**Fisheries and Oceans**

**and**

**Canadian Coast Guard**

**Telework Guidelines**

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# 1. Effective date

These guidelines take effect on June 23, 2020.

# 2. Context

Telework is an arrangement that allows an employee to work from home or a remote location outside of the traditional workplace. Telework is a voluntary flexible work arrangement that can be authorized at management’s discretion. Such an arrangement must be operationally feasible and meet both organizational and employee objectives.

These guidelines provide Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Canadian Coast Guard managers and employees with recommended steps towards establishing well-considered telework agreements that comply with the Treasury Board [Directive on Telework](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32636). The guidelines aim to support employees in balancing their work, personal and family responsibilities while ensuring federal public service organizations are able to achieve their business and organizational objectives.

In adopting detailed guidelines to support [Directive on Telework](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32636) objectives, the department is demonstrating a commitment to fostering employee well-being by embracing flexible employment arrangements, an effort in maintaining its reputation as an employer of choice, and action on environmental goals through a reduction in travel and commuting times.

Telework may also be requested by an employee as part of an accommodation which will be considered by management on a case-by-case basis. Managers are encouraged to consult the [Labour Relations Centre of Expertise](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/933) for advice and guidance.

In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Appendix H has been added to address remote work considerations.

# 3. Objective

The objective of these guidelines is to provide guidance and information to employees and managers about telework to support the implementation of telework arrangements where it is economically and operationally feasible to do so, and in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

# 4. Remote Work and COVID-19 Considerations

On December 31, 2019, the World Health Organization was alerted to several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, China. The virus did not match any other known virus. On January 7, 2020, China confirmed COVID-19. Since then, there has been a global spread of the virus which has left health professionals on high alert.

Health Canada’s Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is working with provinces, territories and international partners, including the World Health Organization, to actively monitor the situation. Global efforts are focused on containment of the outbreak and the prevention of further spread. PHAC is working closely with the medical community to ensure that any cases of COVID-19 occurring in Canada continue to be rapidly identified and managed in order to protect the health of Canadians.

By mid-March, 2020, the Prime Minister of Canada and provincial leaders introduced social/physical distancing measures in an attempt to flatten the curve of COVID-19 spread within Canada. This meant that federal employees in non-critical services were asked to work from home.

It is expected that many employees will continue to work remotely, whether full time or part time, as remote working will become part of the new normal for many in the immediate future and over the longer term.

It is important to note that much of what is outlined in these guidelines is intended for telework situations not remote work. However, many of the priniciples translate in remote work situations.

DFO/CCG is committed to ensuring that employees continue to have a positive employee experience regardless of the physical location of work.

The key to success will be ensuring we have the tools in place to support the workplace of the future, including effective remote working arrangements. To that end, an appendix (Appendix H) has been added to the present Telework Guidelines to ensure employees and managers are well equipped to continue to work remotely, and to support their ability to make a full contribution.

The appendix will focus on the following main areas:

* Communication and Engagement,
* Employees’ physical health and safety,
* Employees’ psychological health and wellbeing,
* Disability Management and Duty to Accommodate,
* Information Technology.

# 5. Definitions

**Telework***:* a flexible work arrangement where employees have approval to carry out some or all of their work duties from a telework place. Telework may be on a full-time, part-time or occasional basis. An authorized Telework Agreement is required for any and all instances of telework.

**Telework Agreement:** A written agreement that authorizes telework and approves the terms and conditions of telework. It includes the type of telework, frequency and duration of the Telework Agreement as well as the occupational health and safety responsibilities of the telework place. (See Appendix G)

**Standard Telework*:*** Specified scheduled telework on a specific day or days during the regularly scheduled work week or shift. This could be full time or part-time. In the case of part-time standard telework, the employee works both from a telework place and the designated workplace on a specific schedule.

**Occasional Telework*:*** Unscheduled or irregular telework (i.e. a day or days or parts thereof). Manager approval is required in advance of teleworking.

**Designated Workplace:** The employee's designated workplace or business address where the employee would work if there were no telework situation.

**Telework place*:*** The alternate location where the employee is permitted to carry out the work that would otherwise be performed at the designated workplace. This is usually the employee's home or other place of residence of the employee. Other locations may also be authorized by management.

**Remote work:** While telework implies that that there may be some on-site work being done by the employee, remote work implies that the employee performs the totality of the work from a remote location; usually the employee’s residence. An employee who teleworks does so on a voluntary basis; an employee who works remotely is required to do so. The distinction is important as each situation is governed by a different legal framework.

# 6. Requirements

In line with the department’s Delegation of Human Resources Authorities *,* the approval of telework arrangements must be made by the Responsibility Centre Manager (RCM) or at a higher level. The decision to approve a telework arrangement is made on a case-by-case basis, at management’s discretion. Managers will exercise their discretion in a reasonable manner. Although managers could invite interest in telework by sharing their willingness to support it, participation in a telework arrangement under these guidelines is voluntary, that is, no employee can be required to telework nor is there a guarantee that an employee will be allowed to telework.

Where the safety and security of employee are at risk, management reserves the right to ask them to work remotely.

Prior to approving requests from employees to telework, managers must ensure that the following conditions apply:

1. The nature of the work to be performed must be operationally feasible in a telework context.
2. The overall quality and quantity of work carried out in the designated workplace shall be sustained by the teleworker in the telework place.
3. The work done at the telework place should be cost effective. Certain up-front costs are permissible, provided they can be recouped over a reasonable period.
4. The terms and conditions of employment, [DFO Values and Ethics Code](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/vicr-virc/vicr-virc2012-eng.htm), provisions of relevant collective agreements and the application of existing policies and legislation will continue to apply in telework situations.
5. Official language requirements and service to the public are not compromised by the telework arrangement.
6. The details of the telework arrangement must be agreed upon between the employee participating in the telework situation and the supervisor or manager and will be put in writing. These details must as a minimum include: the voluntary nature of the arrangement; the duration of the arrangement; the specific days the employee will telework; hours of work; whether the arrangement will be standard or occasional; the telework location; issues of liability (personal and equipment); responsibility for costs associated with telework (utilities and insurance); health and safety responsibilities; impact on colleagues; and the requirement to adhere to all aspects of government policies, rules and regulations.
7. The teleworker and manager shall agree upon the details of the Telework agreement and sign the [Telework Agreement Form](file:///C:\Users\AubinCA\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\334DQIH8\fp_0522.pdf) for all Telework arrangements (Standard and/or Occasional telework). The arrangement must be for a maximum period of one year, at which time it must be reviewed and can either be terminated or a new agreement can be approved.
8. The Telework agreement can be terminated at any time by either party, with reasonable notice (a minimum of 14 days is recommended). In the event that the telework arrangement is ended by management, the manager should provide the employee with the reason for their decision.

# 7. Application

These guidelines apply to all teleworkers and their managers and/or supervisors of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard.

# 8. Roles and Responsibilities

## 8.1 Managers and Supervisors

1. Become familiar with, and respect, the Treasury Board [Directive on Telework](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32636) and Guidelines.
2. As required, consult with the appropriate functional offices within the department before entering into a Telework Agreement (see section 10).
3. Complete the courses offered by the Canada School of Public Service to gain the skills necessary to manage remote employees. The first two courses are mandatory for all employees of DFO and the third one is highly recommended for supervisors and managers:

* [Security Awareness](https://www.csps-efpc.gc.ca/Catalogue/courses-eng.aspx?code=A230) training from the [Canada School of Public Service](https://learn-apprendre.csps-efpc.gc.ca/) (Course A230).Note that all employees must complete this course within three weeks of their start date and every five years thereafter.
* All DFO/CCG managers/supervisors are required to attend a two day in class Occupational Health and Safety Training session and must complete a one day refresher training every 5 years.
* [Leading Teams: Managing Virtual Teams](https://www.csps-efpc.gc.ca/Catalogue/courses-eng.aspx?code=X027) from the [Canada School of Public Service](https://learn-apprendre.csps-efpc.gc.ca/application/en/content/leading-teams-managing-virtual-teams-x027) (Course X027).

1. Manage all telework requests based on operational requirements, the values of fairness, equity and transparency, and the principles of sound human, financial and physical resource management.
2. Consider the nature of the information the employee handles to perform duties, and determine whether telework is appropriate and reasonable in the circumstances. When in doubt consult the regional security office prior to approving the telework agreement.
3. Ensure that employees have read the guidelines before entering into a Telework Agreement.
4. Ensure that teleworkers understand the impacts and practical considerations of the telework situation.
5. Ensure all terms and conditions of employment and relevant collective agreements continue to apply while on telework.
6. Ensure the performance of teleworkers is managed effectively. Ensure that employees have the right tools, training and support to meet the established performance objectives.
7. Ensure that a [Telework Agreement Form](#_Appendix_G:_DFO) is completed for standard and occasional telework agreements and is signed by both parties concerned before telework begins.
8. Ensure that all Telework Agreements are reviewed at least once a year (calendar year).

## 8.2 Employee

1. Become familiar with, and respect, the Treasury Board [Directive on Telework](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32636) and DFO Telework Guidelines.
2. Take the required training on Health and Safety. The following courses are mandatory for all DFO employees:

* Security Awareness training from the [Canada School of Public Service](https://learn-apprendre.csps-efpc.gc.ca/) (A230) Note that all employees must complete this course within three weeks of their start date and every five years thereafter.
* Occupational Health and Safety Awareness Online Training available through the [Fisheries and Oceans Canada Learning Portal](https://dfo-mpo.entia.ca/)

1. Advise your manager in advance and obtain the permission, if planning to telework unless a previously agreed schedule is in place.
2. Before requesting or agreeing to telework, consider its advantages and disadvantages.
3. Respect the terms and conditions of employment and relevant collective agreements while teleworking.
4. Maintain work productivity and quality while teleworking in accordance with the [Directive on Performance Management](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=27146)
5. Assume the costs of establishing the personal telework place, such as insurance, heat, hydro, furniture, Internet access and any other related costs.
6. Ensure secure transportation of any IT equipment at all times.
7. Ensure the personal telework place respects [information management](http://w00intra01.ncr.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ncr-rcn/pimsb-dspgi/index_e.asp) and [information security standards](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/ss/sites/ss/files/corp_policy/standard_on_information_security-eng.pdf).
8. Report to the employer any work-related accident or injury occurring at the telework place at the earliest possible time.
9. Employees are expected to report to their designated workplace location if requested by management and are responsible for the costs of travelling (if applicable).
10. Comply with the [*Privacy Act*](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-21/index.html) and [*Access to Information Act*](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-1/).
11. Comply with the [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=25049) and the [DFO Values and Ethics code](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/1172) at all times.
12. Review and sign all Safe Work Procedures related to remote work.

## 8.3 Labour Relations Centre of Expertise

1. Review these guidelines as required.
2. Provide advice on telework to managers and/or supervisors and ensure information is available about telework arrangement requirements.

# 9. Steps and required documents for supervisors/managers assessing a telework request

## 9.1 Documentation for Telework Agreements

1. [Telework Agreement Form](#_Appendix_G:_DFO) (Appendix G)
2. [DFO Telework Safety and Security Checklist](#_Appendix_D:_) (Appendix D)
3. [DFO Checklist for Managers – Assessing feasibility of Telework](#_Appendix_E:_)  (Appendix E)
4. [DFO Checklist for Evaluation of Previously existing Telework A](#_Appendix_F:_)greements (Appendix F)

## 9.2 Main Steps for assessing a telework request:

1. The employee discusses the proposed telework request with the supervisor / manager. The employee should take into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of teleworking before requesting this work arrangement.
2. The [Telework Agreement Form](#_Appendix_G:_DFO) (Appendix G) is completed by the employee and submitted to the manager for authorization. The employee must also complete the [DFO Telework Safety and Security Checklist](#_Appendix_D:_). (Appendix D)
3. The manager may complete the [DFO Checklist for Managers – Assessing feasibility of Telework](#_Appendix_E:_). (Appendix E) This checklist identifies the criteria that may be considered when determining if an employee and/or the position of the employee are eligible for telework.
4. When needed, the manager should consult functional offices such as Regional Security Office, Labour Relations Center of Expertise, Information Technology and Occupational Health and Safety.
5. The manager analyzes the request and provides a decision to the employee. The request for telework will be approved if the proposed arrangement is deemed to have no adverse impact on the productivity and efficiency of the organization. If the request is denied, the manager will provide the reason to the employee in writing. See section 5 –Requirements.
6. The manager and the employee will discuss the criteria that will be used to evaluate the arrangement before the approval of the telework arrangement. A list of criteria can be found in the DFO [Checklist for Evaluation of Previously existing Telework Agreement](#_Appendix_F:_)s (Appendix F).
7. The [Telework Agreement Form](#_Appendix_G:_DFO) (Appendix G) is signed by the manager if approved and also by the employee. A copy is retained by the manager for their records.
8. At least once a year, the agreement is reviewed and can either be terminated or a new agreement can be approved
9. When reviewing the Telework Agreement annually, the manager completes the DFO [Checklist for Evaluation of Previously existing Telework A](#_Appendix_F:_)greements (Appendix F) for assessing the effectiveness of the Telework Agreement.

# 10. Functional Offices

## Safety, Security and Emergency Services

a) Security Operations

The following precautions must be taken when working from home or other locations, to ensure the safeguard of information:

* Information brought to or accessed from the telework place shall be limited to the minimum required to perform assigned duties.
* Any sensitive information brought to or accessed from the telework place must be handled and safeguarded as per the guidance provided in the departmental [Information Security Guide](http://intra.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ss/documents/corp/print/information-security-guide_guide-securite-info-eng.pdf) and the [Departmental Standard on Information Security](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/ss/sites/ss/files/corp_policy/standard_on_information_security-eng.pdf).
* Employees shall not bring hard copies of information categorized as Protected B or above to the telework place.
* Employees shall not print information categorized as Protected B or above at the telework place.
* Employees shall not access or transmit information categorized as Protected C or Classified from the telework place.
* Employees should always be aware of their surroundings when discussing sensitive information when working in public spaces.
* Employees shall never allow non-employees or unauthorized personnel to use any of their government devices.
* Employees shall not send information from their work email address to their personal email accounts (e.g. Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.).
* Employees should always use caution when using free-public WiFi.
* Employees shall never transmit unencrypted sensitive information over WiFi networks.
* Employees who will be working from a telework place located outside of Canada, must contact [DFO.SecurityAwareness-Sensibilisationalasecurite.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:DFO.SecurityAwareness-Sensibilisationalasecurite.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) well in advance of the departure date as there may be additional security requirements depending on the destination.

## b) Occupational Health and Safety

The employer is required under the [*Canada Labour Code*](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/L-2/page-23.html) to exercise due diligence with respect to his/her obligations under the Code. In order to meet these obligations, the employer provides instructions on how to establish a safe and ergonomic telework working environment, including adequacy of work station and work tools (keyboard, elbow support, proper chair, lighting, etc.). This is specifically addressed through the requirement for new teleworkers to undertake specific training related to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) prior to teleworking.

## c) Information Technology

Important principles must be followed in order to protect the employer's network. The following are the main ones:

1. With respect to IT equipment that connects to our network, only Government Furnished Equipment should be utilized for telework (no personal equipment). This will ensure the device connecting to the corporate network meets all security and IT standards. This includes security hardening, hard drive encryption, antivirus, limited access privileges, etc.
2. Teleworkers should only use the Government of Canada Secure Remote Access (GCSRA) account solution (using Virtual Private Network, "VPN") to remotely access applications and data on the DFO electronic network in a secure fashion.
3. If required to transport electronic data from the workplace to home and vice-versa, teleworkers should be provided an encrypted portable data storage device (USB).

1. Corporate documents should be saved on DFO network resources to ensure appropriate storage and protection.

# **11. Telework and Duty to Accommodate**

Many flexible work arrangements can be used to facilitate a duty to accommodate. The premise of duty to accommodate for the employer is to provide a barrier-free, respectful workplace for all employees and this includes accommodating certain needs that some employees may have.

The [Canadian Human Rights Act](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/) prohibits discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, gender identity or expression, disability or conviction for an offense for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record of suspension has been ordered.

Managers have a duty to accommodate employees. There is no set formula for accommodation. Each person has unique needs and employees have the right to be accommodated up to the point of undue hardship for the employer, taking into account health, safety and cost. For all accommodation requests, including in the context of telework, managers should contact the [Labour Relations Center of Expertise](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/933) and refer to the Treasury Board [Directive on the Duty to Accommodate](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32634) as well as [DFO Duty to Accommodate Guide](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/1519).

# 12. Main references

* [Access to Information Act](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-1/)
* [Canada Labour Code](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/L-2/index.html), Part II
* [Canadian Human Rights Act](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/)
* [DFO Duty to Accommodate Guide](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/1519)
* [DFO Information Management](http://w00intra01.ncr.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ncr-rcn/pimsb-dspgi/index_e.asp)
* [DFO IT Security Standards](https://intra.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/IMTS/IT/Security/Standards)
* [DFO Values and Ethics Code for](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/1172)
* [Government Employees Compensation Act](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/G-5/)
* Privacy Act
* Treasury Board [Performance Management Program for Employees](https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/performance-talent-management/performance-management-program-employees.html)
* Treasury Board [Directive on the Duty to Accommodate](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32634)
* Treasury Board [Directive on Telework](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32636)
* [Relevant Collective Agreements](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/coll_agre/siglist-eng.asp)
* [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=25049)

**Appendix A:   
Questions and Answers**

## Part A: General Questions

### A.1 What is telework?

Telework is an authorized working arrangement in which employees perform all or part of their regular work away from the designated workplace. Telework may be on a full-time, part-time or occasional basis.

### A.2 Why telework?

Telework serves to meet the needs of a growing, diverse workforce for whom telework meets their personal needs. It also helps employees meet personal needs for flexibility in work scheduling. In cities with pollution and traffic problems, it alleviates environmental and commuting concerns. It may also reduce accommodation costs at the designated workplace and parking facility requirements. Moreover, recent advances in technology and telecommunications equipment have made telework more feasible and affordable.

### A.3 Can anyone telework?

Experience has shown that while most teleworkers require a period of adjustment, those employees who are self-motivated and wish to have the flexibility that telework provides tend to experience few difficulties. Provided that the basic principles of the guidelines are met, any employee may be eligible to telework provided the following key principles are met.

* Telework is operationally feasible;
* There is no loss of production or performance directly linked to telework;
* It is voluntary
* It does not generate extra costs (except for one-time start-up costs) that cannot be recouped over a reasonable period of time, with the exception of accommodations pursuant to the duty to accommodate;
* It has been approved by the delegated manager;
* It does not change the terms and conditions of employment or the provisions of collective agreements; and
* A Telework Agreement has been signed by the delegated manager and the employee, and a copy has been given to the employee.

### A.4 Does an employee have a right to telework?

No, telework is not a right, and the approval of telework requests are at the manager’s discretion. Telework arrangements are set out in a written agreement between the employee and their manager, and are based on the key principles set out in the Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Canadian Coast Guard Telework Guidelines. . Managers must exercise their discretion in a fair, transparent and non-arbitrary manner when assessing the request to telework.

### A.5 Can a manager require an employee to telework?

No. Generally speaking, a manager cannot require an employee to telework.

Where the safety and security of employees are at risk, management resereves the right to ask them to work remotely.

### A.6 What types of jobs are suitable to telework?

Any job that complies with the basic principles outlined in these guidelines may be eligible. Each case must be assessed separately, and final approval is given by the delegated manager. Certain characteristics may make some jobs more suitable to telework. For example, project-oriented tasks, research and writing and easily quantifiable tasks are easily adaptable to telework. Some client service jobs such as dealing daily with enquiries, field work, or where highly sensitive material is handled may not be suitable for telework.

### A.7 What are the benefits of telework?

For the employee:

* Increased motivation and productivity;
* Reduced stress;
* Increased control over work-life balance;
* Reduced daily commuting time;
* Reduced transportation, parking and meal costs; and
* Easier to work without interruption from within the office.

For the department:

* Increased motivation, productivity and employee morale;
* Possible reduction in costs of office space;
* Retention of competent and qualified employees;
* Maintaining the dignity and respect of persons employed by addressing their work-related needs without resorting to a formal request for accommodation, to the extent reasonable
* Decreased absenteeism; and
* Continued operations in case of shutdowns, emergencies, snow storms, etc.

### A.8 What are the challenges of telework?

For the employee:

* Possible feeling of isolation and reduced social interaction;
* Increased effort required to maintain communications and good working relationships with colleagues;
* Some jobs not being suitable for telework; or
* Possible increase in household expenses (e.g., electricity, heating, insurance) (See C.2).

For the department:

* Culture change within the organization;
* Initial cost to set-up Telework Agreement (See C.1);
* Perceived loss of direct control over employees and possible adjustment to style of supervision;
* Effort required to ensure communication and the proliferation of ideas and synergy within the team;
* Greater emphasis on long and short-range planning;
* Greater emphasis on work measurement and productivity; or
* Need to sometimes reassure office employees that their workload will not be increased and that teleworkers are fulfilling all their responsibilities.

### A.9 What is a Telework Agreement and do I need one?

The Telework Agreement confirms that telework has been approved, and it sets out the agreed upon terms and conditions. It is intended to ensure that the telework terms are clearly stated and understood by the parties before implementation. A Telework Agreement is required for all telework arrangements. In accordance with the terms of the telework agreement, the manager may require the employee to attend meetings in person at the designated workplace.

### A.10 What happens to the agreement when the employee occupies a new position or changes departments?

The Telework Agreement must be renegotiated and resigned if the employee occupies a new position or changes department.

### A.11 Can employees telework from anywhere?

The guidelines do not prescribe a location for telework. However, the employee must be ready to return to the office in a reasonable time due to emergency or for operational reasons. The employee does not need to work from “their” home, but they must work in a “secure” location (i.e. working from a coffee shop with an open laptop for any bystander to read, or having business calls in a public place are not secure). The employee is responsible for safe keeping of all government assets (i.e. laptop, files, mobile) and cannot share information either verbally or by having left their laptop open in a public place.

**A.12 In the case where a telework agreement is signed allowing an employee to telework full time from home, does the designated workplace remain the office or does it become the telework place ? In such situation, who would be responsible for travelling costs when the employee is required to report to the office?**

Such situations may occur when management experiences staffing challenges in some areas/cities. The employer may decide to allow future employees to work permanently from their home (telework place) while the designated workplace remains the work location where the employee would work if there was not a telework agreement. In this situation, management would be responsible for the travel costs when the employee must report to the designated workplace. For any matters related to recruitment, managers must communicate with their Staffing Advisor.

### A.13 Part of an employee's duties is to go out and meet with clients at their workplace. Is this teleworking and would the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/d10/en) apply?

No, a client's workplace is not considered a telework place. If an employee was required to report to a location away from their telework place or his/her designated workplace to perform work, the National Joint CouncilTravel Directive would apply.

### A.14 What equipment is required for telework?

Equipment requirements depend on the work to be done and the individual Agreements in place. They must be discussed on a case by case basis between the manager and the employee.

### A.15 Can telework be used as a substitute for child care leave or elder care leave?

No, telework is not designed to be combined with the care of young children or the elderly. If an extended period of time is required to care for family members, the types of leave provided for in the collective agreement, conditions of employment or departmental policies should be considered. A reduced work schedule could also be considered. Although telework is not a substitute for child care leave, greater flexibility in working hours can provide more latitude to coordinate family activities. For example, parents who do not have to commute to work every day could be more involved in their children’s extracurricular activities.

### A.16 Are there any recourses if a telework request is denied?

The manager and employee are strongly encouraged to openly discuss the feasibility and implications of a telework arrangement in an attempt to a mutually acceptable solution. If the dispute cannot be resolved informally, the employee retains the right to file a grievance.

## Part B: Operational Questions and Answers for Managers

### B.1 What level of management can approve a Telework Agreement?

In line with DFO’s [*Delegation of Human Resources Authorities*](https://intra.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/folios/00692/docs/delegation-hr-authorities-eng.pdf)*,* the approval of Telework Agreements must be made by the Responsibility Centre Manager (RCM) or at a higher level.

### B.2 How do I know employees are working if I can't see them?

As with employees in the workplace, whether near or at a distance from you, you should know if an employee is working if he/she meets the job requirements on time and up to expected quality, through sound performance management practices. Planning and communication are critical to a successful telework situation. Focus on a results-oriented approach and base your decisions on output/product.

### B.3 Does a specific schedule need to be established for telework?

Yes, a description of the employee’s hours and days of work must be included in the Telework Agreement. Teleworkers must comply with the provisions of their collective agreement regarding hours of work, and must be available during working hours.

### B.4 Can telework be combined with part-time employment?

Provided that the basic policy requirements are respected, telework can be combined with part-time or any other flexible working arrangements.

### B.5 What happens if buildings are closed and an employee is scheduled to telework?

When buildings are closed because of the weather, or for any other reason, and it falls on the employee’s regular telework day, then the employee is expected to connect and work as scheduled. In cases where the weather forecast is bad (e.g. winterstorm) and that the office may close due to inclement weather, management may request their employees to telework if operationaly feasible and to bring the required equipment (e.g. laptop, cell phone, etc.) to avoid losing a day of work and reporting to the workplace.

### B.6 What if there are persistent technological difficulties during telework?

Teleworkers must advise their manager as soon as a technological difficulty cannot be resolved to determine how to adjust (return to the designated workplace, alternative arrangements to work, etc.).

### B.7 How is a teleworker’s performance assessed?

The *TBS* [*Performance Management Program for employees*](https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/performance-talent-management/performance-management-program-employees.html) will continue to be the process used for setting objectives and assessing employee performance. The main focus of performance assessment must be based on work output, wherever the employee may be. Criteria that can be used to evaluate the Telework Agreement could include the following:

* Meeting deadlines;
* Employee’s productivity;
* Progress of individual or team assignments;
* Availability to receive and return calls;
* Impacts on the employee at home as well as other staff in the office;
* Customer service delivery; or
* The ability to attend meetings, even on short notice.

In some cases, changes to the Telework Agreement may be necessary, while in others the agreement may be ended.

### B.8 How can a Telework Agreement be terminated?

A Telework Agreement may be terminated at any time at the employee’s request, by mutual agreement between the employee and the manager, or by written notice from the manager indicating the reason for termination and giving the employee a reasonable time for the change to take effect (14 days is recommended).

### B.9 What happens when the equipment requires repair?

Maintenance, repair, and replacement of government-owned equipment issued to employees are the responsibility of the department. The employee must notify his/her manager immediately following a malfunction of government-owned equipment. The employer is not responsible or liable for damages to the employee's personal or real property during the course of performance of official duties or while using the employer's equipment in the employee's residence in cases of employee negligence. If repairs are extensive and replacement is impractical, the employee must be prepared, if asked, to report back to the official workplace until the equipment is operational. In these circumstances, the employer must provide a place where the employee will be able to work, if he or she does not have an assigned location.

### B.10 An employee provided a medical note recommending working from home for an indeterminate period of time, what do I do?

Telework is sometimes offered to employees whose functional limitations require this as a form of accommodation. For all accommodation requests, including in the context of telework, managers should refer to the t [Treasury Board Directive on the Duty to Accommodate](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32634)  as well as [DFO Duty to Accommodate Guide](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/1519) , and contact their [Labour Relations Advisor](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/fr/node/1110) for advice and guidance.

## Part C: Questions and answers on costs, safety, health and security and taxes

### C.1 Which costs are covered by the employer?

* Transportation, accommodation, meals and incidental expenses in accordance with the National Joint Council’s Travel Directive for attending meetings, training sessions or conferences outside the designated workplace;
* Maintenance and repair of equipment owned by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard;
* Office supplies and equipment required for the telework duties (e.g. laptop, cell phone and chargers);
* Pre-approved postage and courier costs; and
* Replacement of lost or damaged government equipment: employees are responsible to care for departmental government equipment in their possession, and in case of negligence or infraction, the department could decide, depending on the circumstances, to claim the recovery of replacement costs.

### C.2 Which costs are covered by the teleworker?

* Travel costs between the telework place and the designated workplace when the employee is required to report to the designated workplace (e.g. transportation, accommodation, meals, incidental expenses and parking);
* Office furniture and equipment at the telework location (e.g. chair, desk, filing cabinet, lighting);
* Insurance premiums and utility costs (heating, electricity, Internet, phone line) to run a home office (responsible for extra cost); and
* Any additional insurance costs (the employee is not responsible for insuring equipment; however, a review of coverage with the home insurance company is necessary to ensure there are no effects on current coverage resulting from use of the home as an office).

### C.3 How do I ensure that the telework place is safe?

Usually, employees' homes provide a safe and secure environment. Employees are responsible for ensuring that safety requirements are met in their homes to protect themselves and any equipment provided by the employer. As the employer has no formal control over an employee's telework location, employees are asked to voluntarily provide assurance to the manager that the telework location is safe and healthy. Through the Telework Agreement, the employee recognizes that the employer is only responsible for the telework tasks, not for the entire home, hence any accident or illness arising from telework would only be considered work-related if arising from the tasks.

### C.4 What about liability for injuries sustained while teleworking? How will the department deal with an employee's claim for injury?

Under the [Government Employees Compensation Act](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/G-5/), Public Service employees who are injured in the normal course of their duties can be compensated for those injuries. This is the case whether the injury takes place at the employer's designated workplace or elsewhere. Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard’s Safety and Security Checklist for telework must be completed, signed and attached to the agreement. The employee must notify their manager of any accident or injury that occurred in the performance of the employee’s duties. The procedure and corresponding forms can be found on the internet site of the [Provincial Workers' Compensation Boards in Canada](https://www.ccohs.ca/Oshanswers/information/wcb_canada.html).

### C.5 Is information security compromised by telework?

Since organizations no longer have physical control of the employee’s work environment, there are additional information security risks associated with telework. Additional safeguards must therefore be observed when working from home or other remote locations as identified in Section 10 of theses Guidelines.

### C.6 Does an employee who uses a portion of his/her home as an office qualify for any federal income tax deductions?

Depending upon the situation, and provided certain conditions are met, teleworkers may be able to deduct certain expenses from their employment income for income tax purposes. Due to the complexity of the Income Tax Act and the fact that each telework situation is unique, employees should contact the [Canada Revenue Agency](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/menu-e.html) (CRA) for further advice.

### C.7 Are there any municipal or provincial requirements for teleworking?

Employees are responsible for informing themselves of any municipal or provincial restrictions which could have an impact on their telework situation, for example requirement for smoke detectors in the telework place.

**Appendix B:   
Tips for successful teleworking**

The following are tips that can help ensure a successful Telework Agreement

## Scheduling Telework Agreement

1. Post employees' telework schedules in the designated workplace and provide co-workers with their telework place phone numbers.
2. Ensure that employees pre-arrange telework days with their supervisor (if not specifically scheduled in their Telework Agreement) at least 24 hours in advance unless another procedure is established between the manager and the employee.
3. Avoid scheduling meetings in the designated workplace involving part-time teleworkers when they are away from the official workplace. If rescheduling is not possible, try to use teleconferencing or videoconferencing (depending on the available most cost-effective technology). If this is not possible, teleworkers are expected to commute to the designated workplace.
4. Teleworkers must adhere closely to the agreed-upon time schedule, should use voice mail the same way they would at the designated workplace, and  follow-up promptly as if in the designated workplace.
5. Teleworkers must confirm receipt of voice messages by advising  callers that they have retrieved their message and are taking action, the same way as if they  were in the designated workplace.
6. If employees use voice messaging at their designated workplace as part of client service, ensure a proper way to continue the service when they are teleworking. This could include checking official workplace voice messages from the telework place as regularly as they would when in the designated workplace, or changing their personal greeting to advise  callers that they are not at the designated workplace and providing one or more phone number(s) at which they can be contacted.
7. Communication with colleagues is an essential part of teleworking, whether it involves problem solving, providing updates on a project, or following up on emails and requests. Maintaining regular communication will ensure that teleworking employees are engaged with their colleagues and in their work. Regular contact should be maintained (by telephone, email, Instant Messaging, teleconference, etc).

## Performance Management

1. Avoid misunderstanding of work expectations by ensuring that work objectives are well known and in accordance with[*TBS Performance Management Program for employees*](https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/performance-talent-management/performance-management-program-employees.html)and that an understanding has been reached between the teleworking employee and his/her supervisor.

## Technical problems

1. Establish procedures for call-in trouble-shooting through the Information Technology Service Desk at 1-888-248-2210.

# Appendix C: Common Myths and Barriers

## Managerial resistance

Most managers understand the potential benefits of telework. While most are prepared to take steps to accommodate employee needs in this regard, there are a variety of issues that will cause managers to hesitate when faced with a telework request. Such issues include concerns about control, performance management, communication, employee health and safety, and being responsible for the work of employees they would not always see. In order to maximize effectiveness and feasibility of telework situations, both employees and managers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with knowledge and awareness of the benefits of telework .

Telework will lead to longer working hours

The collective agreements govern the employees’ work schedules.

## Telework will cost more

Telework situations are almost invariably cost-effective. On a work-unit level, the increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and lower employee‑turnover rates translate into significant savings.

## Teleworkers will be less productive than if they were at the office

Telework has a proven track record of increasing productivity. Well-planned Telework Agreements stand an excellent chance of success, particularly if the manager provides the necessary supervision and monitoring.

## Telework and teamwork do not mix

Few teams require continual face-to-face interaction. Most team members work independently and communicate with each other by phone, e-mail or teleconference. Team meetings can be planned for days when all employees are at the designated workplace or can be conducted via teleconference (in the case of employees who are teleworking every day).

## Everyone will want to do it

Telework works best when everyone understands that it is not a privilege or a right, but a work option based on such factors as operational feasibility, personal and job suitability, etc. Each telework request shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Scheduling issues

Problems can occur when meetings are scheduled for days when one or more employees are teleworking. Although scheduling issues are unavoidable, they can be minimized. For example, some meetings can be rescheduled. In other cases, a conference call might work.Ensuring that employees' telework schedules and contact information are clearly posted in the office can also help avoid issues.

## Teleworkers will not be there when they are needed

Problems may arise if teleworkers cannot be reached by their manager, colleagues and clients during their working hours. Teleworkers, as well as their managers and colleagues, must be clearly advised that it is expected that they can be reached by phone or other means during their working hours. Also, teleworkers may be required to report to their designated workplace within a reasonable amount of time in the event of a work-related emergency. If so, all travelling costs to the workplace are to be paid by the employees.

## Perception problems

Problems may occur when teleworkers are reluctant to take even short breaks from their home office on teleworking days in case someone should call but not reach them and assume they are not working. This is no longer a problem once colleagues realize that teleworkers perform just as well (if not better) at home than when they are at the designated workplace. Another problem arises if neighbours or other members of the public get the impression that teleworkers are not really working. For example, neighbours could get this impression if they see a teleworker carrying out duties on the patio or by the pool. Although such assumptions may be incorrect, teleworkers must remember that they are more open to public scrutiny when they are teleworking and should therefore exercise care and judgement.

# Appendix D: [DFO Telework Safety and Security Checklist](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/sites/hr-rh/files/safety-security-checklist-eng.docx)

The purpose of this checklist is to assist managers and employees to ensure that employees who are approved to telework are safely performing their assigned duties at the telework location.

Managers and employees entering into a Telework Agreement must ensure that the telework location is as described below. Prior to entering into a Telework Agreement, a completed and signed copy of this checklist must be included with the completed and signed Telework Agreement.

Employees are encouraged to bring to management’s attention, any concerns regarding potential hazards to their health and safety that relate to the performance of the assigned duties in an approved telework situation. Should circumstances or work environment change, this should be discussed with management.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Telework Office Set-Up: | | Yes | No |
| 1. The work area is separate from major family activity areas. | |  |  |
| 1. The work area is not in a high traffic area during work hours. | |  |  |
| 1. The work area is void of background or distracting noise during work hours. | |  |  |
| 1. Safety | | Yes | No |
| 1. There are safe exit paths from the work areas. | |  |  |
| 1. The phone lines, electrical cords, and extension wires are secured, to prevent a tripping hazard. | |  |  |
| 1. The electrical outlets in the work area are not overloaded. | |  |  |
| 1. The work area is uncluttered so that it does not pose any hazard. | |  |  |
| 1. Workplace Environment: | | Yes | No |
| 1. All electrical equipment is free of physical hazards (e.g. visual inspection for frayed wires, bare conductors, loose wires, exposed wires). | |  |  |
| 1. File cabinets and storage closets are arranged so drawers and doors do not pose a hazard. | |  |  |
| 1. Large bookshelves or cabinets are secured to prevent tipping. | |  |  |
| 1. Chairs have no loose casters and the rungs and legs of the chairs are sturdy. | |  |  |
| 1. The office space is neat, clean and free of excessive amounts of paper or boxes that can pose a fire hazard. | |  |  |
| 1. Carpets are well secured to the floor and free of frayed or worn seams. | |  |  |
| 1. There is appropriate light for reading. | |  |  |
| 1. Computer Workstation: | | Yes | No |
| 1. Chair is adjustable (if needed). | |  |  |
| 1. The employee knows how to adjust the chair (if applicable). | |  |  |
| 1. Monitor, elbow rest and mouse are placed ergonomically. | |  |  |
| 1. Document holder is available for use if required. | |  |  |
| 1. Security: | | Yes | No |
| 1. Information brought to or accessed from the telework place will be limited to the minimum required to perform assigned duties. | |  |  |
| 1. Will handle and safeguard sensitive information as per the guidance provided in the departmental Information Security Guide and the Departmental Standard on Information Security. | |  |  |
| 1. Will not bring hard copies of information categorized as Protected B or Classified, to the telework place. | |  |  |
| 1. Will not access or transmit information categorized as Protected C or Classified from the telework place. | |  |  |
| 1. Will not transmit unencrypted sensitive information over WiFi Networks. | |  |  |
| 1. Will only use Secure VPN to connect to the DFO network from the telework place. | |  |  |
| 1. Will not send information from the work email to personal email account (e.g. Hotmal, Yahoo, etc) | |  |  |
| 1. Will not allow non-employees or unauthorized personnel to use any of their government devices. | |  |  |
| 1. If the telework place is located outside of Canada, will contact DFO. [SecurityAwareness-Sensibilisationalasecurite.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:SecurityAwareness-Sensibilisationalasecurite.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) well in advance of the departure date. | |  |  |
| 1. Property Insurance: | | Yes | No |
| 1. Employee has verified with their homeowners’ or renters’ insurance policy their liability coverage in the context of teleworking from home. | |  |  |
|  | | | |
| **Name of employee** |  | | |
| **Signature of employee** |  | | |
| **Date of signature** |  | | |
| **Telework address** |  | | |
| **Agreement date** | From  To | | |
| **Name of supervisor/Manager** |  | | |
| **Signature of supervisor/Manager** |  | | |
| **Date of signature** |  | | |

# Appendix E: [Key Considerations for Managers – A Tool to Assist in Assessing the Feasibility of Telework](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/sites/hr-rh/files/managers-checklist-approval-eng.docx)

The following questions may be used by managers when considering the feasibility of telework/occasional work from home arrangements:

Name of employee: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CONSIDERATION FOR MANAGERS** |  |  |
| The Employee: | Yes | No |
| 1. Does the employee’s performance demonstrate support for a telework arrangement? |  |  |
| 1. Is the employee a self starter? |  |  |
| 1. Is the employee reliable and have a good attendance record (respect his/her schedule) |  |  |
| 1. Is the employee well organized? |  |  |
| 1. Has the employee teleworked before and was it successful? |  |  |
| 1. Has the employee successfully completed the mandatory Security Awareness training from the [Canada School of Public Service](https://learn-apprendre.csps-efpc.gc.ca/) (A230)? |  |  |
| 1. Has the employee successfully completed the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness Online Training available through the [Fisheries and Oceans Canada Learning Portal](https://dfo-mpo.entia.ca/)? |  |  |
| 1. Does the employee have, and will continue to maintain a MyKey (Entrust PKI certificate)? |  |  |
| The Work: | Yes | No |
| 1. Are performance goals SMART? (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) |  |  |
| 1. Are some aspects of the job well suited for telework? |  |  |
| 1. Has the DFO Telework Safety and Security Checklist been reviewed by the manager and the teleworker to ensure adherence to health and safety policies/regulations? |  |  |
| 1. Have arrangements been made to continue open communication (frequency of contact, feedback, performance reviews, etc.) with the employee? |  |  |
| Managing the agreement: | Yes | No |
| 1. Does the agreed-upon Telework Agreement respect the collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment for the respective employee? |  |  |
| 1. Is there an arrangement on how the teleworker will receive and return the completed work? |  |  |
| 1. How will government information be secured ? please provide answer here: |  |  |

# Appendix F: [DFO Checklist for Evaluation of Previously Existing Telework Agreements](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/sites/hr-rh/files/checklist-eval-tele-arragements-eng.docx)

The following questions are intended as a guide to assist managers and employee in evaluating the effectiveness of previously existing telework arrangements.

All Telework Agreements are to be evaluated on a yearly basis. Discussion regarding the criteria that will be used to evaluate the agreements must occur between the managers and the employee before the approval of the Telework Agreement.

Please consult with your [Labour Relations Advisor](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/en/node/933) for further advice and guidance.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(attach approved [Telework Agreement Form](https://intranet.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/hr-rh/sites/hr-rh/files/fp_0522.pdf))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INDICATORS | Yes | No |
| 1. Has productivity/quality been maintained? |  |  |
| 1. Has the telework agreement improved/maintained the progress of the individual or team assignments? |  |  |
| 1. Has the teleworker been available to receive and return calls in a timely manner ? |  |  |
| 1. Did the employee meet all objectives as per the Performance Agreement ? |  |  |
| 1. Has the teleworker attended meetings on a consistent basis using the requested technology? (i.e. Webex) |  |  |
| 1. Has the Telework Agreement had any impact (positive or negative) on the work of the others at the designated workplace? |  |  |
| 1. Is the teleworker actively participating in departmental initiatives including working groups, team projects and committees? |  |  |
| 1. Has the Telework Agreement ever prevented the employee from completing a work related task? For example, not having access to a particular file, not being able to access a shared drive, not being able to return a signed document or not having access to a required resource because it is at the designated workplace? |  |  |
| 1. Is the employee able to participate in learning and training activities? For example, online training through CSPS, online training provided by DFO or in-person learning either at the designated workplace or offsite. |  |  |
| Comments: |  |  |

Name of Supervisor/Manager: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# **Appendix G:**

# DFO Telework Agreement Form



**Appendix H:**

**Remote work and COVID-19 Considerations**

**Determining Whether Work Should Be Performed Onsite or By Working Remotely**

* Consider Public Health guidelines for each workplace.
* Consider occupational health and safety, duty to accommodate, accessibility, Gender Based Analysis+ considerations, and the diversity and inclusion lens.
* Take into consideration functional and operational requirements.
* In assessing which employees should be asked to return to the worksite, specific impacts to individuals will need to be considered as part of protecting the health and safety of employees. Some employees may have specific personal circumstances that may require accommodation, for example, medical conditions, family and childcare responsibilities, at-risk age group, as well other considerations such as travel restrictions.
* Establish and/or modify work schedules using existing flexibilities (e.g., those in collective agreements and relevant terms and conditions of employment) while respecting:
  + The *Canada Labour Code* and *Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*; and Duty to Accommodate requirements

**Communication and Engagement**

*Considerations for Managers*

* Frequent communications with employees.
* Discuss personal circumstances with employees individually to understand whether they are candidates for a return to the worksite, if they require accommodation (e.g. working remotely, flexible work hours), and the extent of the contribution they can make. Factors hindering a return may include availability of childcare, and where individuals are at an elevated risk due to chronic or immunity related health conditions, nature of commute. Factors in favour of a return may include work that can only be performed at the workplace, ergonomic or other issues not accommodated at home, isolation/depression, technology limitations.
* When asking employees to provide personal information, managers should focus on what is directly needed for decisions to be made. Managers generally should not be saving this info but if required for any reason it is to be secured and only used for this specific purpose which the employee has provided it.
* Ensure alignment to department -wide messaging, and alignment in messaging within the organization.
* In order to build trust and resilience, and avoid the spread of misinformation, consider the following when developing messaging: content, clarity, consistency, frequency, and tone.
* Encourage dialogue and flexibility to adapt to specific circumstances.
* Communicate equally with all employees about any plans to ask some or all employees to return to worksites, including employees that will continue to work remotely.
* Communicate with employees who will return to the worksite beforehand to reassure them of the measures in place to protect their health and safety.
* Regularly invite and consider the concerns of all employees, including those related to health and safety, accessibility, wellness, inclusion and diversity, and the duty to accommodate.

*Considerations for employees*

* While working remotely, take all health, safety, and security precautions in accordance with all laws, policies and regulations.
* Communicate with your manager regarding personal restrictions or requirements in regard to remote work
* Maintain regular contact with their manager and colleagues.
* Collaborate with managers to maximize their contribution to the organization’s objectives, in consideration of their personal circumstances.
* Report any concerns of health & safety to their manager.

**Employees’ physical health and safety**

*Considerations for Managers*

* Protect the physical and psychological health and safety of employees, including all legislative requirements under Part II of the Canada Labour Code.
* Management should proactively reach out and check in with employees to ensure that their health and safety is not compromised.
* Demonstrate due diligence. For instance, it is the Employer's responsibility to ensure that the employee knows and understands what is involved in working remotely and provide guidance on the practical considerations of working remotely, where it is considered appropriate or necessary. This should include giving guidance on how to establish a safe and ergonomic working environment and the adequacy of the workstation and the facilities. For more information, refer to the following link for [practical tips for ergonomics and telework.](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/covid19/messages/ohs-sst-02-eng.html)

**Removal, Purchase, and Return of Assets**

*Note: Refer to the Department’s guide on the removal, purchase, and return of assets during the COVID-19 pandemic at the following link:*

[*https://inter-l01-uat.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/dfo-mpo-empl/en/now-available-updated-guide-removal-purchase-and-return-assets-during-covid-19-pandemic*](https://inter-l01-uat.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/dfo-mpo-empl/en/now-available-updated-guide-removal-purchase-and-return-assets-during-covid-19-pandemic)

**Employees’ Psychological health and Wellbeing**

*Considerations for managers*

* Protect the physical and psychological health and safety of employees, including all legislative requirements under Part II of the Canada Labour Code.
* Make sure employees are aware of mental health supports and services, address the 13 psychosocial factors that impact employees, and respond to psychological hazards that emerge (e.g. anxiety around contracting COVID-19 in the workplace, the loss of a team member or loved one) .
* Make [Employee](https://iEmployee) Assistance Program contact information available to all staff.
* Ensure that all employees – those that are working remotely and those that are reporting on-site – are treated with equal respect and value, understand the expectation for results, and are offered equivalent supports and opportunities.
* Managers should continue to apply the principles for the management of a remote workforce and leading at a distance, remain aware of the state of mind and vulnerability felt by members of their work unit and remain vigilant about respect and civility in the workplace, recognizing that tensions in the workplace or among colleagues can be intensified during stressful periods, and to not let inappropriate behavior become a problem.

*Considerations for employees*

* Make use of the tools and advice supporting their own mental health and wellness, inclusion and diversity and that of their colleagues.
* Respectfully share concerns about their personal situation, the workplace, or the behavior of colleagues with management.

**Disability Management and Duty to Accommodate**

As in any other accommodation situation, the goal is to adapt the work place to enable the employee to work. Achieving accommodation is a joint responsibility, and the employee is entitled to a reasonable accommodation - not his or her preferred accommodation.

*Considerations for managers*

* Regularly invite and consider the concerns of all employees, including those related to accessibility, wellness, inclusion and diversity, and the duty to accommodate.
* Maintain the dignity and respect of persons employed by addressing their work related needs, including ensuring work-related information is provided in accessible formats, while maintaining the employee’s privacy of information.
* Ensure that accommodation arrangements are reviewed so that the workplace remains barrier free during remote-work. If items are identified as barriers, ensure they are addressed in a timely manner. (See Ergonomic equipment section regarding removal of assets.)
* If there is an accommodation required management needs to determine the employee’s functional limitations and determine how best to accommodate those. This may include an employee returning to the workplace
* Depending on the employee’s functional limitations, providing ergonomic equipment may be one way to accommodate an employee who is working remotely.
* Obtaining a medical certificate is not a requirement, but may be appropriate in some cases. Ensure that the needs of individuals who may require accommodation are taken into consideration when planning or designing work related processes, or changes to processes as those related to remote work continue to be accessible.

*Considerations for employees*

* Provide information and documentation supporting their accommodation requirements related to their limitations and restrictions, in timely fashion.
* Cooperating and collaborating in good faith to find one or more means to accommodate such needs, taking into consideration issues of health, safety and cost.
* Notifying their manager if their accommodation needs change.

**Information Technology**

Allocation of remote technological equipment and accesses should be regularly assessed so as to maximize productivity.

## IT Best Practices

*Virtual Protected Network (VPN)*

* Limit time on the departmental Virtual Protected Network (VPN)
* If you are authorized to connect to the DFO/CCG network via VPN, do so only for short periods of time and on a rotational basis so other employees are also able to access the network.
* When connecting to the network, use the VPN portal for your region only.
* Disconnect from the DFO/CCG network when you have accessed what you need.
* Vary the time of VPN connection to avoid peak periods and vary your work hours, if possible.
* Note that, when you log on to the network after being disconnected, your email will automatically synchronize, so you can access all received and sent messages, and any outgoing messages that have not yet been sent will then be transmitted.
* Obtain copies of documents you will need (e.g. from shared drives, GCdocs) in advance, so they are available when you are not connected to the network. Once you are reconnected, you can save revised documents to their original locations. Inform your colleagues that you are doing so to avoid overwriting each other’s revisions or a master document.

## *Minimize bandwidth usage*

* If online meetings are essential, reduce bandwidth usage by:
  + limiting participants to those who are absolutely required;
  + disabling cameras; and
  + making documents needed for meetings available ahead of time so participants already have their own copies.
* Refrain from excessive usage of social media on the VPN (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
* Avoid using online training resources (e.g. audio, video, eLearning) or engaging in other activities that can be done offline or through home internet on your personal computer.
* Use other forms of communication to avoid connecting to the VPN.
* Use your mobile work phone for communications, if possible (e.g. emails, texting).
* Ensure your mobile work phone is set up to send and receive encrypted email.
* Use Blackberry Messenger Enterprise (BBME) for communications up to Protected B.
* Use your home internet to access your emails through webmail (https:\\webmail.dfo-mpo.gc.ca) and to access Microsoft Teams, and Outlook, if required. You will need to input your network user name and password.
* Install your regional DFO/CCG Mobile Alert App to receive security notifications on your Android device or iPhone in your respective region (available from Google Play and the Apple App Store).

## *Extra steps*

* Encrypted emails only work within your work email (DFO Outlook Client), so make sure your device is set up to decrypt email messages and documents, if needed.
* Change your network password on a regular basis. Changing it immediately could save you and the IT Service Desk problems in the coming weeks.
* Use extreme caution when viewing any email that looks suspicious. If you have concerns, DO NOT open the email or click on any links.
* Set up an appropriate workspace at home, including a comfortable chair and space for your laptop, tablet, phone, or other equipment.
* Plan for frequent short breaks, as your temporary workspace will not likely have an ergonomic setup.
* Ensure you have lockable storage for any work-related materials requiring security containment, if applicable.
* Talk to your manager if you have any questions or concerns.

## *Data plans on cellular devices*

The data available for use as part of standard data plans will increase automatically once the current limit of 2GB is reached each calendar month (from 2GB to 5, 15, then 25GB). At the beginning of each month the data plans will revert back to the standard data limit of 2GB; however, will increase for the month as specified above if additional data is required.

Unfortunately, you may receive overage warning messages; however, these can be ignored for the time being as SSC has advised that additional charges will not apply.

## *Phishing Messages*

During the ongoing crisis, it is expected that criminals engaging in Phishing Email campaigns will increase their malicious activity. It is important for us to be extra cautious and remain vigilant to thwart these malicious actions.

Please remember the following important tips:

* **Beware of online requests for personal information:** A coronavirus-themed email that seeks personal information like your Social Security number or login information is a phishing scam. Legitimate government agencies will never ask for that information. Do not respond to the email and/or provide your personal data. Delete the email
* **Check the email address or link:** You can inspect a link by hovering your mouse button over the URL to see where it leads. Sometimes, it is obvious the web address is not legitimate; however, phishers can create links that closely resemble legitimate addresses. Delete the email
* **Watch for spelling and grammatical mistakes:** If an email includes spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors, and it is not bilingual it is likely a sign you’ve received a phishing email. Delete the email
* **Avoid emails that insist you to act now:** Phishing emails often create a sense of urgency or demand immediate action. The goal is to get you to click on a link and provide personal information immediately. Delete the email

## Requests for IT Equipments

Requests for IT equipment (laptops/tablets, docking stations, monitors, smartphones/cellphones) should follow the standard process by submitting a ticket through the IT Self-Serve Portal.

## **Need technical help?**

If you have an urgent need, please call the IT Service Desk at 1-888-248-2210, and a technician will respond as soon as possible. However, long delays are possible. If you can wait, please enter your service request through the IT Self-Service portal.

* Submit your **urgent incidents** (problems that greatly impede work) by calling **1-888-248-2210** to speak with a technician.  Call volumes for incidents are closely monitored to minimize wait time.

A few examples of incidents are :

* + Inability to connect to the network or access email
  + Error message from Windows or an application, preventing you from working.
  + Forgotten account or password.
* Submit your **service requests** (a new need) or **non-urgent incidents** via the [IT Self-Service Portal](http://assystselfservice.ent.dfo-mpo.ca/assystnet/application/assystNET.jsp#id=-1;;type=11), taking care to search for the right category in the service catalog, and attaching all required forms, as indicated in the instructions at the top of the form. The request will be quickly analyzed and prioritized based on the information provided, and then queued for processing.

Examples of non-urgent service requests or incidents to be submitted via the portal include

* + Installation of software or hardware.
  + Updating information in GEDS and Outlook properties
  + Ordering or replacing cell phones or computers
  + Obtaining a network or application access account
  + Problems with a software or computer that has little impact on the job
* Submit **general enquiries or comments** by email to [itsd-csti@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:itsd-csti@dfo-mpo.gc.ca). Request for assistance should not be submitted through the mailbox, unless unable to do so through the portal or by phone. Examples where it would be appropriate to send an email to the ITSD :
  + If you are unsure how to enter a ticket or fill out a form that must be attached to your ticket.
  + Reporting a suspicious e-mail or phishing attempt.
  + Verifying that IM&TS is indeed responsible for what you need.
  + Other general IT questions (e.g. how much space I have in my mailbox, etc.).