

## 1.6 Flexible Work Arrangements

Please see additional resources available at

[http://www.intranet.mbgov.ca/csc/flexible\\_work/index.html](http://www.intranet.mbgov.ca/csc/flexible_work/index.html)

### Purpose

The Manitoba government is committed to providing high quality public services supported by an engaged and effective workforce. Flexible work arrangements allows our public service to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness, support work-life balance, and adapt to evolving service and workforce needs, while continuing to provide a high level of service to Manitobans.

This workforce policy enables management to consider flexible work requests from employees, provided they are consistent with the policy objectives and principles, and will not impact on service or program delivery. Employees may request approval to perform their work remotely (from home or an alternate location) and/or adjust their working hours to help balance work with personal responsibilities.

### Objectives

Flexible work arrangements must be voluntary on the part of the employee, agreed to by the supervisor, and adhere to applicable collective agreement provisions (see “Related Policies” below), as well as:

- Enable employees to meet established performance expectations as well as balance their preferences for flexibility with their work responsibilities
- Support innovation and progressive ways of delivering services, while maintaining or improving quality, and levels of service and/or productivity
- Promote a public service culture that values flexibility in where and how work is performed while maintaining a safe, healthy and respectful work environment
- In the case of remote work, reduce transportation costs and contribute to reductions in emissions, traffic congestion and air pollution, in support of Low Carbon Government goals under The Climate and Green Plan Act

### Principles

Flexible work arrangements must be consistent with and adhere to the following principles. In particular, arrangements put in place should:

- make prudent use of public resources and ensure that services continue to be provided fairly, reliably and competently
- ensure that service levels to clients are not negatively impacted
- ensure that sensitive information is handled appropriately, discreetly and that measures are in place to protect confidentiality and information security as required by legislation
- support continued teamwork, collaboration, and professional learning and development
- be flexible and adaptable to changes in the priorities and needs of the department, government, stakeholders and the public
- be continually evaluated to ensure they are meeting operational requirements effectively

## **1.6 Flexible Work Arrangements**

### **Application**

This policy applies to all employees in the Manitoba government.

### **Responsibilities**

For additional information on employee and management responsibilities, please refer to the related resources and tools.

#### **Employees**

- Submit request for a flexible work arrangement to the supervisor in writing, including as much detail as possible to confirm changes to start/end times (if applicable), locations where work will be performed (if applicable), and plans for mitigating any challenges that are anticipated.
- Cooperate with management by providing any additional information needed to support the request.
- In the case of unionized employees, seek union approval and provide signed agreement to the supervisor.
- In cooperation with the supervisor, and in the case of a remote work arrangement, discuss, review and complete the Remote Work Agreement Template and all parts of the Remote Workplace Safety Checklist, and take reasonable steps to address the items on this checklist.
- Should the arrangement be approved and implemented, provide periodic updates (at least monthly) during the trial period to the supervisor on the effectiveness of the arrangement, and proactively discuss any challenges.
- Advise the supervisor if any changes to the arrangement are needed, and provide notice if the arrangement is to be ended, in accordance to any applicable collective agreement provisions.
- Maintain basic elements of the remote workplace, such as adequate homeowner or tenant insurance, Wi-Fi data plan, heat, electricity and maintenance, and taking responsibility for any costs for home renovations to establish a remote workplace.
- Ensure that all electronic and hard copy files are maintained in accordance with department record retention and disposal schedules as well as with information security and confidentiality requirements in the applicable legislation.
- Report to the official work location (headquarters) when requested for meetings, training and/or at supervisor's discretion with reasonable notice.

#### **Supervisors**

- Assess employee requests for flexible work arrangements, ensuring that any approved arrangement is operationally feasible, maintains or improves service and productivity, and does not generate unreasonable cost to government. It is expected that some costs (i.e. VPN) may be incurred, however other costs may not be deemed reasonable (i.e. printers).
- Ensure performance expectations, accountability measures and parameters for the flexible work arrangement are clearly defined.
- Respond to the employee's request in writing. In the case of remote work arrangements, formalize the arrangement using the Remote Work Agreement template and Remote Work Safety Checklist.

## 1.6 Flexible Work Arrangements

- Where a flexible work arrangement cannot be operationally supported as requested, consider and suggest potential alternatives (ex. a partial remote work schedule instead of full-time). Where a request is being denied, provide rationale for denying the request in writing.
- Ensure the employee has the necessary equipment and supplies to perform their work remotely, including confirming that the employee has a safe and appropriate space to work remotely and suitable working alone provisions are in place as necessary. Review the completed Remote Workplace Safety Checklist.
- Ensure verification of union approval is received for unionized employees, prior to entering into a flexible work arrangement.
- Ensure each agreement is reviewed with human resources and seek additional guidance as required.
- Once implemented, check in with the employee to assess the suitability and effectiveness of the arrangement, confirming in writing if changes are made to the terms of the arrangement, and providing notice in accordance to any applicable collective agreement provisions, if ending the arrangement. It is recommended that these check-ins occur on a monthly basis during the trial period, and that the arrangement is reviewed at least annually after that.
- Proactively address any performance issues or concerns that may be related to the flexible work arrangement.
- Ensure that all other relevant policies and guidelines are followed.

### Deputy Ministers

- Support supervisors in granting flexible work arrangement requests where possible.

### Human resource practitioners

- Advise supervisors and employees on the application and interpretation of this policy.
- Provide support to supervisors in considering employees' requests for flexible work arrangements as needed.
- Review individual flexible work agreements and seek approval from labour relations.

### Labour relations officers

- Review and authorize individual agreements.

### Union (in the case of bargaining unit positions - unionized employees)

- Participate and approve if an employee can enter into the flexible work arrangement.
- Provide verification of agreement/approval in writing.

## Definitions

**Flexible Work Arrangement:** An agreement between management and an employee to adjust the employee's hours and/or location of work, on a re-occurring or on-going basis.

## 1.6 Flexible Work Arrangements

**Remote Work:** A flexible work arrangement whereby an employee has approval to carry out some or all of their work duties from an alternate location, on a re-occurring or on-going basis. A remote work arrangement may be full-time or partial, split between the headquarters and alternate location.

### Compliance/Non-compliance

Flexible work arrangements must not alter the employee's terms and conditions of employment, including the overall number of hours worked by the employee or the nature of the employee's work responsibilities. There are limits to the flexibility that can be agreed to, and any change to work locations or hours of work must adhere to applicable collective agreement provisions (see "Related Policies" below) and legislation. They are not transferable and must be reviewed if the employee assumes another position.

Flexible work arrangements may be terminated by either employer or employee provided written notice in accordance to any applicable collective agreement provision is given. Management, with cause, may terminate the agreement with immediate effect and is not required to provide a notice period.

Management will discontinue flexible work arrangements where they are assessed as being ineffective or otherwise not supporting the principles and objectives outlined in this policy or the provisions of the Remote Work Agreement. Flexible work arrangements may also be discontinued to address employee violations of other Manitoba government policies and procedures, or to address performance concerns.

### Related Policies

All relevant workplace and conduct policies, guides and legislation will continue to apply.

[Manitoba Government Code of Conduct](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Oath of Office policy](#)

[Employee Network Usage Policy](#)

[Government Employees' Master Agreement Section 22 – Work At Home \(p. 14\)](#)

[Government Employees' Master Agreement Flexible Hours Guidelines \(p. 85\)](#)

### Resources and Tools

[Remote Work Agreement Template](#)

[Remote Workplace Safety Checklist](#)

[Additional Flexible Work Arrangement resources, tools and supplementary information](#)

### Authority

[The Civil Service Act](#) and [Conditions of Employment Regulation](#)

- The Public Service Act will replace The Civil Service Act on proclamation as the new legislative framework for the public service. The Public Service Act enables modern policies to be developed which includes a flexible work arrangements policy.

[The Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation](#)

## 1.6 Flexible Work Arrangements

Applicable [Collective Agreements](#)

- Manitoba Government Employees' Master Agreement (GEMA)
- Direct Support Providers and Child Development Workers (Rural)
- The Legal Aid Lawyers' Association (LALA)
- The Manitoba Association of Crown Attorneys (MACA)
- Doctors Manitoba
- Manitoba Association of Government Engineers (MAGE)
- CUPE2153 and Department of Families – Support Workers
- Manitoba Housing (IUOE)
- Manitoba Housing (MGEU)

### Policy Review and Revision Schedule

A review will be conducted on the administration and operation of this policy, including any related procedural documents and forms, in accordance with a policy review schedule established by the Civil Service Commission.

### Policy Inquiries

For further information or questions about this policy, please contact:

Policy, Programs and Learning Branch

Civil Service Commission

## Remote Workplace Safety Checklist

**Workplace Safety and Health is a shared responsibility.**

### The Employee

- follows safe work practices and promptly bring safety and health issues to the attention of the supervisor, and forward to the department Workplace Safety and Health Committee any issue not resolved within a reasonable time
- reviews the checklist and applicable links and resources for consideration in identifying risks they may face
- completes all parts of the checklist, and accepts responsibility for taking reasonable steps to address the items listed on this checklist
- retains a copy of the checklist and provides the completed checklist to the supervisor

### The Employer

- ensures appropriate safe workplace considerations and procedures are in place including safe office work training (i.e. ergonomics training) as linked to in this document

### The Supervisor

- acts responsively to emerging safety and health concerns brought to their attention
- reviews, discusses and monitors the completed checklist with the employee
- signs and retains a file copy of the checklist, including a copy to the employee file

<b>Ergonomics</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Have you read in full and understand the information contained at the following links and will apply the information to eliminate potential ergonomic hazards and injuries?  <a href="#">No. 233 – Office Ergonomics : Hazards of the Seated Posture</a>  <a href="#">No. 234 - Office Ergonomics: Neck and Shoulder Hazards</a>  <a href="#">No. 235 - Office Ergonomics: Arm, Hand and Wrist Hazards</a>  <a href="#">No. 264 - Ergonomics: Adjusting the Office Workstation</a>  <a href="#">PREVENTION OF MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES</a>			
Have you completed the <a href="#">Office Ergonomics e-learning course</a> ? Do you understand how to apply basic ergonomic principles to your remote workspace, recognize the early signs of and the factors responsible for discomfort that can arise and assess, control and help prevent ergonomic problems and injuries?			
Is the workspace set-up based on ergonomic principles?			
Is the workspace adjusted properly: the desk, chair, computer monitor and keyboard are at appropriate heights (for example, the employee's head and wrists are in neutral positions)?			
<b>Office Furnishings</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Is the furniture being used for work purposes in good condition, good working order and adjusted accordingly?			
Are all materials, cabinets and other furnishings properly secured?			
<b>Electrical</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Is all electrical equipment, including power bars and cords, CSA-approved and in good working condition?			
Does the workstation have grounded, electrical outlets?			
Are power bar surge protectors plugged in to the wall socket? and electrical outlets not overloaded?			
Are phone lines, charging cables, internet cables and electrical cords properly placed or secured to avoid tripping hazards?			
<b>Tripping and Falling Hazards</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Is there enough room to ensure a clear and unobstructed passage to and from the remote workspace? If there are steps, are they equipped with handrails?			
Is the space neat, clean and free of hazardous material?			
Is the floor surface clean, dry, level and free of worn or frayed seams?			

Are carpets well secured to the floor and free of frayed or worn seams?			
<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Are there known biological or chemical hazards in the workspace?			
Are lighting levels adequate to perform the required work tasks? Lighting should be evenly distributed throughout the workstation and should not create glare or shadows.			
Is there excessive noise or other distractions such as interference with communication or concentration?			
Is the temperature, humidity in the workspace in the range for comfort?			
<b>Potential of Violence</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Do you have anything in your remote work environment that could be a threat to your safety?			
Do you have adequate procedures, emergency contacts and/or a plan to address these issues if they emerge?			
<b>Fire Protection</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Is there an adequate number of smoke alarms/detectors? Are they in good working order?			
Is there a portable fire extinguisher and do you know how to operate it properly?			
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Are there distractions, competing priorities in the workspace that can affect your ability to work?			
Are you aware of the resources available, and where to access them? <a href="#">The Employee and Family Assistance Program</a> <a href="#">Mental Health Resources for public servants</a> <a href="#">Wellness Resources</a> <a href="#">Family Violence Prevention Program</a>			
<b>Work Alone Protection</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Have you and your supervisor discussed your availability to respond to health and safety check-ins (e.g. working alone call-in procedures, regular calls, texts, emails – based on the risks involved)? If not, initiate that conversation.			
Is a first aid kit accessible to the workspace?			
Are emergency contact numbers accessible in the workspace?			
Have you updated your emergency contact information with your supervisor?			
Do you have an evacuation route in place in the event of a fire or emergency?			
<b>Other</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Action Required/Comment</b>
Have you provided your supervisor with a photo of the remote workspace including desk, workstation and chair?			

I confirm that I have completed the checklist of my remote workplace and attest that I am taking and will continue to take reasonable steps to address the items listed on this checklist.

Date

Employee signature

I have reviewed and discussed the checklist with the employee who confirms that the remote work site is adequately equipped from a health and safety perspective.

Date

Employer (Supervisor's) signature

cc. Employee  
Supervisor  
Pay & Benefits

It is the supervisor's responsibility to submit the completed safety checklist and photo to Pay & Benefits for placement on the employee file, using the auto-Submit button below.

## Number of Employees Working from Home as at May 31, 2021

Location	Overall														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	3,591	5,350	4,658	3,916	3,206	3,003	3,069	3,374	4,678	4,809	4,654	4,556	4,364	4,590	4,918

Location	Less than 4 days														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	1,291	586	449	367	531	467	473	455	356	322	298	323	370	411	402
Other	413	199	179	137	144	145	137	140	139	140	114	138	126	135	163
Total	1,704	785	628	504	675	612	610	595	495	462	412	461	496	546	565

Location	4 - 5 days														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	462	263	234	230	263	301	232	214	315	272	216	273	268	292	267
Other	155	97	95	83	70	69	56	73	93	84	60	67	71	77	81
Total	617	360	329	313	333	370	288	287	408	356	276	340	339	369	348

Location	6 - 11 days														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	928	879	836	762	746	820	702	762	995	944	949	1,100	976	794	837
Other	237	329	254	211	150	175	134	158	278	265	224	253	227	194	229
Total	1,165	1,208	1,090	973	896	995	836	920	1,273	1,209	1,173	1,353	1,203	988	1,066

Location	12 - 17 days														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	88	1,180	957	844	651	595	629	705	1,115	1,593	1,200	1,477	1,085	1,140	1,294
Other	13	321	255	185	144	147	151	157	287	384	301	363	260	268	265
Total	101	1,501	1,212	1,029	795	742	780	862	1,402	1,977	1,501	1,840	1,345	1,408	1,559

Location	18 days or More														
	2 0 2 0										2 0 2 1				
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Winnipeg	4	1,208	1,158	913	402	224	426	571	899	647	1,031	457	819	1,055	1,139
Other	0	288	241	184	105	60	129	139	201	158	261	105	162	224	241
Total	4	1,496	1,399	1,097	507	284	555	710	1,100	805	1,292	562	981	1,279	1,380

\* Include active; regular, term, technical and departmental employees only