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Name: HPEI Remote Work Policy

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Date/Time Generated: Aug 21, 2023 20:53

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Policy and Procedures Manual

REMOTE WORK

Health PEI		POLICY & PROCEDURES
Applies To:	All Health PEI Healthcare workers	
Monitoring:	Executive Director of Human Resources	
Approving Authority:	Executive Leadership Team	
Date:	Effective: February 18, 2022 Next Review: February 18, 2025	
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1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 Health PEI's Remove Work program is designed to support and enable eligible staff to work remotely from alternative work locations. Furthermore, the program will also support Health PEI in meeting its operational requirements, by increasing space available for patient care, reducing budgetary overhead, and reducing density within facilities.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Core Business Hours:	Period during which all healthcare workers must be present at their designated Health PEI worksite, designated remote worksite, or otherwise doing business on behalf of Health PEI.
Designated Health PEI Worksite:	The healthcare worker's designated Health PEI worksite and business address and the location(s) where the healthcare worker works part of the time or would work if there were no remote work arrangement.
Designated Remote Worksite:	The healthcare worker's designated remote worksite(s) - usually their home.
Remote Work:	An arrangement in which an eligible healthcare worker does paid work for Health PEI by working at another designated location outside of Health PEI rather than commuting to a central location for work. Health PEI includes all hospitals, long-term care homes and any other sites leased or owned by Health PEI.
Supervisor:	This refers to the leader who is responsible for providing direct oversight and management of the healthcare worker(s).

Virtual Private Network (VPN):	A virtual private network extends a private network across a public network and enables users to send and receive data across shared or public networks as if their computing devices were directly connected to the private network. The benefits of a VPN include increases in functionality, security, and management of the private network.
Healthcare Worker	A person involved in providing care and/or services within Health PEI facilities and programs. This includes all healthcare workers (i.e., casual permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time), physicians (salaried, fee-for-service, contract and locum), students, volunteers and contract workers.

3.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE

- 3.1 Remote work arrangements have been shown to have a number of benefits including improving recruitment, retention, and engagement by creating flexibility and improved work-life balance. In addition, remote work policies are more environmentally friendly (e.g. they aid in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions) and they can help to address operational issues associated with hiring additional workers (e.g. addressing space concerns in Health PEI facilities). There are many other benefits to remote work arrangements, please see the Remote Work Guide for more information.
- 3.2 Health PEI may have two types of remote work arrangements:
- (a) Healthcare worker driven: Remote work arrangements that are initiated by the healthcare worker for personal/professional reasons.
 - (b) Organizational driven: Remote work arrangement that are initiated by Health PEI through the healthcare worker's immediate supervisor.
 - (c) Both the health worker and Health PEI must mutually agree to the remote work arrangement. In the event it is a new role with no incumbent, then the requirement for remote work must be included on the job posting.
 - (d) In the event the healthcare worker and supervisor cannot agree on a remote work arrangement, either party may request a review by their operational Director/Executive Director and/or respective HR Manager/Executive Director of Human Resources.
- 3.3 Any remote work arrangement will:
- (a) Ensure the healthcare worker is able to perform all of the requirements of their role and with the same efficiency and effectiveness as they would if they were on-site.
 - (b) Not be overly complex or costly for the organization or healthcare worker to accommodate.
 - (c) Consider the needs of our patients/clients/residents, peers and other internal and external stakeholders.
 - (d) Not increase the burden of work on any other Health PEI healthcare workers.
- 3.4 Remote work arrangements can vary from one to seven days per week or any parts thereof, depending on the needs of the healthcare worker, division or service.
- 3.5 The Remote Work policy outlined in this document is subject to change at the discretion of Health PEI.

4.0 APPLICATION

- 4.1 This policy applies to all regular full-time, part-time and temporary healthcare workers of Health PEI. However, healthcare workers are not eligible for remote work in the following circumstances:
- The role does not allow for a remote work due to:
 - The nature of the work (e.g. healthcare worker is required to provide in person patient care).
 - Reliance on onsite equipment not available remotely.
 - IT security and technical considerations.
 - An inability to ensure adequate protection of confidential, sensitive or personal information.
 - Remote Work would have a negative impact on patient/client/resident care or services that support patient care.
 - Remote Work would result in a loss of productivity/performance of colleagues or would require peers to take on additional responsibilities.
 - The healthcare worker is unable to occasionally work remotely (e.g. healthcare worker lives in a rural area without reliable internet access).
- 4.2 Healthcare workers who occasionally work remotely on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. to complete assignments or projects) require the agreement of their supervisor in advance but are not required to enter into a formal arrangement.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Initiation and Approvals

- (a) All eligible healthcare workers who would like to initiate a remote work request are required to notify their direct supervisor and obtain their approval. If Health PEI is initiating the arrangement, the supervisor should discuss the request with all impacted healthcare workers.
- (b) The following is required:
- The supervisor and healthcare worker will complete the **Remote Work Agreement** found in the Health PEI Remote Work Workbook (Tab 1).
 - The supervisor/healthcare worker will complete the **Remote Work Safety Assessment Tool** (Tab 2) upon initial approval. Subsequent changes in approved worksite or healthcare worker tasks, require a new assessment.
 - The Suitability Assessment Tool (Tab 3) of the Health PEI Remote Work Workbook is available to guide the assessment of the healthcare worker's or organization's request for remote work arrangements. Use of this tool is not mandatory and should only be used to help guide the decision-making process.
 - Healthcare workers must sign an **Acceptable Use Policy for Computer Systems** and **VPN Government Request** form.
 - The supervisor will ensure the healthcare worker has access to all required equipment prior to beginning the arrangement. This includes but is not limited to VPN access to Health PEI laptop.

- MS Teams may be used for any healthcare worker who is not regularly required to make phone calls outside of PEI government agencies. If a healthcare worker is regularly required to make phone calls to external parties, a Health PEI cell phone should be provided.

- (c) In addition, the healthcare worker’s direct supervisor is responsible for monitoring the arrangement on an on-going basis to ensure it continues to remain in the best interest of the healthcare worker and the organization.

Note: the supervisor is expected to account for any remote work-related expenses within their regular budget. In the event they are not able to identify appropriate funding sources within their own budget they should speak with their supervisor to identify funding that may be available within their Division. Securing additional funding should be considered as a last resort.

- (d) In the event the healthcare worker and supervisor cannot agree on a remote work arrangement, either party may request a review by their operational Director/Executive Director and/or respective HR Manager/Executive Director of Human Resources and engage their union if appropriate.

5.2 Core Hours and Availability

- The number of hours the healthcare worker is expected to work per day, or per pay period, will not change as a result of the arrangement. Supervisors and healthcare workers, by mutual agreement, may determine work hours outside of the core business hours listed.
- Healthcare workers are required to be available during their established work hours. Healthcare workers will have access to phone, voicemail, and videoconferencing using Microsoft Teams by as well as their Health PEI email.
 - If a healthcare worker has a Health PEI office phone, they should ensure that their office phone is set up to forward calls when they are working remotely.
- If a healthcare worker is ill while working remotely, they must report non-working time as sick leave and not as hours worked. In addition, if a healthcare worker wishes to adjust/flex their hours for personal reasons (e.g. a doctor’s appointment), they need to have the approval of their supervisor and must make arrangements to either make up the time or book the time off of work.

5.3 Workspace and Safety Considerations

- Health PEI will take every reasonable precaution to protect the occupational health and safety of healthcare workers by providing a safe and healthy work environment. The healthcare worker is responsible for ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations while working, and that their remote worksite is set up in accordance with any applicable zoning regulations for their municipality.
- Prior to beginning any remote work, the supervisor and the healthcare worker must complete the **Safety Assessment Tool** (Tab 2) in the Health PEI Remote Work Workbook to identify all potential hazards associated with the assigned work or work environment.
- The **Safety Assessment Tool** is to be completed initially and subsequently if there are any proposed changes to the workstation or job duties/tasks and will include, at minimum, the identification of the following:
 - All potential required tasks associated with the work.

- Required workstation and equipment.
 - All potential hazards associated with the task or work environment.
 - Additional required safe work practices or preventative measures.
 - Method(s) of communication and check in frequency.
 - Procedures for reporting hazards or injury.
- The supervisor must ensure that healthcare workers have completed any mandatory learning modules and are educated on applicable Health PEI policies.
 - Where a safety incident or hazard is identified, the healthcare worker must contact their supervisor or manager immediately. All incidents (including hazards and near misses) are to be documented in the **Provincial Safety Management System (PSMS)**.
 - The supervisor must be allowed to inspect the designated remote worksite with one working days' notice as required by Occupational Health and Safety to ensure it meets minimum health and safety standards. The healthcare worker commits to maintaining safe working conditions at the designated remote worksite.
 - Healthcare workers working remotely may be required to share workspace or have no dedicated workspace at their designated Health PEI worksite as deemed appropriate by management.
 - Any work-related in-person meetings must be conducted on Health PEI property (and note the remote worksite).

5.4 **Travel and Logistics**

- Healthcare workers will not be reimbursed for expenses involved in travelling to their designated Health PEI worksite or designated remote worksite. All other travel expenses will be treated as per existing Collective Agreements or the Treasury Board Policy Manual.
- Other designated worksites will not be considered as the primary unless the healthcare worker is working full-time at the other designated worksite. Healthcare workers may be required to attend meetings at the worksite with one (1) days' notice.

5.5 **Equipment/Software Services and Security**

- (a) The healthcare worker must have access to the following equipment, software, and services:

To be provided by the employer:

- A workstation consisting of a laptop, monitor(s), keyboard, mouse, headset, etc.
- A cellular phone if the employee is required to make calls outside of government on a regular basis (otherwise the employee can use a headset and MS Teams).
- All other reasonable request for equipment made by the healthcare worker and approved by the supervisor will be considered. Generally this will be limited to cases where healthcare workers' have specific requirements relating to disabilities or medical conditions.

To be provided by the healthcare worker:

- Access to secure, consistent internet at their designated remote worksite which allows them to perform their job duties as effectively as they would be able to if they are working at a Health PEI site.
 - The provision of suitable office furniture (desk, chair, lamp, etc.) is the responsibility of the healthcare worker.
- (b) Company-owned/supplied equipment is to be used for Health PEI business only.
- (c) Health PEI will not pay for any increases in the healthcare worker’s home utility costs, homeowner’s insurance rates, internet access or any other costs associated with a designated remote worksite (rental fees, etc.)
- (d) The Healthcare worker must ensure that the wireless connection at any designated remote worksite is secure to the satisfaction of Health PEI.

5.6 **Trial and Review Procedures**

- All healthcare workers who enter into a remote work arrangement will be subject to a three-month trial period to determine the ongoing suitability of the arrangement. Health PEI reserves the right to discontinue the arrangement at any point during the trial period if the arrangement has a negative impact on performance or service expectations. Following the trial period, the arrangement may be adjusted or discontinued at any time, by either party.
- Remote work agreements will be reviewed annually to ensure they support job performance and work-life balance as well as the achievement of Health PEI’s organizational goals.

5.7 **Termination of a Remote Work Arrangement**

- Health PEI reserves the right to terminate any remote arrangement at any time with eight (8) weeks’ notification to the healthcare worker, or with two (2) weeks’ notice if the healthcare worker’s performance fails to meet expectations.
- Health PEI reserves the right to recall any healthcare worker temporarily with one (1) days’ notice, in the event of an emergency or for redeployment/reassignment as required.
- Healthcare workers may terminate their remote work with eight (8) weeks’ notice to their supervisor.

5.8 **Governing Laws and Regulations**

– **Employment Agreements and Collective Agreements**

This policy does not supersede any provisions that may exist within any employment agreements or collective agreements that are already in place.

– **Privacy and Confidentiality**

- Healthcare workers must maintain the confidentiality of the personal health information (PHI), personal information (PI) of confidential information (CI) in their custody, per the *Health Information Act*, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* (FOIPP), and all related Health PEI policies. Healthcare workers working remotely will continue to be accountable for safeguarding the information they are collecting, using and disclosing.

- Healthcare workers should be aware that certain equipment suitable for personal use, such as smart home monitoring equipment (e.g. Google Home, Amazon Echo) may need to be turned off while working remotely in order to maintain the privacy of Health PEI information.
- When the remote work site is unoccupied by the healthcare worker, the healthcare worker must ensure that all documents, records, electronics and other confidential information is secured in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

– **Records Management**

All records created by healthcare workers while undertaking Government activities belong to Government. It is the responsibility of Health PEI and the healthcare worker to safeguard any records created while working remotely and to follow all Government Records Information Management policies and procedures

- Taking Government Records off Health PEI premises is highly discouraged but, in the event, it is required all Government Records should be stored in a secure location when not in use (i.e. in a locked drawer, briefcase or secure home office). Work you do for Government is confidential, do not leave Government Records lying around where non-Government workers can access them (including your family members.)
- Do not save Government Records on local drive (i.e. C drive, My Documents folder, Desktop). When working remotely, save all Records to network drives via VPN.
- Do not store Government Records on USB flash drives that are not encrypted. If you cannot access VPN, save Records to encrypted USB flash drives and store them in a secure location.
- Do not use personal technology (computer, phone, personal email account) to conduct Government business. If you receive an email concerning Government business in a personal email account, forward it to your Government email account to continue the correspondence.
- Keep a list of files of Government Records that you take with you. Ensure that you return the Records to the office when you are finished with them.

– **Security**

Healthcare workers must ensure all security guidelines and standards are followed at the other designated worksite at all times. Security guidelines and standards include but are not limited to physical and environmental security, data security, software security, records security, communications security, computer virus protection, license agreements and copyright protection.

– **Income Tax**

- Healthcare workers may qualify for certain Income Tax deductions if it is deemed necessary for them to maintain an external office in order to fulfill the conditions of their employment in a satisfactory manner. Healthcare workers may not claim any expenses that are paid by Health PEI.
- Healthcare workers who are deducting employment expenses related to their workspace as part of their annual tax return may access the Canada Revenue

Agency website for Form T2200 – Declaration of Conditions of Employment. Canada Revenue Agency has established a number of test which must be met in order for these expenses to be claimed. It is the responsibility of the healthcare worker to ensure that these tests are met prior to completing Form T2200.

- Healthcare workers are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications. The completed form must be reviewed and signed by the healthcare worker’s supervisor. Health PEI’s authorization of this form does not guarantee these expenses are deductible for income tax purposes.
- The original signed Form T2200 will be the responsibility of the healthcare worker. The healthcare worker must keep a copy of Form T2200 in the event the Canada Revenue Agency requests it.

– **Standard Work Terms**

The respective Collective Agreement and other relevant Terms and Conditions of employment (e.g., *Civil Service Act and Regulations*, Treasury Board policies), all government legislation and policies, and all Health PEI policies and procedures continue to apply regardless of the work location.

5.9 **Liability**

- Health PEI assumes no liability for any accidents, losses, or damages that might occur in, on, or to a healthcare worker’s premises or property. The healthcare worker will ensure they have adequate insurance coverage for the other designated worksite by working with their personal insurance company. Health PEI and Government of PEI will not assume any responsibility for failure to meet this requirement.
- Health PEI will also not be held responsible for injuries incurred by others in the healthcare worker’s designated remote worksite during working hours or any injuries that occur to the healthcare worker or others outside of work hours or the designated remote worksite.
- In the event of an injury while working in the designated remote worksite, the healthcare worker must contact their supervisor immediately (or as circumstances permit) and file a report in the Provincial Safety Management System (PSMS) to receive instructions for obtaining medical treatment.
- WCB provisions apply to healthcare workers working on-site or remotely.

6.0 MONITORING

- 6.1 The Executive Director of Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed according to Health PEI’s policy review cycle and standards every three (3) years.
- 6.2 The Executive Director of Human Resources is responsible for collecting feedback and making amendments to this policy.

7.0 REFERENCES

Related Documents

[Acceptable Use Agreement – Internal Users Form](#)
Acceptable Use Policy for Computer Systems

[Canada Revenue Agency Form T2200 – Declaration of Conditions of Employment](#)

Health PEI (2022, February) Remote Work Workbook: Remote Work Agreement (Tab 1), Remote Work Safety Assessment Tool (Tab 2), Remote Work Suitability Assessment Tool (Tab 3).

Health PEI (2022, February). Remote Work Guide – 2022

HPEI Privacy and Protection of Personal Health Information Policy

HPEI Record Information Management (RIM) Policy

HPEI Working Alone Policy

[PEI Civil Service Act and Regulations](#)

[PEI Health Information Act](#)

[PEI Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Treasury Board Policy & Procedures Manual](#)

[VPN Form Internal](#)

References

N/A

Appendices

N/A

8.0 STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

Group/Committee	Dates of Review
<i>Occupational Health and Safety</i>	<i>September 2021</i>
<i>Quality and Risk</i>	<i>September 2021</i>
<i>Executive Leadership Team</i>	<i>February 2022</i>
<i>ITSS</i>	<i>September 2021</i>

9.0 REVIEW HISTORY

Review Dates:
