



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

Work from Home Program

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Purpose

The University of Alberta is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive work environment for its employees. In appropriate circumstances, approved by the university, this can include opportunities to work from home.

The Work from Home (WFH) Program provides employees the flexibility to work from home while maintaining the necessary level of productivity, engagement and performance required by the university.

Guiding Principles

The use of the WFH Program is voluntary and mutually agreed upon between the employee and the manager before the WFH Application Form is approved. Where a WFH request is approved, the form does not change the employee's basic terms and conditions of employment with the university under the applicable collective agreement or handbook, employment contract, policies and/or laws.

A WFH Application Form is required when employees are regularly working from home for all or a portion of their regular hours of work on an ongoing basis. Requests to work from home on an occasional or one-off basis are to be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the manager/supervisor and do not require approval through the WFH Application Form.

It is required that managers review each application objectively and ensure the principles of fairness and equity are upheld at all stages of the process. This is accomplished by providing clear and consistent processes and engaging in open discussions that allow parties to provide constructive feedback.

A WFH request should not be used as a solution for personal needs including dependent care or other personal responsibilities. Employees must have plans in place for regular dependent care and other personal or family responsibilities during work hours. Requests for accommodation related to family status or other protected grounds will be considered through other processes.

A WFH request is not intended to facilitate the employment of individuals who wish to reside outside of the province of Alberta. Employing individuals who reside outside of the province of Alberta poses many risks and issues related to pay, benefits, employment standards, collective agreement or handbook application and legislative compliance. All these factors collectively or on their own could be detrimental to the university and can result in penalties, fees and fines as well as reputational risks. Managers should consult their HR Partner (HRP) in relation to any out of province employment.

The university has developed a set of guiding principles that will enable managers/supervisors to make informed decisions regarding WFH requests. These principles are not exhaustive or exclusively determinative of any particular situation, which will ultimately be at the university's exclusive discretion.

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WFH requests should support the faculty and/or department's operations and/or programs, including productivity goals, cost effectiveness, and client-focused service

2	WFH requests are typically entered into with the mutual agreement of the employee and manager (absent situations where the university must mandate that an employee work from home, which may involve policies and considerations separate from these)
3	WFH requests will never be permanent but rather will be expressly stated as temporary and subject to review on at least an annual basis to ensure the WFH request continues to be appropriate
4	WFH requests will not result in an increase to overall operating costs
5	WFH requests will be expressly stated to be subject to amendment or withdrawn with 30 days notice (or less if parties agree or the situation is emergent) if the request is no longer suitable for the faculty/department or the employee
6	WFH requests must not conflict with the provisions of the applicable collective agreement(s) or handbook

Definitions

Please note that the following defined terms are provided solely for the purposes of the Work From Home (WFH) Program and may differ from similar definitions found in other programs and university UAPPOL policies/procedures.

Eligible Employee

An individual who is employed on a full-time or part-time capacity by the University of Alberta and who are employed in one of the following categories:

- Administration & Professional Officers (APO)
- Non-Union Employees (Academic Administrators, continuing or temporary)
- Support Staff
- Temporary Librarian and Administrative & Professional Officers (TLAPO)
- Trust/Research Academic Staff (TRAS)

Designated Work Location

The location where the employee's work would normally be conducted. For the purpose of this program, a designated location of work is on one of the university's five campus locations in Edmonton and Camrose.

Work from Home/WFH

Work that is performed from an employee's primary residence (home office) rather than the University of Alberta.

Work from Home (WFH) Application Form

A completed form that authorizes an employee to work all or a portion of their workday from their primary residence.

Manager

An individual who has accountability over one or more units within a college or administrative unit.

Supervisor

An individual who is responsible for directly overseeing an employee's work.

Senior Manager

An individual at a director or department chair level who is responsible for approving WFH requests. *Note:* If the WFH request is being initiated by a senior manager or above, two levels of approval are required up to the vice president or provost.

Eligibility

Campuses

This program applies to employees whose work would normally be conducted within one of the five University of Alberta campuses:

North Campus	South Campus	Campus Saint-Jean	Augustana Campus	Enterprise Square
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This program does not apply to individuals whose designated location of work falls outside of these five campuses.

Positions

Approval will be at the exclusive discretion of the university and include consideration of operational, administrative, budgetary and program requirements. Applications will not be approved in cases where it is determined that the work is not suitable for a WFH request or where it is not in the overall best interests of the university. Examples of categories of positions that will not be eligible to work from home include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employees required for some in-person service delivery roles
- Employees who provide in-person health or dental care to patients
- Employees who work in a laboratory setting
- Employees who care for animals
- Employees who maintain campus buildings or grounds
- Employees who provide direct service to students living in university residences
- Employees who prepare or serve food
- Employees responsible for maintenance, operation and construction of utilities
- Employees responsible for general patrol services and on-site incident response

While there is no minimum requirement for new employees to work on campus prior to applying for the program, managers/supervisors should make provisions for onboarding and training in an in-person environment as required.

Employee Considerations

As employees review the eligibility criteria, there are a few considerations that may help determine if the WFH Program could be feasible for their role, including:

- Does the work I perform require me to collaborate in person with my coworkers, supervisor, and/or clients on a regular basis?
- How would I ensure I am accessible to clients?
- Am I willing to adjust my schedule and come into the office on a regularly scheduled home office day if required?
- Does my work require me to use systems (non-computer) and/or resources that are only accessible from a university worksite?
- Does my home work location allow for university assets such as equipment and documents to be securely stored?
- Does my home work location meet Health and Safety standards and allow for confidential conversations to occur as required?

Application and Approval

New or revised applications may be submitted to a manager/supervisor at any time and considered thereafter.

Application Process

An employee interested in a WFH request will:

- review the WFH Program Guide materials and assesses whether their role is eligible for consideration
- complete the application form and submit it to their manager/supervisor for discussion

Following initial discussion, the manager/supervisor will:

- consider all WFH requests in good faith to assess feasibility
- forward the WFH Application Form to the senior manager for review and approval if they deem it feasible
- work with the employee to finalize the form once it is approved by the senior manager, outlining the conditions of the WFH arrangement and determining a start date

Regular Review

The manager/supervisor and employee will review the WFH arrangement on an annual basis (at a minimum) to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the faculty/department and the employee. Managers/supervisors will also ensure eligible employees are given equal access to apply for the program, and that all requests are considered in a consistent manner when making decisions to continue and/or terminate WFH arrangements.

The WFH arrangement may be modified or terminated at any time by either party. Except where the termination is immediate due to emergency, just cause or a breach of the WFH arrangement, the manager/supervisor or employee will provide 30 calendar days written notice to terminate a WFH arrangement. This notice period can be shortened by mutual agreement. If other terms and conditions of employment have been modified, the appropriate collective agreement or handbook provisions apply.

WFH arrangements are not guaranteed to continue for any particular period of time or in any particular circumstance, including if an employee changes jobs or moves to a different faculty/department. Upon confirmation of position change, the employee will review the suitability of the new position for a WFH arrangement, which may include completion of a new WFH Application Form.

Hours of Work and Scheduling

Hours of work in a WFH arrangement will be the same as if the employee was working on campus and must comply with applicable collective agreement/handbook provisions and/or employment standards regulation, as applicable.

Work schedules may have a combination of at-home and on-site work, subject to space availability and work demands. Managers/supervisors and employees will work together to confirm an appropriate schedule.

Flexible work hours, earned days off, overtime and other similar arrangements are subject to applicable collective agreement/handbook provisions and/or Employment Standard regulations.

Absences and Time Reporting

- Any deviations of the work schedule are discussed in advance and approved by the supervisor
- Normal departmental processes apply for seeking approval for overtime, requesting vacation and for absences, where applicable
- If an employee is ill and unable to work, normal illness leave provisions apply
- All usual reporting obligations apply, including the obligations to report to the supervisor in the event the employee is sick or otherwise unable to attend to work during scheduled hours (i.e. attending a medical appointment)

The employee is responsible for notifying their manager/supervisor as soon as possible in the event of equipment or connectivity malfunction. It is expected that every reasonable effort will be made by the employee to minimize work disruption. Alternative tasks and a change in work location may be assigned.

Designated in-person (on campus) days per month will be determined by the manager/supervisor and included in the application form. Faculties/departments may also set required in-person days for employees. Even when a WFH arrangement is in place, in-person attendance may be required at any time by the manager/supervisor at their discretion, including to attend:

- in-person team meetings or meetings with their manager/supervisor
- other in-person meetings
- work events
- training sessions
- emergencies or unplanned events

Accountabilities

Senior Manager (Department Chair/Director)	Senior managers are required to review and approve/deny WFH requests within their designated areas of authority. <i>Note: If the WFH is being requested by a senior manager or above, two levels of approval are required up to the vice president or provost.</i> <i>Example 1: Director requests a WFH—AVP and VP approval required</i> <i>Example 2: AVP requests a WFH—VP approval only required</i>
Manager or Supervisor	Managers (with input from the supervisor) will monitor and oversee the performance of employees with WFH arrangements, including regular review to ensure operational needs and appropriate service expectations are being met. This may include but is not limited to: • reviewing WFH requests and determining operational feasibility • completing the WFH Application Form which clearly outlines the conditions of the WFH arrangement • ensuring a copy of the approved WFH Application Form is provided to the employee and included in the employee's personnel file • reviewing and ensuring the employee will have the appropriate office contents and equipment in the home environment to support safe work practices • understanding the department's financial responsibility, including deductible and claim reporting, for loss or damage to university property while the employee is in transit or working from home • ensuring the employee understands and accepts responsibility for all personal property used for university business including their vehicle • establishing standards for tracking and reporting work • incorporating specific and measurable performance expectations for work performed at home into the employee's regular performance plan • ensuring regular coaching and feedback sessions • requesting regular updates on project progress and milestones • obtaining feedback from clients • identifying areas for growth and development Performance standards of employees working at home or on campus will not vary. A WFH arrangement will not result in a loss of productivity or added responsibilities for other colleagues.

Employee	Employees play a key role in making the WFH arrangement work. Specifically, employees are responsible for: • reviewing the requirements of the WFH Program • developing and submitting a WFH Application Form for their manager/supervisor's review • fulfilling the conditions outlined in the WFH arrangement • reviewing and complying with university Guidelines for Working Remotely to ensure privacy and security of information while working from home • reviewing and complying with space/office and health and safety requirements • ensuring that all work records are kept in one central, accessible location to be accessed while in the office and the home work location • ensuring all personal homeowner and tenant insurance policies are in place while working from home • ensuring performance and service standards are being met • completing all mandatory training requirements • maintaining regular communication with colleagues, stakeholders, clients and their manager/supervisor • ensuring a plan is in place for regular dependent care and other personal or family responsibilities during work hours Employees will be required to attend in-person meetings or other work-related events at the university work-site as determined in the WFH arrangement and from time to time by their manager/supervisor.
HR Partner	Responsible for advising managers/supervisors on WFH requirements including: • assisting managers/supervisors in assessing operational feasibility and suitability for work from home • reviewing requests for modified hours accompanying a WFH application to ensure compliance with collective agreements/handbook or Employment Standards • ensuring WFH arrangements are reviewed during trial periods and at least annually thereafter

Training Requirements

Employees entering into a WFH arrangement will be required to complete the following training before their start date.

Health and Safety

- [Ergonomic Self Assessment](#)
- [Working in an Office or Hybrid Workplace - Ergonomics + Fire Extinguisher E-Courses](#)

Information Management - Security/Privacy

- [Privacy & Security Awareness Training and Acknowledgement](#)
- [PARIS Training – Privacy, Archives, Records & Information Security](#) (Questions? privacy@ualberta.ca)
- [Protecting and Managing University Records When Working from Home](#)

Information Management - Systems and Technology

- [Information Services and Technology Working From Home Resources](#)

Home Office Requirements

Employees approved for a WFH will require a dedicated home workspace that will enable a productive work environment. Employees are responsible for the following costs and equipment associated with working from home, including:

- high-speed internet connection
 - *High speed broadband access (LAN, cable or DSL) with minimum download speed of 5Mbps is strongly recommended*
- cellular phone or landline
- printer and printer supplies, if required
- office furniture meeting ergonomic standards
- appropriate workspace lighting
- repair, maintenance and operation of personal equipment
- home insurance and related coverage for a home office
- mortgage or rent
- utilities

The university will provide:

- standard stationery (ordered through established university procedures)
- touchdown space at a designated university worksite to enable meetings with supervisors or work teams, or to complete administrative work required on site
- first aid kit
- headset
- one university-owned desktop computer or laptop and technology accessory kit (mouse, keyboard, monitor, docking station, etc.), if required

Additional equipment for the sole purpose of working from home will not be provided. Office chairs may be **borrowed** from the work-site pending approval of the manager/supervisor.

Employees are able to use personal computers while on a WFH arrangement by following the requirements in the *Information Management - Security/Privacy* section below.

All equipment and furnishings purchased directly by the university remain the property of the university and will be returned at the end of the WFH arrangement, or earlier if requested by the university. University provided supplies are solely to be used for the purposes of the employee's duties for the university. The cost of university provided equipment is the responsibility of the faculty/department. Employees may purchase equipment for university use through their Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER) where applicable however equipment purchases must follow the [IST guidelines](#).

The employee is responsible for insuring any employee-owned or leased (personal) contents and equipment used in the performance of their work and for informing their home or tenant insurance carrier of their intent to work from a home office.

Employees who choose to purchase any equipment or otherwise invest funds in anticipation of a WFH request being approved or continuing shall do so at their own expense and risk. There are no guarantees that their WFH request will be approved and/or continue for any particular period of time.

Employees with a WFH arrangement will continue to have access to on-campus resources such as fitness and recreation facilities, libraries, etc.

Compliance with University Policy and Procedures

All University of Alberta policies and procedures (as defined in UAPPOL) and standard departmental operating procedures apply regardless of the work location. These include but are not limited to:

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Conflict of Interest and Commitment and Institutional Conflict Policy](#)
- [Workplace Impairment Policy](#)
- [Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control Procedure](#)
- [Training and Competency Procedure](#)
- [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy](#)
- [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Ethical Conduct and Safe Disclosure Policy](#)
- [Information Technology Use and Management Policy](#)
- [Government of Alberta OHS Working Alone Requirements](#)
- [Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Vehicle Management and Driver Safety - Driver Authorization Procedure](#)

Information Management – Security/Privacy

Any employee with a WFH arrangement will be **required** to:

- take all reasonable steps to secure and maintain the confidentiality of all university information and documents while they are being transported to and from the employee's home work location
- ensure records are kept in one central, accessible location to be accessed from the office and home work location—records are not to be duplicated for in office and home work location use
- secure and protect University of Alberta information in electronic and physical format according to current information management policies
- ensure the home work location allows for confidential discussions when necessary
- dispose of documents as per established departmental record retention schedules at a University of Alberta facility
- safeguard university issued equipment (such as laptops) by storing them in a secure location
- store documents in a location not accessible to others (family members, other residents, visitors, etc.) in the home workspace and separate from personal documents
- store electronic information on the University of Alberta network only and not on the local drive of personally-owned computers, university-issued laptops, or removable media (including smartphones)
- allow the installation of security applications on any university issued computer (or personal computer if being used to conduct U of A work) or personal cell phone, including **Multi-Factor Authentication** (MFA) and **Mobile Device Management** (MDM)
- immediately report any potential information security incidents or privacy breaches including loss or compromise of university information or equipment by following the university's information security incident or privacy breach reporting process and reporting to their direct supervisor

The Staff Service Centre and IST endpoint support staff will resolve any technical issues with software required for university employment, whether on our campuses or at home.

Information Management – Systems and Technology

The university will maintain and repair all IT equipment supplied and owned by the university and within university facilities only. If repairs or maintenance are required, equipment must be brought to a university facility.

Should there be an equipment or technology failure, plans will be made for the employee to work at an on-campus work location while repairs are completed. Employees will advise their manager/supervisor of technical issues immediately so that plans for alternate work locations can be made quickly to reduce downtime.

The employee is responsible for maintenance and repair of all personally-owned equipment used voluntarily for work purposes.

The employee is required to be aware of all the technology requirements in order to work securely. This includes but is not limited to the [IST Securely Working from Home Requirements](#).

Health and Safety

The university is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees. A work site is defined under the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation as any location where an employee is, or is likely to be, engaged in an occupation, including in a [home office](#). As such, the requirements, regulations, and code under the Alberta OHS Act apply to employees approved for a WFH arrangement.

In a WFH arrangement, employees have a personal responsibility for their health, safety, and wellbeing. While working from home, employees should be aware of the potential hazards and the required controls to perform the work safely. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and to meet the requirements of the OHS legislation, employees and managers/supervisors will adhere to the requirements outlined in [HSE-2.1-601.0](#).

The home office is to be evaluated by the employee to ensure that it meets health, safety and wellbeing requirements. During the approval process, employees will be required to complete the applicable documentation and training, and ensure they have implemented mandatory safety measures required to make their WFH location safe for work. Employees and managers/supervisors, together, will review, document and implement all controls identified in the [Home Office Hazard Assessment](#), and ensure that all required training and documentation are completed prior to finalizing the WFH Application Form.

Employees will be required to complete office ergonomics training to ensure their office is set up properly to prevent injury. Basic first aid kits will be provided to employees by their Faculty/Department for their use.

Incident Reporting

Incidents can occur at any work site and must be reported, including at an employee's home office. Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) coverage extends to your home office location and claims will be assessed in line with the WCB Act.

Employees with a WFH arrangement must be familiar with the incident reporting process and follow the process if injured while working in their designated home work location. The process includes:

- Reporting all incidents to their supervisor
- Reporting all incidents through the incident reporting portal
- Reporting all incidents, as necessary, using the standard [WCB reporting form](#)

All incidents should be reviewed between the manager/supervisor and employee and corrective actions implemented to ensure the incident does not occur again. If multiple employees are working from home, the corrective actions should also be implemented at all home work locations, as applicable, to prevent incidents from occurring.

In the rare occurrence that a formal investigation is required for an incident, a site visit may be required by the supervisor. Where possible, this site visit may be done virtually (by video call) or by providing photographs.

Reporting Illness and Injury

If an employee is ill and unable to work, normal illness leave provisions will apply. The employee should advise their manager/supervisor that they are unwell and unable to work.

Employee Pay and Expenses

Salary and Benefits

Salary and benefits will be issued in accordance with current pay scales and benefit plans. Pay for overtime, shift differential, or other premiums will be as per the appropriate [collective agreement](#) or [handbook](#) provisions.

Business Expenses

The university will reimburse business travel in accordance with the Travel Processes and Expense Procedure. Mileage costs for required local travel will be reimbursed as if the employee was traveling from what would be their designated university campus if the employee was not part of a WFH arrangement.

Some employees may be eligible to claim home office expenses on their income tax if certain conditions are met. Employees are responsible for ensuring they understand the Canada Revenue Agency's [Employment Expense Guidelines](#) for home workspaces. Employees are required to seek their own tax advice.

Employees who have an approved WFH arrangement in excess of 50% of their regularly scheduled hours may be eligible to receive a T2200. Providing a copy of the signed and approved WFH Application Form to the [Staff Service Centre](#) will initiate the production of a T2200 if applicable.

Ineligible Expenses

Mileage, parking, or transit fees incurred when an employee is required to attend work at the designated university work site are the responsibility of the employee.

Any personal insurance premiums and/or expenses including but not limited to general insurance costs, additional premiums due to this arrangement, deductibles and/or expenses arising from personal property are excluded from the WFH arrangement.

Department Responsibilities

Every department is responsible for university property that is under a university employee's care and control while on or off campus. This responsibility includes:

- property that is owned by the university but is in transit to another location
- property used by an employee when working from home, or at any remote location
- any financial loss incurred by the university, including any deductible and/or non-insured claim, resulting from loss of use, or damage to university property

Following any loss of use or damage to university property while used in a home office environment, the employee is responsible to report the loss promptly to their supervisor and to file the claim (notice of loss) through the university's insurance [claim reporting process](#). The department is responsible for overseeing that claim reporting is completed in a timely manner with information that will support reimbursement back to the department.

Employee – Home and Automobile Insurance Requirements

At no time will the university be financially responsible for personally owned property on or off campus whether used for the business activities of the University of Alberta or not.

In the event of loss or damage to university-owned property, financial recovery may be available through the university's insurance fund. Employees are fully responsible for:

- notifying their supervisor of the potential loss or damage to university property
- fully cooperating with the university's claim adjuster
- providing details of the circumstances which caused the loss or damage
- providing evidence of university ownership (asset tags) including appropriate documentation

Your department will be responsible for financial loss including any deductible that may be applied by Risk Management or the university's insurer. Your supervisor will be asked to review and approve any claim submitted through to the university's insurance fund.

Using Personal Vehicles for University Business

Where an employee uses a personal vehicle for university business, the employee is responsible for:

- complying with the university's [Vehicle Management and Driver Safety Policy](#)
- completing and signing a waiver, requested from Risk Management, to ensure the employee fully understands the risks and hazards of operating a vehicle for university business
- confirming their insurer is fully aware of the use of their personal vehicle where the vehicle may be used for university business purposes and that an automobile insurance policy is in full force and effect with a minimum of \$2,000,000 of liability
- confirming they are fully aware and responsible for any financial costs that may arise from the use of their personal vehicle, including any deductible and/or uninsured costs

Home or Tenant Insurance

Each employee is required to maintain home and/or tenant insurance as part of the Work from Home program. This is to protect and insure personal property that is used while working from home. Employees are responsible for any costs of this insurance as well as for any deductible for claims against a personal insurance policy.

While copies of personal insurance policies are not required as part of the Work from Home application, employees may, with appropriate written notice, be required to provide the university with a letter from the insurance provider to confirm that personal property and liability insurance is in effect.

Any professional activities for work undertaken by employees outside of the university including property that is not for the business of the university, is the financial responsibility of the employee.