

REMOTE WORK FRAMEWORK

2021



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Introduction

Selkirk College is planning a return to campus for the 2021 Fall Semester. Guiding principles and an overarching framework will support the fulfillment of any needs for remote work arrangements for employees in both instructional and non- instructional roles. The college, on occasion, has allowed for alternative working arrangements on a case-by-case basis prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. These arrangements were informal and inconsistent across departments and programs and were limited to a small group of employees. The shift in operations and work place requirements due to the pandemic has created the potential for the college to be more flexible in supporting, where applicable, a greater number of employees working remotely.

Selkirk College established and consulted a working group to consider the benefits and opportunities along with the impact and considerations of creating a remote work framework in preparation for the start of 2021 Fall Semester. This working group provided recommendations to leadership for consideration.

Definition of Remote Work

Remote work is defined as engaging in recurring, scheduled or approved as-needed work performed from a remote location that is not an employee’s regular worksite and is within BC. Employee that are called back to the college should be able to return within 24 hours for meetings or other events as needed.

Approval Process

In order to be considered for a remote work arrangement, a discussion with your supervisor is required. Then, to document the intent by stating the reason for their request for remote work, an employee/supervisor must formally submit a request in writing (application) to their

supervisor/manager (or designate). Once approved, supporting documentation will be completed by the supervisor and Human Resources Department.

Any remote work arrangement requires applicants to be actively employed for a minimum of six months of continuous employment or, if on a short-term appointment, have passed any required probationary period, and must have a satisfactory performance record, including demonstrated time-management and institutional skills. Other cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Selkirk College will ultimately determine the appropriateness and suitability of a remote working arrangement and will have sole discretion to approve such a request. A *Remote Work Agreement* will be required and signed by the appropriate parties before such an arrangement can commence. Discussion of remote work arrangements may include union representatives but remain the sole discretion of the employer.

Approval Principles

Approval of remote work arrangements should, at a minimum, consider the following principles:

- Improved student experience (hours of operation, accessibility, removal of barriers);
- Increased enrolment and student engagement;
- Enhanced operational effectiveness (addresses space challenges, effective use of technology to improve service levels, sustained or enhanced productivity);
- Reduction of the college's carbon footprint or expedited achievement of sustainability goals.

Before entering into any remote work agreement, the employee and supervisor/manager (or designate), with the assistance of the Selkirk College Human Resource Department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, taking into consideration the principles above and other relevant factors such as:

- whether the employee has work that can be completed outside a Selkirk College campus or office;
- the operational needs of the employee's department or team;
- whether the employee has demonstrated an ability to work independently with little oversight or minimal supervision; and
 - Does the college have adequate IT hardware/software equipment for the employee to use off site?
 - Does the college have capacity to allow for flex on-site office space?
 - Does the employee have adequate internet connection?

Time Worked

As a result of the remote work arrangement, the regular and consistent daily and weekly working hours of the position shall remain unchanged unless otherwise specified or varied in writing to a supervisor/manager. An employee working remotely is expected to be available by telephone either college-issued or through Mitel telephone on the employee's college-issued computer, email and any other reasonable electronic means, such as Zoom, as if they were working at their regular workplace. Employees should ensure the supervisor/manager (or designate) is aware of any times when the employee may not be available while working remotely and the supervisor / manager (or designate) has approved of such unavailability in writing ahead of time.

Employees working remotely are expected to be free from distractions or interruptions and to ensure working remotely is in keeping with the college values of community, accessibility, respect and excellence through all communication and productivity during their work hours.

Employees working at a remote location must ensure they have appropriate dependent care arrangements in place in advance. Working at a remote location is not a substitute for child care or other personal obligations.

Work hours, compensation and leave scheduling will continue to conform to applicable policies and collective agreement provisions. Any changes in hours of work must be pre-authorized by the employee's supervisor/manager (or designate) in writing prior to implementing.

Employees working remotely are expected to be flexible in accommodating the needs and interests of the college. Employees must still be available to report to their home campus/worksite on non-remote work days, as and when required by the college, to attend meetings, training, or other events. Advance notice will be provided by the college where possible.

Employees working remotely who are timesheet driven must continue to submit their work hours as if working on campus and based upon the applicable collective agreement and college policies and procedures.

Expenses

Selkirk College will reimburse an employee for necessary and pre-authorized work-related expenses related to remote work in accordance with its policies in effect

Household expenses, such as internet, personal cell phones, home maintenance, insurance and utilities, will not be reimbursed.

Should employees be required to attend work at the college home campus for any reason on a day scheduled for remote work, the college will not be responsible for any mileage or transportation expenses.

The college will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's remote workspace, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the space.

The college will follow Canadian Revenue Agency guidelines with respect to the declarations of conditions of employment for remote work.

Performance

A remote work arrangement should not impede an employee's ability to complete regular work functions and duties, including communicating with colleagues, supervisors, subordinates and other contacts. Employees must stay current in terms of relevant department and work events. Employees must keep their direct supervisor/manager (or designate) regularly informed on the progress of work in the manner requested by that supervisor/manager (or designate) and seek support, advice and direction as needed. Evaluation of remote work performance will be consistent with that received by employees working at the college home campus.

Supervisors/managers (or designates) must review the continued validity of remote working agreements for their staff at the end of the trial period, and at least annually after conclusion of the trial period. This process ensures supervisors/managers (or designates) have the opportunity to evaluate and adjust remote work arrangements to meet operational needs.

Equipment

The college will determine the appropriate equipment needs, software and programs to be used while working remotely in order to maintain data security and confidentiality. Employees must comply with Selkirk College IT policies and procedures, guidelines and best practices, including without limitation: Software updates, anti-virus software and scanning, password protection, file sharing and downloads and locking the computer when not in use. Employees working on a flexible part-time or ad-hoc arrangement must ensure they take the appropriate equipment to work from home, to and from the office each day. As part of the *Remote Work Agreement*, a list of college equipment being issued will be required for approval.

Equipment supplied by the institution will be maintained by the IT Services Department and is subject to all applicable rules, policies and practices relating to use of equipment. Employees must take reasonable steps to protect any company property from theft, damage or misuse. Any equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the college IT guidelines will be maintained by the employee. The college assumes no responsibility for any damage to, wear of, repairs or loss of an employee's personal property.

The employee is responsible for obtaining and maintaining adequate insurance and to consult with their insurer on any insurance implications due to their remote work arrangement. The college reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Employees may be required to bring college issued devices back to the campus as directed by the IT Services Department for updates and/or servicing.

The college will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. All purchases will be in accordance with the college purchase policy.

The employee workspace should be ergonomically optimized with proper furnishings and adequate space that supports working efficiently and safely (ergonomics@Selkirk.ca). The minimum requirement for equipment is an ergonomic chair, keyboard, mouse. The employee's internet must function consistently with sufficient bandwidth so that the employee can work effectively and meet the expectations in this framework.

Security

Consistent with the [College Privacy policy \(6550\)](#), [Working Alone or In Isolation \(6410\) policy](#), expectations of information security, and applicable privacy laws, remote work employees will take all reasonable steps to ensure the protection of personal, confidential and/or proprietary information accessible from their remote location. This will include at a minimum:

- Employees working remotely will be provided with secure access to network files and email. Given the security risks associated with remote access, it is of utmost importance that remote working employees comply with all data security policies and procedures and privacy laws.
- All college property, including documents, equipment, and devices must be kept secure to minimize or prevent loss or theft. Such property should not be left unattended when outside the remote workspace.
- All completed and working copies of documents must be saved on Microsoft One Drive so that information is available to those who may require its use from the institution's worksite. Personal email accounts should not be used to transfer or transmit institution information, and the college email accounts should be used to ensure all proprietary institution information continues to reside on secure college designated applications and areas.
- Telephone calls involving personal information, confidential institutional information, employment or other sensitive matters must be conducted in private and out of earshot of others.
- Employees must seek approval from their supervisor/manager (or designate) prior to removing any physical files from the college worksite. Physical files must be kept separate from other personal documents and should be kept private from other individuals and locked in a file cabinet or locking bag.
- Remote work employees must exercise diligence in relation to their home security (i.e., locking doors and cabinets, activating alarms when away from home (if installed)).

Employees will continue to be bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of British Columbia (FIPPA) and any other applicable legislation.

Health & Safety

The college is responsible for providing safety guidelines and procedures and is committed to ensuring that remote work sites are safe. Employees are expected to maintain the remote workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards and to report any unsafe condition(s) as soon as possible to their supervisor/manager, including any risk of violence.

The college will provide each employee with a set of temporary remote work guidelines and checklist that must be completed and reviewed with the supervisor/manager (or designate) and attached to the *Remote Work Agreement* upon signing. At minimum, employees working remotely will utilize these guidelines checklist to assess their workspace for any hazards and dangers that could foreseeably affect themselves, and to confirm their remote workspace is safe, healthy and ergonomically sound.

The college may make onsite or online visits to the employee's remote work site at a mutually agreed upon time to ensure that the workspace is safe and free from hazards. The college may also request periodic safety or inspection reports from the employee. If the workspace is unsafe and cannot be made safe, the college may cancel the remote work arrangement.

Employees working remotely must develop their own remote office work location protocols for evacuating from the workspace to a safe location if needed and how to contact the college in case of emergency and submit for review to their supervisor and a copy will be placed in their personnel file. Employees working remotely must follow safe practices and report all work-related injuries, incidents or accidents to their manager within 24 hours. The employee is responsible to adhere to all injury report protocols including and limited to participation in the modified duty program.

If the employee is deemed to be working alone or in isolation the employee will be required to adhere to the [Working Alone or In Isolation \(6410\) policy](#). At minimum, employees working remotely must check in with their supervisor (or designate) both at regular agreed to times such as the start and end of their shift. Alternative arrangements may be considered as part of the working alone plan for example using technology. A working alone plan must be in place prior to commencing the flexible working arrangements.

Employees on a remote work arrangement will be covered by Work Safe BC for job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment while working remotely. The college will not be responsible for any injuries that may occur at the remote work location that are not related to work. The employee remains liable for injuries to third parties that occur on the employee's premises.

Additional Information and Contact

Employees are directed to reach out to the Human Resources Department at HR@Selkirk.ca and/or your supervisor/manager with questions.