



Temporary Remote Work Policy

Policy Level Approval:	Senior Executive Team
Policy Category:	Human Resources
Policy Number:	
Cross Reference to Other policies/legislations/regulations/directives:	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Original Date of Approval:	November 17 th , 2020
Next Scheduled Year Review:	November 17 th , 2021

Policy Applies to: *[Tick off all appropriate boxes for broad application. If it primarily applies to a particular group(s) then list the group(s)].*

Board Member Executives Management/Non-Union Employees
 Unionized Employees Secondees Other

1. Purpose

The Ontario Health Central Region (“Central Region”) is committed to fostering a healthy work environment and establishing greater flexibility to create an agile workforce. This Temporary Remote Work Policy will be applicable during the COVID-19 pandemic response period.

The Temporary Remote Work Policy provides guidelines to teams that will temporarily work from home with a connection to the office through the use of technology. Individual employee needs within the team will be taken into consideration where this arrangement is not feasible.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Central Region teams and employees. For greater clarity, this includes employees who have transferred to Ontario Health in December 2019 and all employees of: Central, Central West, Mississauga Halton and North Simcoe Muskoka LHINs.

This policy is not intended to contravene any collective agreement provisions or previously established permanent work from home arrangements. Where differences exist, negotiated contractual arrangements will supersede the program guidelines.

Where the term “home office” is used it shall refer to an employee’s temporary workspace being located in their home where the employee fulfills job responsibilities. It is not considered to be a permanent remote work arrangement, nor flexible hours or an individual schedule.

3. Principles

It should be noted that remote work may not be appropriate for every team, or every position or individual within a team. Decisions to support remote work are made at the discretion of the LHIN and are considered based on a functional assessment related to the operational and role requirements, health and safety measures, availability of resources/equipment and individual considerations. Some of the key principles are summarized as follows:

1. Health and safety of all our employees, including their physical, mental and social well-being continues to apply in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Public Health guidance, best practices, and evidence-based information.
2. Service to our patients, customers, colleagues, teams and stakeholders will not be negatively impacted.
3. Communication should be seamless to both internal and external customers and contacts.
4. Employees working remotely will fulfill all job requirements.
5. All equipment, software and hardware supplied by the LHIN will remain the property of the LHIN. Any equipment, software or hardware belonging to the LHIN will be used for their intended purposes only, used solely for the purposes of the LHIN work and used by the employee only.
6. The requirement to access, maintain and protect confidential information/PHI exists regardless of work location.
7. Employees who provide medical documentation recommending modifications to their job, work environment or who cannot meet the requirements of this policy for other reasons, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis of the circumstances presented.

Individual employee considerations will additionally include:

- i. The safety of the employee if recovering from a work related injury/illness.
- ii. The suitability of the employee to work in an independent/self-directed environment.
- iii. The skills and ability of the employee to meet the current standards, achieve targets and workload levels with minimal supervision.
- iv. The employee’s home environment is conducive to a successful remote work arrangement.
- v. It can be noted that additional standards/guidelines specific to a team or position based on operational needs or safety of employees.

Employees who are not well or who are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms are required to follow the absence reporting protocols at the local LHIN.

4. Responsibilities

Employee:

Employees are required to sign a *Temporary Remote Work Agreement [Appendix B]*. The Agreement will commit the employee to following expectations outlined below. Additionally, employees are responsible for maintaining a healthy and safe work environment by completing a Health & Safety Inspection Checklist (Referenced in the Health and Safety policy) on a monthly basis. Any areas that require attention, must be addressed by the Employee and reported to their Manager. A copy of the completed checklist must be kept by the Employee and submitted to the manager on request.

Health and Safety

Employees will:

- Follow all LHIN health and safety policies, which can be found on the intranet, and attend all required health and safety and infection prevention and control training.
- Ensure a safe and healthy workplace exists in the home office environment. On a monthly basis complete a Health and Safety Inspection Checklist and provide a copy to the manager on request.
- The following should also be considered to support safety when working from home:
 - Removing/avoiding/remediating obstacles in the walkway, defects in the carpet, and wet or irregular floor surfaces slip, trip, and fall hazards
 - Ensuring electrical cords and cables are kept out tidy and out of any walkways
 - Keep stair treads and handrails in good repair
 - Keep corridors, stairs and exit routes free of clutter/obstructions
 - Providing surge protection for electrical equipment, ensuring outlets are grounded and not overloaded
 - Creating sufficient ventilation for electrical equipment
 - Use chairs for their intended purpose and not as a device to climbing or reaching
 - Avoid storing large quantities of combustible materials, (paper and cardboard stored in the open can create a fire hazard)
 - Never alter or impair the operation of fire-protection systems
 - Know your lifting limitations, and always use good lifting technique
 - Ensure extension cords are in good condition and positioned properly
 - Maintain first aid supplies, keep fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors in good working order
 - Ensure an evacuation plan has been established
 - Follow the absence reporting protocols at the local LHIN if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms

Communication

Employees will:

- Be available and responsive (within the established timeframes) to communication, including phone, email and instant messaging during scheduled working hours.
- Attend all meetings at the scheduled times and present him/herself and his/her workspace in a professional manner.
- Make themselves available for any meetings at a designated office locations this, even if at short notice, unless otherwise authorized by their Manager.

- Employees are expected to keep the manager apprised of any challenges he/she may face with regard to his/her ability meet work targets, or his/her health, safety or well-being to enable timely and effective support and resolution.

Minimum Standards for Privacy

Staff must be able to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of LHIN personal health information, personal information and other confidential information (“confidential information”) while working from home.

Do - Minimum Standard	Don't - Minimum Standard
<input type="checkbox"/> Connect to the network through any of the following ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secured Personal Wi-Fi network 2. HotSpot on your LHIN Phone 3. Network cord directly into your secured personal router 	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not use an open Wi-Fi or unsecure network connection
<input type="checkbox"/> LHIN devices must only be used in accordance with the Acceptable Use of IT Resources statement as seen when signing onto computers	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not use personal computer devices for LHIN business <input type="checkbox"/> Do not forward LHIN phone or email to personal devices
<input type="checkbox"/> Confidential and patient information displayed on computer/laptop screens must be protected from unauthorized access (viewing)	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not permit others to see or view confidential or patient information
<input type="checkbox"/> Laptops and other devices must be locked with password and kept safe when not in use	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not walk away from open screen that others can view or access
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff must print only what they need to – through a secure on-site printer connection or other approved printer and connection	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not print through an unapproved printer connection
<input type="checkbox"/> At end of work day staff must have a clean desk/work area – put notebooks, paperwork, etc. into a drawer or box with lid or zippered laptop bag that is not shared with others	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not leave out any confidential information where others may access or see It
<input type="checkbox"/> Printed Documents must be safely stored (e.g. a dedicated drawer, box with lid, zippered laptop bag), until able to be shredded, as per current process	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not leave confidential information unprotected where others may access or see It
<input type="checkbox"/> Place records in designated shredding bins at LHIN offices, or use a cross-cut or confetti shredder at your home office <input type="checkbox"/> Staff are expected to comply with records retention rules and shred paper monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not dispose of documents without shredding securely (e.g. do not place in a recycle or garbage bin, or single-cut shredder)
<input type="checkbox"/> Privacy or security incidents or breaches must be reported as per policy and an incident report filed. (E.g. QRS, ETMS, RL Solutions, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not delay in reporting privacy incidents or potential issues

Phone conversations and Virtual/video meetings:

Do - Minimum Standard	Don't - Minimum Standard
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone conversations and virtual meetings must take place in a quiet spot where others will not hear the conversation – consider using headphones if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not compromise confidentiality by working in an area where others can overhear
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider background noises and conversation and mute your microphone when not speaking on video. Others may hear YOUR personal business	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not compromise your personal privacy <input type="checkbox"/> If an employee must make an outgoing call on their personal phone, they should press *67 (on landline) or #31# (on mobile) prior to dialing out to block their personal number on call display
<input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of what can be seen in the background on video – use a blurred background or virtual background screen if available	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not have an open active microphone for Home Devices in the area where you are working (e.g. Google Home)
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider connected Internet of Things (IoT) and other Home Devices in the work area. These devices often have a microphone and may pick up all conversations depending on how it is set up. Best practice is to remove the device or shut off the device in the work area or confirm there is no microphone	

- Ensure that no in-person meetings with patients, families or service providers or other stakeholders are conducted in the employee's home.

Performance and Conduct

Employees will:

- Ensure work responsibilities and deliverables are not compromised and that appropriate productivity levels are maintained.
- Comply with all existing operational policies and procedures including Health and Safety and privacy policies, with specific home office environment considerations.
- Participate in LHIN ergonomics training and ensure appropriate office set-up to support proper ergonomics, including putting in place recommendations that may result from an ergonomics assessment.
- Agree that in the event of circumstances such as power failure, poor VPN connection, lack of internet connectivity, sustained system outages or LHIN equipment malfunction, any of which prevents the employee from working at home, the employee should i) report it to IT, ii) discuss with their manager what alternate arrangements can be made. This may include: working from another location, flexing the work day, use of approved benefit time off (lieu, float, vacation) or unpaid time until the situation is resolved.
- Ensure that LHIN owned resources are used for LHIN business only, and equipment is properly used, maintained and secured.

Equipment, Supplies and Expenses

The LHIN will provide the required equipment based on job function defined in the table in [Appendix A] of this policy.

Employees will be trained only on the use of approved LHIN provided equipment which has been supplied directly to the employee by the LHIN for work from home purposes.

Employees will:

- Arrange for pick up, installation and return of all LHIN equipment.
- Ensure home internet services are functional and adequate to support home office and will upgrade service if required. A poorly performing internet connection may result in the employee being requested to return to the office. On-going internet connectivity speed tests will be required.
- Immediately report to the manager any technology issues that limits ability to perform duties.
- Agree to maintain sufficient technical skills and equipment to support independent remote work.
- Ensure a high-speed internet connection is available (DSL, cable or wireless (WIFI or cellular). Satellite connection is not adequate.
- Ensure capability to physically connect a network cable connecting any Mitel VOIP Phone in the user's home to the internet (when applicable to the role). A 25 foot cable for router to POE adapter and 6 feet for others.
- Keep the manager apprised of any challenges he/she may face with regard to his/her ability meet work targets, or his/her health, safety or well-being to enable timely and effective support and resolution.
- Return all equipment to IT Services when an employee commences any leave greater than 30 days regardless of the assigned work location.

General office supplies are available from each local LHIN, either through a designated pick-up location or delivery upon request and approval.

The Employee will provide at their expense:

- Hardwired high-speed internet connection including installation, maintenance, support and monthly fees
- Phones if not essential to employee role
- Desk & Chair (unless conditionally provided by the LHIN – should be an approval process for this)
- Filing space
- Power surge bar
- Wifi adapter
- An appropriate workspace in which business will be conducted to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- First aid kit
- Working fire extinguisher and Smoke Alarm
- Working Carbon Monoxide detector
- Travel from a home office to a LHIN office to attend meetings, pick up supplies or for any other reason
- Implications and any related homeowner's insurance costs, including liability and provide proof to the employer upon request.

Some expenses purchased by the employee may be claimed against income taxes in whole or in part by the employee in a year when the LHIN issues a T2200. Employees should follow the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) guidelines or consult with a tax advisor for further information.

Staff will be reimbursed Mileage in accordance with their Collective Agreement, Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive and local expense reimbursement directives and policies.

For the purpose of mileage reimbursement, pre-COVID assigned primary office locations continue to apply.

Manager:

- Considers request to change employee work location and informs employee of decision, outlining rationale if approval is not granted.
- Informs Human Resources of decision.
- Management reserves the right to recall an employee to office whose primary work location was designated as the home.
- Ensures employee is aware of all appropriate policies and procedures related to the home office.
- Requests and maintains Health & Safety Inspection Checklist (Referenced in the Health and Safety policy) in accordance with health and safety guidelines.
- Ensures employee signs and returns working from home agreement as required.
- Establish a method and regularity of communication between the employee and the team
- Support awareness and compliance with relevant Health and Safety and Privacy Legislation and all local LHIN policies and procedures including IT and Privacy/Confidentiality.
- Monitor for and reinforce the need and benefit of appropriate ergonomic set up based on best practice and any completed assessments.
- Accountable for follow up with Human Resources on employee reported work injuries and illnesses.
- Managers will establish and communicate performance expectations and reporting accountability to support both on site and off site employees. This may include activities such as progress reports, one to one meetings and regular team meetings.
- Conduct regular monitoring and measurement of employee performance based on established operational standards, objective and results to target to discuss both patient and performance challenges.
- Review and evaluate the ongoing suitability of the arrangement and at his/her discretion to remove this option if the arrangement proves unsatisfactory or in any way fails to meet the operational or patient care needs.
- Supporting staff feel connected to the organization.

Human Resources:

- Provide support to leaders in the review of suitability of the work from home arrangement where requested.
- Provide support to leaders and employees in navigating remote work arrangements, including providing training and resources needed to support a safe working environment, and to monitor and manage remote work.
- Track and monitor completion of required training for employees.

5. Key Implementation Documents

- Home Office Application Form (available through on-line forms)
- Internet Speed Test Instructions
- Tips for the Alternate Workforce Participant; the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Standards: <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprogrames/telework.html>
- ErgonomicTools/checklist: https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/ergonomics_during_work_stress_releasers.pdf?xt=.pdf
- Health and Safety Inspection Checklist
- Coronavirus page of the intranet – “Working From Home Tips and Resources”
- Privacy and Protection of Personal Health Information policies
- Confidentiality Policy
- Acceptable use of Technology Policies
- Safeguarding Privacy in a Mobile Workplace
- Safe Storage and Disposal of Records policy

6. Policy Change History

Revision Number:	New
Date of Approval:	November 17, 2020
Description of Change:	New

7. Appendices

Appendix A Required Equipment Based on Job Function

Roles	Computer	Phone	Monitor QTY	Accessories
Office Care Coordinator, Information & Referral Assistant, Placement Facilitator, Team Assistant	Laptop or Desktop	Mitel Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Camera / Headset for Desktop users Network Cables - IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Community Coordinator, Convalescent Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner, MHAN RN, Pharmacist, H2H Nurse(CW), BSO(CW)	Laptop	Cell	1	Mouse, cell phone headset, keyboard Network Cables If Required: IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Rapid Response Nurse	Laptop Printer	Cell	1	Mouse, cell phone headset, keyboard Network Cables If Required: IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
School CC, TeleHomecare RN, Scheduler, Hospital Care Coordinator, Short stay Coordinator	Laptop	Central Short stay - Mitel Phone MH, CW & NSM School, hospital - receive Cell phone Central - Hospital CC - receive cell phone/ Mitel Phone	1	Standard computer headset Cell phones receive headset mouse & keyboard Central\CW\MH - do not supply docking stations to community roles NSM - Supplies docks

		Schedulers need a Mitel Phone *** all community roles who perform home visit receive cell phone***		If Required: IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Health Care Connect	Laptop	Mitel Phone and Cell NSM - no cell, office based employees	1	mouse, cell phone headset, keyboard Network Cables - IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Supervisor/ Manager/ Director	Laptop	Cell Mitel Phone	1	mouse, keyboard Docking stations Computer headset phone headset laptop bag
Human Resources	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Information Technology	Laptop or Desktop	Cell Phone And Mitel phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset laptop bag IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Finance	Laptop or Desktop	Mitel phone & Headset for staff communicating with external vendors. or MS-Team for all others staff who don't communicate externally	1	Keyboard Mouse Camera for Desktop users Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset laptop bag Network Cables - IT will supply 6 feet to connect phone to computer

Contracts SPO	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset laptop bag Network Cables - IT will supply 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Privacy	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Communications	Laptop or Desktop	Mitel Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag For Desktop-IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Quality & Risk Management	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Facilities & Administration	Laptop or Desktop	Mitel Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag For Desktop -IT will supply up to 25 Feet (for Phone) 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Education	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag

Health Information	Laptop	Mitel Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset laptop bag Network Cables - IT will supply 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Decision Support	Laptop	MS- Team	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Performance, Contracts, Allocation	Laptop	Mitel Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset laptop bag Network Cables - IT will supply 6 feet to connect phone to computer
Administrative Assistants	Laptop	MS-Team	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Executive and Senior Assistants	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Supervisor, Manager, Director	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset Laptop bag
Senior Leadership	Laptop	Cell Phone	1	Keyboard Mouse Docking stations for Laptop Computer headset & Laptop Bag

Appendix B
Temporary Remote Work Agreement

As a means to support employees in caring for their health and reducing risk of exposure to COVID-19, Ontario Health Central Region has implemented social distancing by encouraging employees to work remotely where leadership has determined that working remotely is appropriate and viable for the position.

Note this agreement is temporary in nature and is intended to be in effect as long as the Ontario Health Central Region operates in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will conclude at a time determined by its leadership. The parties acknowledge that the temporary remote work arrangement will be evaluated on an on-going basis to ensure that service to patients, work quality, efficiency, and productivity are not compromised by the remote work arrangement. Should this evaluation demonstrate the remote arrangement is not working effectively, the manager may at any time adjust or end this Agreement.

The job duties, responsibilities, performance expectations and conditions of employment remain unchanged except as specifically addressed in this Agreement and policy. The manager reserves the right to assign work as necessary at any work site.

Note that having successfully engaged in temporary remote work pursuant to this Agreement does not require Ontario Health Central Region to agree to any future remote work.

In signing this agreement, I understand the requirement to uphold the Employee Expectations as defined in the Temporary Remote Work Policy in each of the following areas:

- a. Health and Safety
- b. Communication
- c. Privacy
- d. Performance and Conduct
- e. Equipment, Supplies and Expenses

I acknowledge the importance to my personal health, safety and wellness of the proper ergonomic set up of the home office workspace, and the value of taking rest and meal breaks while working remotely in full compliance with all applicable policies or collective agreement.

I hereby affirm by my signature that I have read the Temporary Remote Work Policy and this Temporary Remote Work Agreement and understand and agree to all of the provisions.

Employee Signature

Date

As a people leader, I acknowledge my responsibilities and commitment as outlined in the Temporary Remote Work Policy and this agreement.

Manager Signature

Date