
Flexible Work Arrangements

Policy Number:	4301
Key Process Area:	Employee Engagement & Culture
Owner:	VP FA
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POLICY STATEMENT

This policy addresses working from home due to the following situations:

- a) extreme weather conditions
- b) severe, extensive, or prolonged events
- c) unforeseen events, such as power outages, floods, fires
- d) reasonable requests for a flexible arrangement that may include working remotely or a pre-retirement work reduction that meets considerations outlined in the policy

PURPOSE

The New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) is committed to being flexible in its work arrangements and to the wellbeing of its employees. This includes considering reasonable requests for alternative work arrangements when operational requirements permit. Accordingly, NBCC has adopted this policy to support employees in alternative work arrangements and to meet the changing needs of the College. It is important to note that not all work performed by NBCC employees can be performed from home. Requests to work from home must be approved by the employee's manager.

This policy provides guidelines and precautions for working from home, outlining the responsibilities for the employer and employees.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This policy applies to any NBCC employees who are approved for a flexible arrangement for the reasons noted in the policy statement.

- A flexible arrangement should maintain an employee's regular hours of work, any shifts in hours of work or availability should be discussed with your supervisor/manager in advance.
- A flexible work arrangement does not change the basic terms and conditions of employment, benefits and leave entitlements under the applicable collective agreement, employment contract, policies, and law. All employees are expected to continue to comply with NBCC policies while working remotely.
- In some cases, a supervisor/manager may require an employee to report in a different way, or with different levels of frequency than when they are working onsite. For example, the supervisor/manager may wish to schedule additional update meetings, have updates provided by email, or implement schedules and methods of reporting.
- A remote workspace should provide a comparable level of health, safety, and security to college office space. For more information about ensuring a safe workspace at home, visit the **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety** website.
- The length of time flexible work arrangements, including remote work arrangements, are in place is based on the circumstance for the arrangement, and in some cases the College may terminate a flexible arrangement.

- If employees experience difficulties working remotely due to existing circumstances, they may request consultation with their supervisor/manager and Employee Engagement and Culture to identify potential and reasonable arrangements, on a case-by-case basis.
- The College does not provide additional furniture and equipment (including information technology) which may be needed to work remotely (e.g., printer, scanner, etc.). Additional furniture, equipment (including information technology) would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Employees granted permission to work from remotely (i.e. those for whom their normal work location is other than an NBCC facility) will still be required to attend NBCC facilities and/or events in person to meet operational requirements at the discretion of the employer. Examples may include accessing information technology, physical or electronic files, data, or information as well as supplies or other materials available at a NBCC facility, meetings, and training sessions, etc.
- When required to attend in person, travel from their normal work location to any of the NBCC facilities in their headquarters area will be at the cost of the employee. Travel from their normal work location to any NBCC facility or other location outside of their headquarters area which may be required by the employer will be subject to NBCC's normal travel and reimbursement policies.
- Employees who work remotely more than 60% of the time, will not be guaranteed a permanent workspace at an NBCC location.

1.0 DEFINITIONS

Ergonomics

"The science of studying people at work and then designing tasks, jobs, information, tools, equipment, facilities and the working environment so people can be safe and healthy, effective, productive and comfortable." (Ergonomic Design Guidelines, Auburn Engineering, Inc., 1998).

Family-Related Violence

Family violence in the workplace occurs when violence which originates from a home or within the community spills over into the workplace.

Pre-retirement Workload Reduction

A workload reduction within two years prior to an employee's planned retirement as permitted by the New Brunswick Public Service Pension Plan. If approved, pre-retirement workload reductions will only be permitted within the 24-month period preceding the employee's retirement date. Pre-retirement workload reductions involve a corresponding reduction in pay but allow for employees to maintain their pension contributions at 100%.

Work-Related Incidents at Home

An injury/illness incident that occurs while the employee is performing work for pay or other compensation in the home.

Working Alone at Home

Working alone is considered when the employee is the only worker at the workplace and are working in circumstances where help is not readily available in the event of an injury, ill health, or emergency.

2.0 IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1.1 Employer

It is the responsibility of the supervisor/manager to coordinate appropriate and reasonable work arrangements that include clear expectations with each employee. Such plans should be documented. Flexible arrangements will be reviewed at a minimum annually at which time it may be renewed (with or without additional conditions) or cancelled at the discretion of the employer. The employer may review these arrangements earlier.

Supervisors/managers can achieve this by implementing guidelines, such as:

- Regular one-on-one meetings/check-ins
- Standing or reoccurring team/department meetings
- Work status check ins

In addition:

- Ensure employees understand remote work and ergonomics standards and potential hazards associated with their work task.
- Maintain contact with employees.
- Establish agreed upon hours of work and method of communication (e.g. telephone, email, etc.)
- Communicate specific expectations to individual team members based on each person's needs, circumstance, and job responsibilities.
- Utilize technology to support connection and virtual meetings as appropriate. This may include emails, telephone calls, Microsoft Teams, VPN, etc.
- Ensure any College equipment taken to the remote worksite is documented. When an employee returns to work, ensure that all College property is promptly returned.
- If a work-related injury occurs, arrange for incident investigation in accordance with NBCC's Health and Safety Program and report incidents in accordance with WorkSafeNB requirements

2.1.2 Employee

- Understand and follow the steps outlined in this flexible work arrangements policy.
- Recognize that the flexible work arrangement can change or end based on operational requirements.
- Be aware of and mitigate the risks associated with working remotely.
- Understand that provision of any resources except for basic office supplies (e.g., pens, paper, etc.) needed to work remotely are the employee's responsibility.
- Follow proper ergonomics while working from home.
- Report any work-related incidents to your supervisor/manager.

- Ensure a suitable remote workspace, taking into consideration safety, ergonomics, privacy, and confidentiality.
- Conduct regular check-in of work voicemail and/or have calls forwarded to a home, or cell phone.
- Fulfill the expectations agreed upon with their supervisor/manager regarding the scope of the flexible arrangement and agreed upon method(s) of communication.
- Keep supervisors/managers informed on the progress of assignments and reach out for support if needed.
- Use Microsoft Teams to hold and attend meetings as necessary.
- Ensure ability to access applications and files needed to work remotely.
- Responsible to ensure that College furniture, equipment (including information technology), physical or electronic files, data, and information as well as supplies or other materials are maintained in a secure confidential manner to avoid loss or unauthorized access, destruction, or tampering. Confidential electronic documents should only be accessed securely from College provided servers or cloud locations.
- College files, data and information is not to be stored on removable media or on personal devices (computers, phones, or tablets). Information stored on any device is to be removed once it is no longer in use. All confidentiality and security requirements refer to paper documentation as well.
- Report any malfunctions to equipment as soon as possible to supervisor/manager and IT Services.
- Continue to report absences to your supervisor/managers as soon as possible and ensure that they are reflected in Employee Self Service (ESS).
- Understand that working remotely from home is not for the provision of dependent care. Refer to Paid Leave for Personal and Other Reasons Policy (non-union) or your Collective Agreement (union) for more information on these entitlements.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Considerations for flexible arrangement

- a) Does the nature of the work and requirements of the job allow the employee to be productive in their flexible arrangement?
- b) Is it practical and an efficient use of resources for the work to be completed by the employee in a flexible arrangement?
- c) Can output be monitored and/or measured?
- d) Will there be an impact on the work of others (e.g., meetings, schedules, availability during usual business hours, supervision of or collaboration with other employees)? If so, can the impact be adjusted by the employee or the department?
- e) Approval of flexible work arrangements for Managers should consider requirements at the local level to have “Managers on Duty” to respond to emergencies as part of NBCC’s commitment to collective leadership.

3.2 Work-Related Incidents at When Working Remotely from Home

Where you work and how your workspace and equipment is organized is important to your health and safety. Injury/illness incidents that occur while an employee is working at home, including work in a home office, are considered work-related if:

- a) The injury/illness incident occurs while the employee is performing work for pay or other compensation in the home; and,
- b) The injury/illness is directly related to the performance of work rather than to the general home environment or setting.

For example, if an employee drops a box of files on his/her foot, the injury/illness incident is work-related. However, if the employee trips over the family dog while rushing to answer the phone, and is injured, this injury/illness incident is not work-related.

Promptly report any work-related incident that occurs at home to the supervisor/manager and complete an NBCC Incident Report.

The Employer is not responsible for any non-work-related injuries that occur at home.

3.3 Working Alone at Home

Even though working from home is considered non-hazardous/low hazardous work, if the employee has no one in the home to assist in an event of an injury or emergency, the employer must establish daily check in protocols.

3.4 NBCC Equipment, Supplies and Documents

Equipment and supplies provided by NBCC are to be used only for the purpose of carrying out work for NBCC.

Employees are responsible to secure and protect the property, documents and information belonging to NBCC. Employees will promptly report to their supervisor/manager, any circumstances or incidents which may compromise the confidentiality of any property, documents, or information in connection with their employment.

3.5 Ergonomics

The employee agrees to maintain a designated and dedicated workspace that meets occupational safety standards for the home office and office ergonomics. In doing so, reference **WorkSafeNB Office Ergonomics - Guidelines for preventing Musculoskeletal Injuries**.

3.6 Family-Related Violence

In the course of working remotely from home, if an employee encounters a threat which poses an immediate danger to their personal safety, verbal abuse, or physical violence, and requires immediate assistance, call 9-1-1.

3.7 Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

Working remotely from home for extended periods, especially during emergencies, can have adverse impacts on mental health, particularly for those already living with pre-existing mental

illnesses such as anxiety and depression. There are ways you can ensure you are being productive, healthy, and happy while working from home.

EFAP is a voluntary and confidential service to provide quick and short-term support for work-life wellbeing for all employees and their dependent family members. Information can be found on **NBCC@work/Human Resources/Employee Wellbeing/EFAP**.

4.0 OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

Application Form for Flexible Work Arrangement (4301.5436)

NBCC Health & Safety page

NBCC Incident Report (2600.5390)

Pre-Retirement Workload Reduction Guideline (4301.5209)

Working Alone - Safe Work Practice (2600.4822)