or deny it.

The employee's manager or Head of Unit may require employees who telework to report to work and attend in-person at the office as frequently as needed (for example – to attend staff meetings).

The employee's manager or Head of Unit may also decide to approve a telework request for a trial period, at the conclusion of which the manager may review and decide to withdraw or renew the telework arrangement for a specific duration. If renewed or if there is a change in the telework arrangement, the telework agreement must be re-executed by the employee, the manager and the Head of Unit.

The decision shall be communicated to the employee in writing by the employee's manager utilizing the form in Appendix B, a copy of which will be kept in the employee's personnel file maintained in Human Resources.

7. TELEWORK AGREEMENT

If a request to telework is approved, the employee, the manager and the Head of Unit must sign a written telework agreement as set out in Appendix B to these guidelines before the employee is permitted to telework. The telework agreement and any changes to it will be kept in the employee's personnel file maintained in Human Resources.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

When performing work in a telework arrangement, employees' and managers' health and safety duties remain unchanged; as such, the telework work location during the employee's working hours becomes a

workplace, subject to the same occupational health and safety and workers' compensation regime as the University's principal work location.

The employee must take reasonable measures to ensure their health and safety, to maintain a safe and suitable workspace and telework set-up. For additional information and resources please refer to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety: [Telework Tips](#).

The employee must do a home office self-assessment to ensure proper ergonomic layout and home office safety. By signing a telework agreement, the employee acknowledges having read and completed the Home Office Self-Assessment Checklist and Equipment List (Appendix C). For additional information on ergonomics, see [Health and Wellness' ergonomics webpage](#).

If there are any health and safety, ergonomic concerns or work-related injuries the employee must notify their manager immediately as per [University Procedure 14-1 Internal Responsibility Procedure for Health and Safety Issues](#) and University [Policy 77 Occupational Health and Safety](#).

If the employee injures themselves during their working hours while teleworking and while engaged in their work, they must report it to their manager and submit the [accident/incident/occupational illness form](#) indicating that the injury occurred at their telework location.

9. SECURITY OF UNIVERSITY PROPERTY, IT SECURITY, CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Employees working under a telework arrangement are responsible for securing from theft any University property used for work.

Any University equipment, cellphone, or University confidential information used in the course of their work are subject to the University's policies and related procedures on information technology and communications (See [Policy 116 – Use and Security of Information Technology Assets](#), [Policy 117 – Information Classification and Handling](#), on privacy (See [Policy 90 – Access to Information and Protection of Privacy](#)) and on information management (See [Policy 23 – Information Management](#)).

Employees working under a telework arrangement must maintain confidentiality by using University-provided electronic devices, by using the University [VPN to access resources on the University network](#) when needed, disconnecting from the University VPN when not working, maintaining and keeping passwords secure, maintaining regular anti-virus protection and computer backups. Employees must not download University confidential information onto a non-secure University device. Employees must adhere to the [Working outside of the university](#) guidelines set out by the University's Access to Information and Privacy Office and University IT training, tools and resources may be accessed via [Working Remotely](#).

Employees must not share any password related to the employee's University accounts with anyone.

Employees shall report a privacy breach (whether confirmed or suspected) to the Access to Information and Privacy Office and the Privacy Breach shall be handled in accordance with [Procedure 20-8 – Privacy Breach Response Protocol](#).

In accordance with Policy 117, Employees should not store University information on a personal computer, external storage (ex. USB), or other non-approved University device. All University information, regardless of medium or format; that is in the custody and control of the University is subject to Policy 23. Disposition of information must be securely disposed of (including from the Download folder of the browser and recycle bin) when logging off from their University issued computer.

Employees should avoid printing University work-related documents from the telework location. In the event that an employee needs to dispose of work-related documents, they must shred or securely destroy University information.

10. EXPENSES, INSURANCE, AND INCOME TAX

10.1 Expenses

Office supplies required to perform employment related duties will be procured and supplied by the University in accordance with the process defined by the employee's faculty, service or unit. Some examples of office supplies include pens, pencils, notebooks, and paper (other than for a printer). If a telework arrangement is approved, the employee must have access to and use a University issued computer to conduct their work.

The University will not reimburse and is not responsible for paying any of the following costs:

- The cost incurred by the employee for the telework work set-up, including but not limited to desk, chair, ergonomic equipment, lamp, screen, keyboard, monitor
- Office supplies if not deemed as required by the University
- The cost of internet access, heating, electricity or other utilities, insurance or other home expenses and home maintenance associated with the telework work set-up
- Personal cell phone or long-distance telephone charges (employees should not be utilizing their personal cell phone for work related calls)
- The repair or replacement of the employee's personal property or equipment used to telework
- The payment of commuting costs to travel to the official place of work or parking at the official place work
- Any transportation costs incurred by the employee , including parking, unless the employee is required to travel on official University business, in which case University [Policy 21 – Reimbursement to Individuals for University Business Expense](#) shall apply.

Prior to commencing the telework arrangement, the employee's manager, the Head of Unit, and the employee will identify and agree, in advance and prior to incurring costs, on any other expenses related to telework that are not covered by these guidelines.

10.2 Other considerations and insurance

It is the employee's responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by any municipal by laws, zoning or other rules that may impose requirements or limits on conducting business from the employee's home.

The employee shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with their household insurance policies related to telework and ensure that they have the appropriate level of insurance coverage.

The University is not liable for loss, destruction, or injury of a third party that may occur in or to the employee's home. This includes family members, visitors, or others that may become injured within or around the employee's home.

10.3 Income tax implications

As per the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) guidelines, employees who work remotely may be entitled to deduct certain expenses from their income. The determination of eligibility is the employee's responsibility. Should an employee meet the prescribed conditions the University will issue the appropriate income tax form (ex. T2200 Declaration of Conditions of Employment).