



FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS RESOURCE GUIDE



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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INTRODUCTION

A flexible work arrangement (FWA) is an agreement between an employee and their supervisor to design a work schedule that accommodates the individual needs and preferences thereby promoting greater productivity, job satisfaction and work-life balance. While it is the university's goal to offer FWAs where there is alignment with the guiding principles outlined in the [Flexible Work Arrangements](#) policy, it recognizes that such arrangements will not be suitable for all positions and situations. Unit heads, supervisors and employees should be open to discussing the various factors involved and decisions should be based on full consideration of all reasons, facts and options.

Where FWAs are approved, the employee and their supervisor should develop or maintain connections in person on a regular basis (e.g. maintaining a monthly meeting on campus). Coordination across the unit should consider a commitment to service, position fit, availability of workspace for employees working on campus and any requirements for all staff to be present on campus for certain meetings or events. Planning should take place at the unit head, supervisor and employee level. Clear communication is essential to ensure everyone has the same understanding.

Types Of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)

Per **section 3** of the [policy](#), the types of flexible work arrangements available include:

Remote Work - A remote work arrangement (RWA) allows employees to perform their job duties at an approved alternative location. Remote work does not include work that is required to be completed remotely (e.g. field research) by virtue of the nature of the work. This arrangement can take the form of either hybrid remote work or complete remote work. Ad hoc remote work is an informal arrangement that may be available to Employees. See more information on ad hoc remote work

Reduced Work Week - a shorter workday or a shorter work week. Salary and benefits are prorated based on the number of hours worked. If working less than 20 hours per week, the employee is not included in the University's pension or benefits plans.

Job Sharing - sharing of a position with another employee; wages and benefits (if applicable) are prorated according to the hours worked. The Department of Human Resources can assist in finding a job-sharing partner and develop a job-sharing agreement.

Short-Term Lateral Position Exchange - The transfer of employees to lateral positions (those of the same or comparable classification) with the consent of both employees and the respective unit heads. The Department of Human Resources can be contacted for assistance in finding a position exchange partner.

Revised Daily Work Schedule - The revision of an employee's daily work schedule to reflect a starting time and/or ending time that is different from an employee's standard hours of work while maintaining the same number of hours per day.

Compressed Work Schedule - An arrangement whereby employees work longer hours, including the option of working a reduced lunch break, for the purpose of facilitating periods of time off with pay at other times, subject to the conditions as outlined in section 3.6 of the [policy](#).

Responsibilities

A key part of the role of a supervisor is working with employees to assess whether a FWA would be a good fit for the individual and their role. Before participating in an FWA, employees should consider how the arrangement will impact their work life and the factors which will influence success. Supervisors are required to receive approval from their unit head for all FWAs. All FWAs should be documented using the [Flexible Work Arrangement Application Form](#) found in the HR Employee Forms section of the [my.mun.ca](#) portal.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE INITIATING FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Units are ultimately responsible for assessing which types of flexible work arrangements will be available to employees within the unit, including RWAs. Unit heads and supervisors are responsible for confirming individual arrangements with employees who report to them and for administering the arrangements in accordance with unit guidelines, the processes outlined in this document and any relevant Memorial policies.

Note that employees with a RWA are expected to be in Newfoundland and Labrador and available to come on campus if required and pre-arranged by their supervisor; any exceptions to allow working outside the province must be approved by the Department of Human Resources.

Benefits of Flexible Work Arrangements

- Fostering a culture of care and well-being is a strategic priority for Memorial. Supporting and enabling employees to effectively balance their professional and personal lives can help foster overall well-being and can be a key contributor of the overall employee experience.
- Fostering a culture of inclusion and equity is also a priority for Memorial. Offering a remote work option can help create a more inclusive environment.
- May be a strategic tool to increase employee engagement and job satisfaction.
- Can help to attract and retain valued employees who want flexible options such as remote work and compressed work schedules.
- With a suitable RWA, employees can work with minimal distractions, resulting in improved productivity and efficiency.
- When structured properly can help improve work/life balance and a healthier lifestyle for employees.
- Implementation of remote work across a unit may result in better space utilization, parking availability and relieve traffic congestion on campus.
- Can help reduce carbon emissions through lower levels of commuting and strain on campus facilities.

A key part of the role of a supervisor is working with employees to assess whether a FWA would be a good fit for the individual and their role. Before participating in a FWA, employees should consider how the arrangement will impact their work life and the factors which will influence success.

Supervisors are required to receive approval from their unit head for all FWAs. As a guideline, checklists covering considerations for units, unit heads, and employees are available (found in the HR Employee Forms section of the my.mun.ca portal) and should be used before initiating a FWA. Unit heads, supervisors and employees should conduct a review of the considerations listed in these checklists in order to determine whether the request is suitable for a FWA.

MONITORING FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Both the supervisor and the employee should expect ongoing adjustments to the FWA may be required. Per the [Procedure for Availing of Flexible Work Arrangements](#), each FWA will begin with a **six-month trial period** for viability assessment. Supervisors must assess the suitability of FWAs for each Employee and consult with the applicable Unit Head to determine if the arrangement is feasible.

A periodic review and evaluation (at minimum on an annual basis) will allow any challenges to be identified and corrected by adjusting details of the arrangement. A number of factors could trigger the need to modify the arrangement, including employee performance concerns, employee satisfaction, operational impact, the ability to meet strategic goals and priorities, and the overall well-being of the employee and others in the unit.

As part of on-going monitoring, supervisors and employees should engage in regular discussions around the success of the arrangement. In evaluating, consideration should be given to the impacts (both positive and negative) on work performance, employee satisfaction and department operations.

Where issues related to performance, behaviour or attendance arise, supervisors should work with employees to address these concerns in a supportive and open manner. This is applicable for all employees regardless of whether they are in an FWA. In some circumstances this will include adjusting the method of communication and feedback to account for FWAs, including relying on communication methods other than in-person meetings for employees working remotely.

Regardless of how feedback is provided, supervisors should consider the following steps in addressing their concerns:

- Set **clear performance standards** and communicate them effectively.
- When performance concerns arise, address them in a **timely, open** and **supportive** manner.
- Partner with employees to create an **action plan** for addressing areas of development, including identifying supports.
- If incidents continue, consider **escalated forms of intervention**, which may include adjustments to (or termination of) the FWA if the arrangement has demonstrated to be a contributory factor.
- Consult with **Human Resources** for further options and support as needed.

MODIFYING OR CONCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS

The process used in modifying or ending a FWA should be just as carefully thought out as when initiating one. Employees should have a role in determining any modifications and should be given appropriate notice before an arrangement is modified or concluded. The [Flexible Work Arrangement Modification or Termination Form](#) (found in the HR Employee Forms section of the my.mun.ca portal) should be used to document any modifications to the type of FWA or when an agreement trial period has ended or is being terminated.

The following reasons may provide justification for modifying or concluding a FWA:

- Change in performance and/or performance concerns
- Ongoing communication challenges
- Change in employee satisfaction
- Change in employee well-being
- Negative impacts to operations
- Other

While the above reasons can occur regardless of whether an employee is working in a FWA, when the arrangement is seen to be a contributing factor to an issue, and corrective action fails, modifying or concluding the FWA may need to be considered.

Such arrangements can be modified or terminated by either party with a **minimum of one month written notice** for adequate planning purposes. Consideration may be given to a shorter notice period (or even immediate termination or modification of FWA) should all parties be in agreement, and/or there be a health and safety concern or other exceptional or unexpected circumstance where the FWA is having a significant negative impact on operational needs or added unit costs that are not feasible.

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

To effectively work remotely, employees require access to appropriate technology to complete their work. This typically includes:

- A Memorial-managed **laptop** (or desktop computer, where appropriate).

- A **VPN connection** to the Memorial network for accessing specific Memorial systems (such as shared drives). [Read more about VPN access.](#)
- A **webcam and microphone** appropriate for video conferencing (including those built into most laptops).

A Memorial **Webex** account and/or **Microsoft Teams**.

- Appropriate technology may also include:
- A headset.
- A phone, whether mobile or landline.
- Any other technology or software necessary for the specific duties of the role.

Equipment or technology required for an employees' secondary workspace will be a **financial cost to the unit** and may be deemed cost prohibitive.

All leaders, managers, and employees are **strongly encouraged** to utilize Microsoft Teams or Webex if they are participating in a RWA **or** supervise employees who participate in an RWA. Microsoft Teams is a communication and collaboration tool for groups to create content and share the information they need to work together. Webex is a suite of online meeting tools that allow you to meet with participants inside and outside of Memorial using your computer, mobile device and/or telephone.

For more information on Microsoft Teams and Webex please visit the below webpages from the Office of the Chief Information Officer:

- [Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Microsoft 365 User Resources](#)
- [Virtual Meetings \(Webex\)](#)

Where an employee requests an RWA, they may be provided the necessary technology equipment and services by their unit, depending on the type of RWA and the position. Remote work may not be appropriate for employees who are heavily dependent on phones, particularly if they are a key contact for the public, students, clients, etc. In these situations, the feasibility of a work phone (cell phone or another supported device) should be considered. Employees are **responsible for providing internet connectivity** that functions consistently with sufficient bandwidth to work effectively and meet the expectations of the role. Internet expenses are not eligible for reimbursement.

The use of university property while working remotely remains governed by all relevant university policies, including the [Information Management](#), [Electronic Data Security](#),

Appropriate Use of Computing Resources and the Computer Standards policies. St. John's campus employees can contact the IT Service Desk at 709-864-4595, help@mun.ca or chat support at www.mun.ca/cio/need-help/. Grenfell Campus employees can visit Grenfell Campus ITS webpage and Marine Institute employees can contact servicedesk@mi.mun.ca.

University Equipment

University equipment provided remains the property of Memorial and should be inventoried in the same way as equipment on campus. Employees will be responsible for returning the equipment as required at the end of an arrangement. There is a space on the FWA Application form to provide details of equipment arrangements with the employee, including a space for any applicable asset tracking number, serial number or item description. If the information is not available at the time of form completion, these details are to be recorded within one month of starting the RWA. This information is to be shared with the individual responsible for asset tracking within the unit. Memorial supplied equipment is to be used for the sole purpose of carrying out work on behalf of the university and is not for personal use. For additional details, please see the Procedure for Removing Tangible Capital Asset from University Premises.

Use of Personal Devices and Phones

Employees participating in RWAs are not required to use personal devices such as cell phones when working remotely, except for use of the two-step VPN verification process required for Memorial VPN access. If an employee does not have a smart phone compatible with applications associated with VPN access they may contact the IT Service Desk for assistance with alternative options.

Managers and supervisors are encouraged to only contact employees on their personal devices in cases of time-sensitive work-related issues **if** they have been unable to reach the employee via university approved communication channels (i.e. Outlook email, Microsoft Teams). Confidential information should never be sent via text message or other personal communication channels to ensure data is kept private and secure.

While the use of personal devices is not recommended for university work, there may be rare situations where it is beneficial for an employee to work remotely using a personal device. In this scenario, employees will be unable to access systems where

access is restricted to the Memorial network. When using a personal device, users should never store or access confidential or sensitive work-related information. Email and Microsoft Teams are available outside the Memorial network and can be accessed from a personal device.

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

When employees work with confidential information, leaders are encouraged to seek recommendations from the university's Office of the Chief Information Officer and Information and Privacy Office. All employees must sign/complete the [Undertaking of Confidentiality Agreement](#) (found under the HR Employee Forms section of the my.mun.ca portal) as part of their RWA. All RWA employees should review the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Privacy Recommendations for Remote Work](#). Protocols must be established and agreed to for securing confidential materials that are transferred between the home and Memorial locations and/or maintained at the employee's home.

In addition to considering privacy and confidentiality of work materials, leaders and employees need to consider and establish protocols for protecting university information from risk of loss or theft. Regardless of where a breach of university data occurs (on campus or RWA), employees have a responsibility to immediately report the breach to their supervisor as per the [Procedure for Managing a Privacy Breach](#).

Paper records should only be taken home if absolutely necessary. If the position entails handling sensitive paper records, consider whether these physical paper records could be reasonably transferred for digital access. Otherwise, a position requiring work with sensitive paper records may not be suitable for remote work.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

RWAs present unique health and safety considerations which should be a priority of any employee participating in an arrangement. Employers have the same general duty to take every reasonable precaution to ensure their employees have a healthy and safe workplace whether an employee is working on-site or off-site. Employees also have duties and obligations under [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) laws](#), and these continue to apply to employees working remotely. Employees must maintain safe workplaces and report hazards. As a result, employees have a duty to maintain their workspace at home in a safe condition.

Employees are required to conduct and submit a risk assessment to their supervisor in order to maintain safe conditions in the remote work area (see [Occupational Health and Safety Checklist– Remote Work Arrangement](#) in the HR Employee Forms section of the my.mun.ca portal). The employee is responsible for alerting their supervisor if there are any changes to this checklist over the duration of the RWA. The Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) team has the right to audit.

Employees working with RWAs may end up being on campus at times when their direct co-workers are not in the office. When working alone on campus, employees should utilize the [Safe Work Alone](#) feature on the MUN Safe App. Employees working remotely are not permitted to schedule in-person meetings at their home or other private locations and should not share their home address or personal contact information unnecessarily.

Ergonomics

Ensuring that employees have an appropriate ergonomic set-up is a key consideration for remote working. Memorial's Department of Human Resources provides a number of [ergonomic resources](#) to support setting up an at home office, including virtual consultations. Employees seeking a RWA must complete an [Ergonomics Self-Assessment](#) at the time of the FWA request and, as applicable, a [Request for Ergonomics Assessment](#) form both found in the HR Employee Forms section of the my.mun.ca portal.

The university will support with applicable, required ergonomic equipment for the primary workspace, yet it will be a financial cost to the unit for any additional supports required for the secondary workspace and may be deemed cost-prohibitive if working under a hybrid arrangement. The employee is responsible for alerting their supervisor if there are any changes to the Ergonomics Self-Assessment over the duration of the RWA. For more information, please email ergonomics@mun.ca.

Employee Wellness

Staying connected with team members, supervisor(s) and unit head(s) is important as we all try to work collaboratively and reduce the risk of becoming isolated. Memorial has [tools for staying socially connected](#). Rather than only emailing, try to also connect virtually with one of the university's approved collaboration tools. Supervisors and unit heads should create space for dialogue about any health and wellness concerns and all

team members should be aware of the supports available to them, including Memorial's [Employee Assistance Program](#).

EMPLOYEE LEAVE

This policy does not apply and is not to be used as an alternative for sick leave, family responsibility leave or any other types of other job protected leaves as outlined under the [Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Standards Act, 1990](#), Memorial's [Leave Administration](#) policy, or leave under collective agreements, as applicable. RWAs should not be used in place of family leave where employees require time away from work to fulfill family responsibilities (i.e., provide child or elder care, etc.). Employees are directed to speak with their supervisor or HR Advisor about leave options best suited for their circumstance.

Illness and Remote Work

If you are unable to work due to illness, you must advise your supervisor prior to the start of your shift as per normal processes. It is requested that you do not come to campus even with mild symptoms if you are contagious.

If you are participating in a remote work arrangement and are feeling ill, you are encouraged to avail of sick leave. If you are ill but feel well enough to work you may work remotely with approval from your supervisor.

Long Term Leave or Termination

In the event that an employee with a RWA leaves employment with the university or is on long term leave, all university assets, including but not limited to laptops, paper records, mobile devices, office supplies, furniture etc. must be returned to the university in a timely manner.

PARAMETERS OF AD HOC REMOTE WORK

Ad hoc remote work is an informal arrangement available to employees in cases where they are required or prefer to work remotely on a rare and occasional basis for a specific incidental reason. Ad hoc remote work should not be availed of more than twice per month; if an employee is requesting more than two ad hoc remote workdays per month they should request a formal hybrid work arrangement.

Where possible, a minimum of 24 hours' notice should be provided to one's supervisor to allow for consideration of ad hoc remote work. Situations that may qualify for an ad hoc remote work arrangement are those that are not frequently recurring and that allow employees to complete normal work functions within regular working hours.

Cases that are **not suitable** to participate in ad hoc remote work include:

- Poor weather conditions (unless approved by your supervisor);
- Your child is home sick and requires care such that it is disruptive to your normal working day (family leave or annual leave should be availed of);
- You are unavailable during your regular working hours, but could work outside of those hours (unless approved by your supervisor);
- You are home sick and feel well enough to complete some hours of work or partial work duties (employees should avail of hours available for sick leave if unable to work regular hours due to illness).

In situations that employees do not wish to divulge the reason for their ad hoc remote work request, as it is personal or private in nature, requests may be submitted citing "personal reasons" without requirement for additional justification. Requests may be approved or denied by supervisors based on operational requirements.

REMOTE WORK SCHEDULE AND HOURS OF WORK

Each supervisor/unit will determine the type of requests that will be considered. Some departments may implement set schedules in order to best meet operational requirements (e.g. a RWA that specifies an employee works remotely Tuesday and Thursday each week, and on campus Monday, Wednesday and Friday). This is the recommended approach to allow team members and any applicable service units to know the expected regular schedule and to ensure consistency of operations on campus. However, some departments may be able to approve a more flexible approach to scheduling remote workdays, particularly when remote work is infrequent.

Employees are expected to be online and available during previously agreed upon work hours apart from break times. Likewise, employees are not required to be available outside of standard business hours unless outlined within the terms of their employment. Managers, supervisors, and employees should not contact other employees outside of standard business hours, apart from cases of emergency.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND REMOTE WORK

It is important to note that RWAs as outlined in this policy cannot override the formal accommodation processes. Accommodation is viewed as a protection of human rights. The purpose of accommodation is to enable employees to perform the responsibilities of their position. Accommodation may require making changes to the working environment so essential requirements of the position may be met. The university must provide reasonable accommodation up to the point of undue hardship.

Remote work arrangements can yield many benefits regarding physical and psychological safety, especially for employees who are neurodiverse, have physical disabilities, or deal with chronic pain. Accommodation could take on many forms, one of which may be remote work.

If an employee's remote work request submitted under this policy is supported by a protected ground under the [Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Act, 2010](#) ("Act") as an accommodation measure, such a request will be considered and assessed in a timely and responsive manner on an individual and case-by-case basis in accordance with the University's statutory obligation.

If a potential accommodation situation arises, please consult the [Workplace Accommodation](#) policy or contact the Department of Human Resources or Office of Faculty Relations for additional support.

CANADIAN REVENUE AGENCY (CRA) TAX CONSIDERATIONS

Employees working remotely should consult the CRA website to determine if certain home office expenses can be claimed on their personal tax return and the required forms can be requested from Department of Financial and Administrative Services.

OFFICE SUPPLIES

If employees require office supplies (e.g. paper, pens) while working remotely, they can contact their supervisor or administrative departmental contact to inquire if there are supplies that can be picked up by the employee from campus. Staples home delivery will not be offered.

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Much of the university's work happens through meetings. In units where employees are participating in RWAs, efforts should be made to ensure that individuals working remotely are included and able to fully participate. This might include providing video conference options, ensuring meetings are scheduled during times that align with work schedules or arranging for all team members to be on site for some meetings. Supervisors should provide guidelines for procedures on meeting with clients and ensuring appropriate university policies are adhered to.

Where RWAs are approved, the employee and their supervisor must develop or maintain in-person connections on a regular basis (e.g. maintaining a monthly meeting on campus). In some cases, a work activity taking place during hours in which the employee would usually work remotely will require the employee's attendance in person. Staffing changes may also result in the need to alter an employees' RWA. The employee will be given as much advance notice, where possible at least two calendar

days in advance, of a work activity requiring the employee to attend in person if they are otherwise scheduled to work remotely.

HIRING AND ONBOARDING

RWAs may impact the hiring process for new employees, including through the use of technology to facilitate interviews. WebEx is Memorial's approved platform, given its integration with other university systems including Outlook scheduling and Brightspace, as well as its security features, and OCIO and CITL support models. Testing this technology, sending questions in advance, using closed captioning, lessening distractions and other recommendations are available on the Department of Human Resources website under [Conducting Virtual Interviews](#).

When a new employee is hired by a unit participating in a FWA, the details of this arrangement, including any expectations for flexible or remote work, should be communicated and agreed to as part of the hiring process. In situations where an employee is starting a new role while working remotely, a deliberate onboarding plan will need to be developed in order to ensure the appropriate resources, including any applicable technology, workspace, job expectations and training are available prior to the start date. When developing the onboarding action plan, hiring managers should consider the new employees' unique personal circumstances and other appropriate accommodations.

The following can be included in a job advertisement for positions which offer remote work possibilities:

"Memorial has a Flexible Work Arrangements Policy for University Staff in place. At the employee's request and subject to unit approval, employees may have the opportunity to work flexible hours, work remotely or a combination of working on campus and from home."

ON-CAMPUS OFFICE SPACE AND PARKING

Employees with a RWA may be asked to relocate to a shared workspace in order to maximize workspaces on campus. This will be determined by the unit/department based on need for space resources and should be discussed and agreed upon as part of the RWA. Parking permits may also be revoked or modified for any employee with a RWA, to be agreed upon by the employee as part of their RWA.

Hot desks are used by departments with employees who are able to work remotely and have insufficient office space for all team members to have their own desk. As a result, desks are not assigned to any particular employee but are instead shared and employees who come to work may sit at an unoccupied desk of their choice. Managers and supervisors are advised to confirm employees utilizing hot desks do not require accommodations to their physical space before beginning such arrangement.

If you are an employee utilizing hot desks and require accommodations to your workspace, please submit a request for accommodation to your Academic or Non Academic Administrator by completing the [Request for Workplace Accommodation Form](#). Employees are encouraged to communicate with their union representative, if applicable, regarding their request.

When setting up a hot desk, units are encouraged to connect with Ergonomics to ensure that workspace furniture and peripherals are appropriately adjustable to accommodate a range of users. For more information, please email ergonomics@mun.ca.

UNIVERSITY CLOSURES

In the event of a university closure for reasons such as a snow day, building maintenance etc., all employees, including those with a RWA are not required to work.