

Telework Policy and Procedures for Staff

1.0 Background

Dalhousie recognizes the opportunities and challenges that teleworking can present. Telework policies respond to:

- improving and supporting employee motivation, productivity, recruitment, and well-being;
- growing pressure on office space;
- the flexibility of technology; and
- environmental and social impacts of travel to and from the office.

This policy sets out the framework within which Dalhousie administers employee requests to telework.

2.0 Application

This policy applies to all Dalhousie staff.

3.0 Definitions

In this policy:

“Department Head” means the person responsible for the oversight of an administrative or academic unit at Dalhousie University.

“Employee” means a person employed by Dalhousie in a staff position.

“Telework” means work typically performed on Dalhousie University premises but instead is performed at home or from a remote-access location. For greater certainty, telework does not include work which is required to be completed remotely by virtue of the nature of the work.

“University property” means equipment (including, but not limited to, telephones, computers, printers and software), services (including, but not limited to, fax lines and electronic networks) and University information (proprietary, confidential or personal) provided by the University to the teleworker.

4.0 Policy

Telework arrangements may be established when an employee requests such an arrangement and when, in the sole discretion of the Department Head or delegate, it is appropriate to do so.

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Eligibility

- 5.1.1 Employees who wish to telework should first discuss their request with their immediate supervisor who will advise the Department Head of the request.

- 5.1.2 Teleworking arrangements and approvals will be made on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Department Head or delegate. Consultation with Human Resources is recommended.
- 5.1.3 Generally, requests to telework should only be considered when the Department Head or delegate determines, in his or her sole discretion, that:
 - 5.1.3.1 The employee does not require close supervision;
 - 5.1.3.2 The employee has more than six months of service in the unit and is not serving a probationary or assessment period;
 - 5.1.3.3 The employee has a suitable work location at the off-site premises;
 - 5.1.3.4 The employee can maintain the expected quantity and quality of his/her work while teleworking;
 - 5.1.3.5 The quality of service provided by the unit where the employee works will not be negatively impacted;
 - 5.1.3.6 Telework is appropriate considering the nature of the employee's job duties;
 - 5.1.3.7 The employee has sufficient knowledge and resources to maintain his or her remote work-site technology, internet connections and software applications. (University IT support will be limited to providing the software to provide appropriate and secure connections should the employee be required to access sensitive information systems.)

5.2 General Terms

All telework arrangements shall comply with the following terms:

- 5.2.1 Duration
 - 5.2.1.1 Telework arrangements will be initially arranged on a trial basis for a finite period, subject to time-limited extensions by mutual agreement. A telework arrangement can be terminated at any time, with reasonable notice by either the Employee or the Department Head or delegate.
- 5.2.2 Working Arrangements
 - 5.2.2.1 Employees must abide by all terms and conditions of their employment while teleworking, including relevant collective agreements, employee group handbooks, University policies, and all other legal and regulatory requirements.
 - 5.2.2.2 The employee must maintain a normal workload.
 - 5.2.2.3 Specific terms of teleworking, including work days, hours and expectations shall be assigned by the Department Head or delegate and confirmed in a completed Appendix A: "Telework Assignment."

- 5.2.2.4 The employee shall record and report all deviations from the telework arrangement to the Department Head or delegate.
 - 5.2.2.5 The employee must be on site (at Dalhousie) as necessary to attend meetings, training sessions, or similar events or activities, or participate in an alternative way, e.g., via teleconference, when appropriate.
 - 5.2.2.6 Dependent (child, elder, pet) care arrangements should be in place and the employee is responsible for keeping up with work demands while teleworking.
- 5.2.3 University Property
- 5.2.3.1 The use of University property while teleworking shall conform to all relevant University policies, including, but not limited to, the IT Resource Acceptable Use Policy (<http://its.dal.ca/policies/5.1.1-acceptable-use.pdf>) and the Mobile Devices Policy (<http://its.dal.ca/policies/5.3.3-mobile-devices.pdf>).
 - 5.2.3.2 Equipment and services may be provided by and paid for by the employee's unit at the Department Head's or delegate's sole discretion. In many cases, however, employees will be expected to provide their own equipment and services, including, but not limited to, computer, internet and telephone.
 - 5.2.3.3 Employees are responsible for the safety and security of all University property that is in their custody while teleworking. For greater certainty, employees shall not copy or duplicate Dalhousie software or information (other than for back-up purposes as required). Further, no person other than the teleworking employee may access any University property. If the employee suspects that a privacy or security breach may have occurred, the employee must notify the Department Head or delegate immediately. Teleworkers must review and comply with Dalhousie's Data Protection Standards (http://its.dal.ca/security/data_protection) and breach reporting practices (lost computer - http://its.dal.ca/security/help/lost_computer; privacy - http://its.dal.ca/security/help/incident_report).
 - 5.2.3.4 Employees shall use all University property only for the purposes of carrying out the University's work.
 - 5.2.3.5 University property must be returned and/or service terminated upon termination of the telework arrangement. If University equipment is provided, each piece of equipment must be listed when the employee takes possession. Employees must return the equipment in the same condition in which it was originally received, minus normal wear and tear. Employees are responsible for missing or damaged equipment. University property in the form of information must be also returned to the University, and all copies or reproductions thereof must be returned or destroyed.

- 5.2.4 Responsibility for Remote Work Site
 - 5.2.4.1 It is the employee's responsibility to ensure compliance with zoning regulations and by-laws concerning the set up of a remote work site. All costs associated with failure to comply with this term shall be borne by the employee.
 - 5.2.4.2 The employee will ensure that adequate insurance is in place to cover the cost of University property at the remote work site.
 - 5.2.4.3 Employees are responsible for the costs of maintaining the remote work site, including, but not limited to, insurance, heat, and electricity.
- 5.2.5 Health and Safety
 - 5.2.5.1 An employee who is teleworking shall be solely responsible for work-related injuries that would not have occurred but for the teleworking arrangement.
 - 5.2.5.2 Business meetings and appointments must not be conducted at the employee's remote work site.
 - 5.2.5.3 Teleworking employees are responsible for adequately equipping the remote work site to ensure its safety.

6.0 Accountability and Monitoring

- 6.1 Department Heads or delegates must periodically evaluate their implementation of this policy to ensure compliance with the policy and the terms of the telework arrangements.
- 6.2 Employees who are granted permission to telework will be provided with a copy of this policy. Each telework arrangement shall include the completion of the Telework Assignment Form (Appendix A) and Acknowledgement of Telework Policy (Appendix B).
- 6.3 Consultation on telework arrangements is available by contacting Employee Relations in Human Resources at 494-1958 or Employee.Relations@Dal.ca.
- 6.4 This policy will be regularly reviewed by Human Resources.

Appendix A
TELEWORK ASSIGNMENT – SPECIFIC TERMS

This chart describes the teleworking terms to be observed. If there are any changes in the telework arrangements, such changes must be noted and agreed upon by the employee and the Department Head or delegate. The employee must read the Telework Policy, sign and date in the spaces provided, and return a copy of this signed document to the Department Head or delegate.

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| The employee agrees to work at the following location: |
| |
| The employee will telework on the following days and hours: |
| |
| Specific work expectations during the telework arrangement: |
| |
| The following equipment is being provided to the employee by the University for telework purposes: |
| |
| The following services are being provided to the employee by the University for telework purposes: |
| |

NOTE: Please forward a copy of this form to Employee Relations at Human Resources so we may better know the roles and departments utilizing telework arrangements. Input and feedback on the effectiveness of this work arrangement from the manager or the teleworker would be most appreciated (494-1958 or Employee.Relations@Dal.ca).

Appendix B
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TELEWORK POLICY

Your signature attests that you agree to the following terms:

I have reviewed a copy of the Telework Policy and understand and agree to the same; and

I understand and agree to the general and specific terms of my telework arrangement as set out in the Telework Policy and in Appendix A.

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Employee Name | Department Head Name |
| Employee Signature | Department Head Signature |
| Employee Title | Department Head Title |
| Date | Date |
| Employee Department/Location | Department/Location |