



Remote Work – Employee Resources

Remote Work

Is Remote Work for me? Some things to consider:

Before completing a Remote Work Application, it is important to understand that Remote Work is not an appropriate work arrangement for everyone. There are many important factors to consider before approaching your supervisor about a Remote Work arrangement. Departmental needs, past employee performance, and suitability of position to Remote Work will all impact the decision about whether a Remote Work Application will be approved. Employees should consider financial, social, and professional factors before completing an application. Employees should also familiarize themselves with the Remote Work Policy and its supporting guidelines.

1. Remote Work Arrangements

Consider the type of work arrangement you would like to request. There are four different types that an employee can apply for:

- **Full-time Remote Work** is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform their job duties away from their Designated Workplace for their entire work week.
- **Hybrid Remote Work** is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform their job duties away from their Designated Workplace for part of their work week on a specific schedule, with the remainder of the work week spent at the Designated Workplace.
- **Long-Distance Remote Work** is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform their job duties at a singular work location within the Northwest Territories (NWT), or within the NWT and Nunavut for employees of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC), that is outside of the community where their Designated Workplace is located.
- **Out-of-Territory Remote Work** is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform their job duties away from their Designated Workplace, at a location within Canada that is outside of the NWT, or for WSCC employees, outside of the NWT and Nunavut.



2. Financial Considerations

Remote work arrangements must not cause additional costs for the GNWT. It is important for employees to consider the financial costs of working from their Designated Workplace. These costs may include:

- Responsibility for any service charges for the Remote Work Site, including phone line and internet (email), as well as the cost of any utilities or renovation costs associated with the Remote Work Site.
- Responsibility for purchasing office furniture for the Remote Work site.
- Employees will be responsible for all assets belonging to the employer and will be responsible for the replacement value of those assets that cannot be accounted for at the termination of the Remote Work arrangement.
- Reduced cost of commuting to the workplace
- Possible tax-deductibility of expenses incurred while working at a Remote Work Site
- Savings gained through flexible working hours
- Responsibility for ensuring appropriate insurance coverage for the Remote Work Site.

3. Social Considerations

- Remote Work can lead to feelings of isolation, especially for employees who work remotely full-time. Consider if you are comfortable working alone in your Remote Work Site.
- Employees may need to make extra effort to maintain communication and a good working relationship with colleagues.
- Employees may need to consider accessing mental health resources, as needed.



4. Performance Considerations

Employees are expected to maintain the same level of productivity and work quality while working remotely.

- It is important that the Remote Work Arrangement is compatible with an employee's working style. Are you able to work independently with minimal supervision? Are you reliable, responsible, and flexible?
- Think about the following abilities, skills and responsibilities as they pertain to Remote Work:
 - Ability to carry out the full responsibilities of your job description.
 - Ability to maintain work contacts and professional networks.
 - Ability to problem solve and work independently or reach out to appropriate supports for assistance when required.
 - Strong follow-up and communication skills.
 - Suitability of position to remote work.
 - Responsibility for troubleshooting technology issues with minimal or remote support.

Tips for approaching your manager about Remote Work

Before you meet with your manager to discuss working remotely, take time to consider the type of work arrangement you are requesting. It is also important to:

- Review the Remote Work Policy and Guidelines to ensure that you are aware of the requirements and your responsibilities as an employee.
- Review the considerations above before you make your decision. Consider how you will approach issues that may arise.
- Prepare for the meeting in advance – have a clear idea of the type of Remote Work Agreement you are requesting.
- Give your supervisor ample notice for your meeting request.
- Be open to discussing alternative options to your request. This might include a Hybrid Remote Work agreement instead of Full-time Remote Work.



Post-agreement Considerations

1. Health and Safety Considerations

- Employees are responsible for following safe work habits and must inform their employer immediately of any accidents that occur at the Remote Work Site.
 - Responsibility for maintaining a clean office space that complies with the Occupational Health and Safety policy.
 - Completion of regular Remote Worksite Health and Safety Inspections and submitting them for review as directed.
 - Completion of appropriate Health, Safety and Wellness training prior to the start of Remote Work.
- Employees should consider how they will remain engaged in workplace culture and maintain relationships with colleagues while working remotely.

2. Performance Management Considerations

- Consider how you will maintain communication with your colleagues and supervisor.
- If out-of-territory work is approved, consider how you will manage a potential time difference between your Remote Work Site and your Designated Workplace.
- How will you achieve performance objectives and learning goals?

3. Technical Considerations

- When working remotely, employees are responsible for:
 - Setting up their own workstations, including necessary technology.
 - Troubleshooting basic computer issues themselves, or with minimal support.
 - Maintaining confidentiality and security of sensitive information.
- Employees may be required to bring their electronic device(s) to a government location for service.



Mental Health and Wellness

Working remotely can lead to feelings of isolation. It is important to maintain social and workplace connections. The GNWT offers several resources for help managing mental health and well-being.

1. [Employee and Family Assistance Program \(EFAP\)](#)

Professionally trained counselors are available 24/7 to provide confidential help to employees who are struggling with stress and anxiety. EFAP can connect you with resources to assist with emotional and mental health, as well as financial matters, family matters, and other issues that may occur.

Supports include:

- individual support for managing stress and anxiety (discussing your concerns with a professional and getting relaxation or coping strategies);
- how to support and have conversations with your family, including young children, who may be upset by stresses relating to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Connecting employees with a financial consultant regarding planning for an emergency fund or concerns about your retirement plan

Through EFAP, employees can also access free webinars as well as information and tips for managing themselves and their family members through stressful, important subject areas.

2. [LifeSpeak](#)

LifeSpeak is a 24/7, total well-being platform where GNWT employees and their families can access expert information and videos on a wide range of topics including managing anxiety, social distancing, and managing finances when and where they need—completely confidentially.

3. [AbilitiCBT](#)

AbilitiCBT is an app-based program that delivers interactive, engaging, and convenient Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) delivered by professionally trained therapists through an online platform accessible 24/7 from home or anywhere through your mobile device or tablet.



FAQs

- **Is there a minimum and maximum length of time for a Remote Work Agreement?**

A formal Remote Work Agreement is required for remote work over 21 business days. Remote Work Agreements have a maximum length of 2 years and must be evaluated in accordance with schedule outlined in the Remote Work Agreement.
- **Where do I find a list of resources for the Remote Work policy?**

Please see Employee Resources under the [Remote Work Policy](#) found under the Resources tab in MyHR. [Tools for working remotely](#) is also available under the Resources tab on MyHR.
- **Can I work from home while caring for my children or an elder?**

This will be dependent on the work duties of the Employee and the responsibilities involved in providing care for the dependent(s). The Employee will be required to submit a brief overview of the daily care required for their dependents and how that care can be managed while completing the requisite duties of their position.
- **Will the GNWT cover my expenses for office furniture if I am requesting Remote Work?**

The Remote Work Policy sets out that Remote Work should not result in additional costs for the GNWT. Employees applying for Remote Work should consider whether they are able to set up a workspace that complies with the requirements of the [GNWT Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#) and, if there are any costs they expect the GNWT to bear, whether those costs are reasonable.
- **How do I know what a reasonable expense is?**

Employees should consider a 'reasonable expense' as something that limits costs while allowing the employee to complete their work duties safely. At all times, employees should be mindful of the fact that Remote Work under this Policy is voluntary and should not result in additional costs for the GNWT.
- **I live in a small community but would like to use a Remote Work agreement so that I can live in Yellowknife. Is this possible?**

Community specific positions are created for those specific communities to ensure fair distribution of Public Service work force opportunities. Remote Work Agreements where the proposed Remote Work Site is located in Yellowknife and the duration is in excess of 21 business days will not be approved.



- **Am I expected to work regular hours (8:30-5) when working remotely, or can I do flex hours?**

Employees should consider their duties and their normal work hours in making an application for Remote Work. If an employee's duties require them to be available during their division's normal work hours, flex hours may not be appropriate.
- **Can I use my own computer for GNWT business?**

Security and confidentiality of information risks make use of an employee's personal computer for a formal Remote Work Agreement not recommended; a request for Remote Work may not be approved if the employee proposes to use their personal computer.
- **How can I ensure client information is kept confidential?**

Employees who participate in Remote Work will need to ensure that they are able to complete their work securely and confidentially. This may include use of GNWT services, such as linking to the GNWT Virtual Private Network (VPN), or only completing employee duties on GNWT authorized workstations and computers.
- **Does the internet usage policy apply to me if I work remotely?**

Employees who are using a GNWT issued computer must adhere to the GNWT's Employee Internet Usage Policy as well as to all other applicable GNWT policies during completion of their duties. GNWT issued computers and other work tools should only be used for completion of work duties. As per the Remote Work Policy Guidelines, the Employee is required to cover all operating costs associated with their Remote Work Site.
- **How do I conduct an OHS inspection of my remote workspace?**

The Employee will conduct a [Work From Home Safety Assessment](#) (Safety Assessment) and send it, along with photographs of their Remote Work Site, to their supervisor for approval. If there are issues with the employee's workspace meeting OHS requirements, the employee should inform their supervisor so OHS requirements can be met.
- **How do I report a workplace incident to WSCC?**

Workplace incidents should be reported on the employee's MyHR page in the same manner as when the employee is at their Designated Workplace.
- **Do I need to remain at my Designated Workplace during work hours or can I work from another location (i.e., camping spot)?**

The Employee is required to work from the Remote Work Site set out in their Remote Work Agreement. Locations other than the approved Remote Work Site will not have had a Safety Assessment completed for them, creating potential risks and liabilities not considered in the employee's Remote Work Agreement.



Communication with Team and Supervisor

- **What are the expectations for communication with my supervisor?**
Communication with supervisors and other team members is expected to remain consistent with communication levels at the Designated Workplace. The Employee and Supervisor will set communication and performance expectations before the start of the Remote Work Agreement.
- **What do I need to do if I'm working remotely and have a doctor's appointment?**
You are required to inform your Supervisor of any medical appointments, childcare duties, sick/special leave, annual leave, etc.
- **I have not disclosed my vaccination status and do not wish to undergo weekly testing or wear PPE in the office. Can I apply for a Remote Work Agreement?**
All GNWT Policies remain in effect for the employee regardless of the location of their Work Site, including the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.
- **I have colleagues in my work environment who are not vaccinated, and I do not feel comfortable. Can I apply for a Remote Work Agreement?**

The GNWT has a duty to ensure a safe work environment for employees. The GNWT COVID-19 Vaccination Policy sets out safety measures that must be adhered to by employees, including PPE use and testing for COVID-19. Employees who do not feel comfortable should address these concerns with their supervisor so that they can be addressed.