

Columbia College - Remote Work Policy - April 2022

What is remote working?

Remote working, also known as telecommuting, teleworking, or working from home, is a work arrangement that allows employees to perform their usual job duties at an approved alternative location. Scheduled hours of work will be determined by the Manager and will generally fall between core business hours (7:30 am – 5:00 pm).

Remote working is distinctively different from flexible working or “flextime”. Flextime is an arrangement that allows an employee to alter the starting and/or end time of their workday and works outside of the core business hours. Flextime is separate from the **Remote Work Agreement** and must be pre-approved in writing by your manager in advance.

The College recognizes there are benefits from working remotely, either part-time or in some instances full-time. A work from home option may be appropriate for some employees and positions but not for others. Unless mandated by legislation or regulations, remote work is not a universal privilege and will be arranged on a temporary, case by case basis, focusing first on the changing business needs of the organization and needs of our students. This policy outlines the approval process, specifications, and expectations for employees working remotely from home.

1. Guidelines

This policy does not alter or replace the terms of an existing employment contract. Employees must comply with all College rules, policies, practices, and instructions that would apply if the employee were working at the College worksite. Remote work is completely voluntary; the College will not require an employee to work from home except under legislated circumstances. Positions that regularly provide services off-site will follow the Remote Work Policy.

Work hours, compensation, and leave scheduling continue to conform to applicable policies and agreements. Requests to work overtime or use leave time must be approved by the employee’s supervisor in writing, in advance in the same manner. If an employee moves their primary residence, they must inform the HR Department of the new address they will be working from. If an employee requests to work outside of the Calgary region while working remotely, the Manager must approve this in writing in advance. Requests to work outside of Calgary for more than 3 consecutive days must be approved by the HR Department and will be based on evidence and will be reviewed to ensure the expected work will under no circumstance be affected.

2. Approval Process

An employee may request to enter into an agreement with Columbia College for an ongoing **Remote Work Agreement**. These requests should be submitted in writing to the employee’s Program or Department Manager or designate in advance using the **Remote Work Request Form**. If the request is approved, it will be regularly reviewed at the sole and absolute discretion of the Department Manager or College. If at any time the arrangement no longer meets the college’s needs and expectations, the College reserves the right to modify or revoke the agreement.

Employees without a **Remote Work Agreement** may request to work from home up to 3 days if needed (ie. showing symptoms of illness). The employee will be required to contact their manager directly in writing for pre- approval.

3. Payroll

Employees are to maintain a regular working schedule as per their Employment Agreement while working remotely. No changes will be made to the method of payment or the amount. If an employee is found to have falsely reported their hours, they will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

4. Expenses

The College will supply the employee with the appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

Upon submission of receipts as per the Employee Expense Reimbursement Policy, pre-approved expenses will be reviewed and then processed if the College finds they are work-related and are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job.

5. Performance Management

Working remotely should not affect an employee's ability to complete day-to-day functions, including communicating with colleagues, management, students/clients, and other stakeholders within normal business hours. Employees must stay updated on department and work events, keep supervisors informed of the progress of assignments and reach out for support if needed. If an employee's presence is required for a meeting, workshop, event or any other activity at the worksite, as much reasonable notice will be provided and the College expects that employees attend.

Working remotely is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child/elder care or pet care. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child/elder care needs on a time to time basis, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting student needs and business demands.

6. Use of College Property

The College will assign access to electronic devices to staff for one workspace. This will normally be in a shared or assigned workspace at the College. In cases where an employee is required as part of their responsibilities to conduct work away from the College, the temporary lending out of additional devices may be considered by Human Resources pending confirmation from the IS Coordinator that extra devices are available.

Employees requesting to work remotely through the Working Remote Agreement will be required to use their own equipment when working from home. This includes the use of personal desktops, laptops, tablets and cellphones. Technology requirements and security applications will apply and must be pre-approved by the IS Department by the successful completion and review of the IS Workplace Checklist. Extra equipment, including ergonomic desk and chairs, will not be provided to employees moving back and forth between their WFH Location and the College Premise.

In certain programs where external funding bodies have provided devices for remote work, or under specific circumstances (for example, where an individual's job description clearly outlines how working remote is a direct part of their responsibilities), the College may provide devices when working remotely. College-owned resources

may only be used for business purposes, and must also satisfy the **IS Remote Work Personal Device Checklist**. Employees must take reasonable steps to protect any College property from theft, damage, or misuse. Employees must report to the IS department immediately if devices are lost or stolen. Depending on the circumstances, the employee may be responsible for damage to or loss of College property.

When an employee who works remotely comes to the College premises to work, they must bring the necessary equipment (e.g. laptop) or confirm that equipment is available on College Premises (e.g. shared workstation) to perform their job. Departments are responsible to ensure appropriate workstations are available for employees working on College Premises

7. Information Security, Privacy and Confidentiality

Employees working remotely should follow these guidelines:

- ensure that other members of your household do not have access to confidential or personal information;
- do not leave information unattended in your vehicle or at home;
- all Columbia College records must be stored on-campus in a secured location ie. Locked filing cabinet. Records should not be stored remotely.
- have a unique login profile set up exclusively for College work that is only used by College employees (i.e. Login name for computer: Jones – College Profile);
- all employees must complete Cyber Security Training provided by the College.
- have installed approved Anti-Virus software;
- use a secured Virtual Private Network (VPN) with College account when accessing confidential information;
- take extra precautions to safeguard hard copy information; and
- use the College's Microsoft 365 account to manage information. If documents need to be shared with external parties, they can be shared via a secure link. These should be limited, specific and timed.

Employees who are using personal devices at home for College work must go through the **IS Remote Work Personal Device Checklist** with the IS Department Coordinator or Designate and submit to Human Resources.

Employees should review and follow the College's [Records Management Policy and Password Policy](#)

Employees who experience or suspect unauthorized access to College data, loss of College data or disclosure of College resources, please immediately report the incident to the IS Department's Help Desk at <https://help.columbia.ab.ca>.

8. Health and Safety

Columbia College is committed to ensuring that the alternate worksite is safe and ergonomic.

The employee is responsible for providing adequate workspace free from distractions, appropriate furnishings (desk/table and chair) and good internet connection while working remotely.

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Employees must complete the **Home Office Safety Checklist**. Injuries sustained by the employee working remotely and in conjunction with their regular work duties are normally covered by the College's workers' compensation policy. Employees working remotely are responsible for notifying the employer of such

injuries as soon as possible. If working alone remotely, a regular communication plan should be made to ensure OHS regulations are met.

Unless ill-advised due to legislation, regulations, or restrictions, the College reserves the right to request an onsite visit to the employee's residential worksite at a mutually agreeable time to ensure that the designated workspace is safe and free from hazards and distractions. If the workspace is unsafe and cannot be made safe, Columbia College may refuse or revoke the employee's remote work arrangement.

All in-person meetings with students/clients/ suppliers/etc. should be done at the college premises.

9. End of Agreement

The employer or employee may end the **Remote Work Agreement** with a minimum of 30 days' notice in writing. This notice period can be shortened by mutual agreement. Employees must promptly return all College property and documents/files used for working remotely, and return to the regular on-site work schedule. Failure to do so may result in discipline for current employees or legal action if the employee no longer works for the College.

The College reserves the right to change this policy at its discretion.