

TYPE:	Employment-Related
TITLE:	Remote Work
NO.:	EMPL-324
RESPONSIBILITY:	Chief Administrative Officer + Associate Vice-President, Human Resources
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
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1. Introduction

Durham College fulfills its mission through exceptional teaching, learning, and support services, which, typically, are delivered in-person on our campuses. In recognition that in some jobs, remote work can support a high standard of service to our students and each other, the College may approve requests for employees to work remotely. All employees are expected to have some on-campus presence in the performance of their work.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the consideration, management, and review of remote work arrangements.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. This policy does not alter or replace the terms of an existing employment contract or collective agreement.
- 4.2. Durham College values the work that all employees do in support of student success, and recognizes that in some instances, position responsibilities can be performed effectively both in-person and remotely. Employee compensation, work status, and work responsibilities will not change because of the remote work agreement.
- 4.3. The ability to work remotely will be determined based on the position responsibilities and team accountabilities. Remote work will not negatively impact department operations, and will not result in a loss of productivity or added responsibilities for other colleagues. Remote work requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

- 4.4. All remote work arrangements require advanced approval by the employee's supervisor and department head. Where approval is provided, remote work arrangements will be established according to the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 4.5. This policy covers remote work arrangements where a schedule will be established and maintained over several weeks or months as well as occasional (unplanned) remote work.
- 4.6. In establishing a remote work schedule, employees are required to work their regular hours and meet the expected number of hours of work for a typical day. Employees are required to be available by phone, chat, and/or video conferencing during the scheduled work hours, exclusive of meal breaks or paid breaks.
- 4.7. All employees are expected to continue to be present on campus as required by department and college operations for meetings, training sessions, events, or other activities as advised by the supervisor.
- 4.8. Faculty work schedules will continue per established practices.
- 4.9. All work-related in-person meetings are to take place on college premises.
- 4.10. All remote work is to be conducted at a location approved by the employee's supervisor, within the province of Ontario. Requests to work outside the province of Ontario for a limited duration will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Vice-President.
- 4.11. Travel between the employee's remote work location and the reporting locations (i.e. campus) is the responsibility of the employee.
- 4.12. Durham College will not subsidize the cost of an employee's remote workspace, including equipment, supplies and/or services.
- 4.13. All terms and conditions of employment, including the relevant collective agreement, and college policies and procedures, continue to apply to employees when working remotely, in particular the Acceptable Use of Information Technology policy (ADMIN-206), the Information Management Policy and Procedure (ADMIN-242), the Harassment, Workplace Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy (ADMIN-202), and the Employee Code of Conduct (EMPL-317).

5. Procedure

5.1. Remote work request and approval process

- 5.1.1. The ability to work remotely will be approved in advance by an employee's supervisor and senior department manager. In the case of faculty, the ability to perform the administrative duties associated with a faculty role, for example marking or research for course development, is deemed approved under this policy and does not require an application or approval.
- 5.1.2. Remote delivery of academic programming is based on pedagogical and program requirements, and established and approved prior to the start of a course. Any deviation to the scheduled program delivery requires advance approval by the Executive Dean/Dean or Associate Dean.
- 5.1.3. For support and administrative staff, supervisors will determine the ability for a position to successfully complete position responsibilities while working remotely. It is expected that services and/or responsibilities of a position are delivered with the same effectiveness as they would be on-campus.
- 5.1.4. Remote work arrangements will normally be established (where applicable) on the completion of the probationary period for support and administrative staff, which are 6 months and one year respectively.
- 5.1.5. The appropriate remote work approval documentation will be completed, along with health and safety checklists (and other forms as required) and submitted to Human Resources to be maintained in the employee's file.
- 5.1.6. Remote work approvals will be documented in the 'Remote Work Agreement Request Form'. Approval to work remotely can be revoked by the supervisor at any time for operational, performance, or other reasons. Remote work agreements will be reviewed bi-annually by supervisors.
- 5.1.7. An approved remote work arrangement is for the specified period of time, as documented in the agreement form; ongoing approval is not guaranteed.
- 5.1.8. Requests for remote work will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in a fair and equitable manner.
- 5.1.9. Circumstances may occasionally arise where the College will implement remote work arrangements for a specific period of time (e.g. emergency closure of an office or campus). In such instances, remote work arrangements will be established, where possible, and communicated by the supervisor to employees.

5.2. Hours of Work/Work Scheduling

- 5.2.1. Remote work days will normally be scheduled as a full workday.
- 5.2.2. Approved remote work schedules will maintain an employee's regular daily and weekly hours of work and income, such that it does not affect the employee's pension and benefit plans, if applicable.
- 5.2.3. Supervisors and employees will agree in advance on any variation to an employee's normal daily hours of work. Employees are expected to take rest and meal breaks when working remotely.
- 5.2.4. Any overtime requires advanced approval by a supervisor.
- 5.2.5. Employees are expected to be available to attend in-person meetings or functions as required and/or requested by the supervisor.
- 5.2.6. When an employee is ill or injured and unable to work, they must comply with the College's standard practice for reporting absences or injuries. Attendance keepers will continue to record and report such absences accordingly. Employees eligible for sick leave entitlements will be compensated appropriately.
- 5.2.7. Faculty are to continue to schedule student and office hours on campus as discussed with their Associate Dean or Dean.
- 5.2.8. Employees are expected to maintain an on-campus presence, in support of our campus community. Supervisors and/or employees will endeavor to provide three weeks' notice to schedule changes.

5.3. Performance Management and Evaluation

- 5.3.1. Supervisors will identify expectations for daily communication and activity reporting on remote work activities. Examples of expectations to be discussed include:
 - Overall and/or employee productivity;
 - Progress of individual or team assignments and deadlines;
 - Availability to receive and return calls and emails;
 - Client service delivery, including responsiveness;
 - The ability to attend meetings on-site;
 - Other indicators as determined by the supervisor in consultation with the employee.
- 5.3.2. Supervisors are expected to continue providing feedback on employee performance, positive and constructive when remote work arrangements are in place. Performance management will continue to follow the practices outlined in Collective Agreements, the Administrative Terms and Conditions of Employment and/or college practices.

5.4. Accommodations

- 5.4.1. Medical accommodations during remote work arrangements, or as part of a remote work request, will be assessed on an individual basis and will continue to follow the process guided by College policy. HR will work with the employee, supervisor, and medical professional as per the established process.
- 5.4.2. Non-medical accommodations during remote work arrangements, or as part of a remote work request, will be assessed on an individual basis. Such requests should be discussed in advance with the supervisor and any ongoing agreement should be documented in writing. HR will work with the employee and supervisor as per the established process.

5.5. Health and Safety

- 5.5.1. Durham College is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for its employees. The commitment and duty also extend to employees who work remotely. All employees working remotely must adhere to the Health and Safety and Accident Reporting policy and procedure (EMPL-301). Employees are responsible for ensuring that the remote work site is safe and provides the same level of security as the regular work office and for updating the checklist anytime there are changes to the remote workspace.
- 5.5.2. A home office/work area must meet the same health and safety standards as workspaces available on campus. A completed Remote Office Safety Checklist will be submitted to the Health and Safety officer prior to the approval of remote work arrangements.
- 5.5.3. Durham College will not be held responsible for injuries incurred by others in the employee's remote work location. It is the employee's responsibility to become familiar with and comply with all applicable laws and insurance requirements.

5.6. Work Area/Office Set-up

- 5.6.1. Employees are responsible for costs associated with hydro, insurance, internet/phone, etc. at their remote work location. Durham College will normally not provide a signed T2200 where the employee has on-campus office space.
- 5.6.2. Office supplies are to be obtained through the employee's department using the usual ordering procedures. Supply expenses for a remote work arrangement require written authorization and approval by the employee's supervisor.

5.7. Information Management and College Assets

- 5.7.1. In accordance with College policy, employees working remotely are responsible for the safe and secure handling of all Durham College information and records.
- 5.7.2. Equipment or assets provided by the College, such as cell phones or laptops, remain college property and are to be used to carry out work on behalf of the college, and returned to the College in good working order.
- 5.7.3. All college information must be kept in a secure location within the employee's remote work location, and must not be accessible to others (including family members). Hard copy files that contain confidential or private information will remain on campus, except where required for legal or other such related matters.
- 5.7.4. All electronic equipment must be password-protected. The employee is required to use and update as required College-provided software on all College equipment.
- 5.7.5. Electronic records should be stored using the employee's department central electronic records on the assigned Shared Network Drive or other appropriate Enterprise Systems such as Banner.
- 5.7.6. For employees who work with confidential personal information, supervisors are encouraged to seek recommendations from the College's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Coordinator on ensuring appropriate protective measures are in place for this information.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. An Employee will:
 - 6.1.1. Abide by all terms and conditions of their employment while working remotely, including relevant collective agreements, College policies, and other legal and regulatory requirements;
 - 6.1.2. Comply with the conditions outlined in this policy and as agreed to with the supervisor in the remote work agreement;
 - 6.1.3. Maintain a normal workload and work in accordance with the specific days and hours as discussed with the supervisor, and ensure any changes to agreements are approved in advance.
 - 6.1.4. Report to their regular work location as scheduled to attend meetings, training sessions, events, or activities.

- 6.1.5. Maintain a strong connection with their work team and the College community through active participation in meetings, discussions, and training.
 - 6.1.6. Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for primary caregiving or other personal responsibilities during the remote work period.
- 6.2. A Supervisor will:
- 6.2.1. Review requests for remote work agreements on an individualized basis and based on the criteria provided for in this policy, and consult with Human Resources as required; where remote work requests are denied, a rationale is to be provided in writing to the employee;
 - 6.2.2. Ensure employees for whom remote work requests are approved can maintain the expected quantity and quality of work while working remotely, and that the quality of service provided by the department is maintained;
 - 6.2.3. Ensure the employee has sufficient knowledge and resources to work remotely and that all documents to support the remote work agreement have been completed;
 - 6.2.4. Maintain regular contact with the employee to ensure participation and collaboration in the workplace;
 - 6.2.5. Ensure that appropriate precautions are being taken to reduce any risks, in particular Occupational Health and Safety risks that may arise due to the remote working arrangements.
 - 6.2.6. Review remote work agreements each semester and ensure copies of remote work agreements are forwarded to Human Resources for the employee file.
- 6.3. The Health and Safety Officer will:
- 6.3.1. Review and retain the remote work safety checklists;
 - 6.3.2. Provide advice on ergonomics and office set-up, as requested;
 - 6.3.3. Review and provide recommendations for safety while working remotely;
 - 6.3.4. Support the process of incident/accident reporting.
- 6.4. The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion will:
- 6.4.1. Provide advice and guidance on questions with human rights considerations in accommodation and equity.

6.5. Human Resources will:

- 6.5.1. Answer policy-related or remote work agreement questions;
- 6.5.2. Ensure remote work agreements are retained in the Employee personnel file;
- 6.5.3. Conduct periodic reviews of remote work agreements to ensure information is accurate and up to date;
- 6.5.4. Update policy and related documents as required.

7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Accessibility Plan (ADMIN-203).

8. Non-compliance implications

Failure to comply with the remote work approval requirements could have individual as well as departmental performance or service implications, as well as unnecessary health and safety, privacy, and other associated risks. Failure to comply with employment-related policies while working remotely could lead to disciplinary measures being taken.

9. Communications plan

A message will be posted on ICE alerting employees when new or revised policies and procedures are added to ICE.

10. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- Remote Work application
- Remote Work office safety checklist