



Guidelines for Telecommuting at UBC MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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Introduction and General Principles

There is increasing interest amongst Management and Professional (M&P) staff for more flexible work arrangements. The underlying reasons are grounded in individual circumstances but are often based on the need to create more time in the work day, the avoidance of a lengthy commute, or a desire for quiet or reflective work time.

[*Focus on People: Workplace Practices at UBC*](#) urges us, within strategy #1 to explore flexible work arrangements as part of our commitment to a sustainable, healthy workplace.

The corollary to providing M&P staff with the flexibility to manage their lives for their well-being, is that their departments must still be able to function effectively.

Simply put, telecommuting means the ability to work off-site, either on a regular or ad hoc basis. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide for the fundamental elements that need to be in place for this kind of work arrangement to be successful, and processes to follow in considering such arrangements.

The sheer number of M&P staff, and their various roles and working arrangements makes it impossible to provide for a singular telecommuting arrangement. Therefore, the details of any such arrangement must be determined at the departmental level. It is incumbent though upon HR, in its stewardship role for workplace practices, to provide for a framework that enables consistency of approach and practice across the University.

The following are the fundamental elements of these guidelines:

1. These Guidelines apply to M&P staff.
2. The purpose and objective of Telecommuting is to provide flexible work arrangements in appropriate circumstances where doing so enables the Department to continue to function effectively.
3. Telecommuting is a valuable benefit to provide in appropriate circumstances, but it is not a right or an entitlement. While some jobs and positions will be suitable for telecommuting, not every job or position will be.
4. Telecommuting will be approved on a case-by-case basis as outlined below under "Approval and Termination".
5. In order for departments to function effectively, there is the need for M&P staff to attend the workplace regularly. Telecommuting is not an appropriate or complete substitute for being physically present in the department. Consequently, it is important to note that approvals for telecommuting will not include full time work from off-site locations.
6. Telecommuting is a means by which, in appropriate circumstances, an M&P staff member can perform their job responsibilities. In all circumstances, it is important to state that it must not be used as a substitute for dependent/elder care.
7. Except as expressly agreed between the Department and the M&P staff member, Telecommuting does not change the terms and conditions of employment of the M&P staff member. For purposes of certainty, all existing terms and conditions of employment as set out

in the Agreement on Conditions and Terms of Employment and the Framework Agreement between the University of British Columbia and the Association of Administrative and Professional Staff (AAPS) continue to apply.

Approval and Termination of Telecommuting Arrangements

1. An M&P staff member interested in Telecommuting must submit an application in writing to his/her Manager, which includes the following information: name, position, time period for request, off-site work location, contact information, and proposed working hours on and off site.
2. Following receipt of a written application, a Manager may request to meet with the M&P staff member to discuss the application and/or to provide additional information.
3. Approval of Telecommuting applications is in the sole discretion of the applicable Manager and done on a case-by-case basis.
4. If an application is approved, the specific terms and conditions of the telecommuting arrangement will be set out in a written agreement, signed by the M&P staff member and his/her Manager. The written agreement will contain at a minimum the following information:
 - Hours and Days of Work;
 - Hours and Days per week in the Department;
 - Hours and Days per week off-site;
 - Agreement on prior notice if the schedule is on an ad hoc basis;
 - Agreement on whether UBC owned or personal computers will be used;
 - M&P staff member contact information for all times when working off-site; and
 - Performance Standards and/or goals and objectives.
5. Telecommuting arrangements and agreements may be terminated by either party as follows:
 - a) By the M&P staff member upon 2 weeks' notice to his/her Manager; and
 - b) By the Manager, upon 2 weeks' notice to the M&P staff member.
6. Telecommuting agreements will be monitored by the Manager to ensure goals and objectives are met.

Workspace, Equipment and Protection of Proprietary and Other Information

1. M&P staff members approved for telecommuting are responsible for providing a suitable and secure off-site workspace at their own expense.
2. The off-site workspace will be considered an extension of the University's workplace and therefore will be subject to and governed by applicable Workers' Compensation legislation and WorkSafe B.C. Employees will be expected to comply with normal reporting requirements for any work-related accident or injury.
3. Telecommuting M&P staff will be responsible for the safe and secure handling of all proprietary and other information taken off-site or accessed from the off-site location, including but not limited to electronic files saved on home computers. For greater clarity, the security systems and policies established by the Department and the University policies will continue to apply.
4. The use of UBC supplied and owned computers/laptops are preferred for telecommuting. This may take the form of laptops permanently assigned to an employee as their work computer, a laptop from a pool of department laptops which is returned when not in use,

or a UBC computer taken home and left at home. It is also possible to use your home personal computer for telecommuting. Your manager will assess your needs and approve either the use of a portable workstation or your personal computer. Their decision will be recorded in the Telework Agreement. The department will provide a checklist of minimum security requirements which will include: anti-virus and anti-malware software installed, regular full-computer virus scans, cabled or hard wired connection to a router or wireless that is password protected, and restricted use by non-UBC individuals. Other considerations include:

- Refrain from using email to transfer data to yourself
 - Use USB storage devices that require a password
 - When connecting to UBC from home, use a VPN connection
 - Avoid CDs and DVDs as they can be lost or copied
 - Ensure laptops are password protected so data can't be easily accessed if the laptop is lost or stolen
 - Remove information from laptop once it is no longer in use
5. Telecommuting M&P staff will continue to be bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of British Columbia and any other applicable legislation.