

Directive on telework

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Directive on Telework

1. Effective date

- 1.1 This directive takes effect on April 1, 2020.
- 1.2 This directive replaces the *Telework Policy* dated December 9, 1999.

2. Authorities

- 2.1 This directive is issued pursuant to the same authorities indicated in section 2 of the *Policy on People Management*.

3. Objectives and expected results

- 3.1 The objectives indicated in section 3 of the *Policy on People Management* apply to this directive.
- 3.2 In addition to the expected results indicated in section 3 of the *Policy on People Management*, the expected results of this directive are as follows:
 - 3.2.1 Employees are able to reduce stress, achieve work–life balance and meet performance expectations;
 - 3.2.2 Telework is used where appropriate, including as a means to ensure an inclusive public service and a safe and healthy work environment where employees have access to flexible work arrangements; and
 - 3.2.3 The public service contributes to reducing emissions from transportation, traffic congestion and air pollution, in accordance with the *Greening Government Strategy*.

4. Requirements

- 4.1 The head of human resources is responsible for the following:
 - 4.1.1 Ensuring that managers and employees are informed that participation in telework is voluntary and that employees are not required to telework;
 - 4.1.2 Ensuring that processes and procedures are in place for employees to request telework;

- 4.1.3 Identifying relevant considerations, in collaboration with other senior officials in the areas of security, privacy, information technology, information management, financial management and occupational health and safety;
 - 4.1.4 Ensuring that employees and managers have access to information, procedures and practices about entering into an agreement for formal telework;
 - 4.1.5 Establishing organizational criteria to distinguish between formal telework arrangements and ad hoc telework; and
 - 4.1.6 Ensuring that employees and managers are made aware that telework arrangements are subject to review and may be terminated by either party at any time, with reasonable notice.
- 4.2 Managers are responsible for the following:
- 4.2.1 Entering into a formal telework arrangement only where an employee's participation is voluntary;
 - 4.2.2 Respecting organizational processes, procedures and considerations when making a decision to enter into a formal telework arrangement with an employee;
 - 4.2.3 Considering the impacts of a proposed telework arrangement on operational requirements before approving an employee's telework request, to ensure that neither productivity nor costs are negatively impacted;
 - 4.2.4 Ensuring that requests for formal telework arrangements are approved or denied on a case-by-case basis and that the decision and reasons are communicated in writing to the requester;
 - 4.2.5 Ensuring that a telework arrangement is not used to prevent or create a relocation situation where that relocation is the result of a machinery change, reorganization, workforce adjustment or alternative service delivery arrangement;
 - 4.2.6 Ensuring that the employee is informed of applicable policies, procedures and guidelines;
 - 4.2.7 Verifying with the employee that the telework location is a suitable working environment that meets the health and safety requirements of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, and its Regulations;
 - 4.2.8 Ensuring that employees are informed on how to minimize risks when they work with sensitive information away from their designated workplace;
 - 4.2.9 Ensuring that colleagues of a teleworker are informed of applicable telework processes and procedures;

- 4.2.10 Ensuring that a telework agreement is completed in accordance with the Standard on Telework Agreements in the appendix to this directive, signed by and provided to the requester and their immediate supervisor prior to the commencement of a formal telework arrangement;
 - 4.2.11 Ensuring that a signed copy of the agreement is retained in accordance with the appropriate information management policies and procedures;
 - 4.2.12 Ensuring that telework agreements are reviewed with employees at least annually;
 - 4.2.13 Ensuring that employees who telework are included in meetings and other work events;
 - 4.2.14 Maintaining regular contact with employees who telework;
 - 4.2.15 Communicating with employees who telework on a regular basis to discuss work priorities, objectives and deliverables; and
 - 4.2.16 Reintegrating employees following a period of telework.
- 4.3 Employees who wish to participate in a formal telework arrangement, or who are already doing so, are responsible for the following:
- 4.3.1 Requesting a telework agreement, in accordance with the processes and procedures established by their organization;
 - 4.3.2 Protecting and managing records and other sensitive information stored on devices and transmitted across external networks;
 - 4.3.3 Keeping government property and information safe, secure and separate from their personal property and information while they are working at their telework location;
 - 4.3.4 Informing their manager immediately in the event that any information or Crown assets are lost, stolen or damaged;
 - 4.3.5 Respecting the relevant terms and conditions of their employment, their collective agreement, legislation, and Treasury Board and departmental policies while at the telework location;
 - 4.3.6 Ensuring that their telework location complies with the health and safety requirements of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, and its Regulations; and
 - 4.3.7 Assuming all utility costs related to maintaining their telework location.

5. Roles of other government organizations

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Application

6.1 This directive applies to the employees and organizations listed in section 6 of the *Policy on People Management*.

7. References

7.1 Legislation

- *Access to Information Act*
- *Canada Labour Code, Part II*
- *Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*
- *Canadian Human Rights Act*
- *Government Employees Compensation Act*
- *Privacy Act*

7.2 Related policy instruments

- *Accessibility Standard for Real Property*
- *Policy on Government Security*
- *Policy on Information Management*
- *Policy on Management of Information Technology*

8. Enquiries

8.1 For interpretation of any aspect of this directive, contact Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Public Enquiries.

Appendix : Standard on Telework Agreements

A.1 Effective date

A.1.1 This standard takes effect on April 1, 2020.

A.2 Standards

A.2.1 This standard provides details on the minimum requirements for a telework agreement as set out in subsection 4.2.10 of the *Directive on Telework*.

A.2.2 The telework agreement must include, at a minimum, the following details:

A.2.2.1 Information about the employee's current situation, including, but not restricted to:

- a. Name;
- b. Position; and
- c. Designated workplace.

A.2.2.2 The terms of the telework arrangement, including:

- a. The start and end of the telework period;
- b. The address of the telework location;
- c. Where the work will be conducted at the telework location;
- d. Details of the telework arrangement, including hours of work and number of days per week or month;
- e. Contact information at the telework location; and
- f. Manager's name.

A.2.2.3 A health and safety checklist for the employee and their manager to complete, which includes an attestation that the telework location complies with the health and safety requirements of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, and its Regulations. The checklist should include the following:

- a. Home office environment
 - i. The desk, chair and other accessories are suitable to the needs of the employee;
 - ii. The computer furniture, shelves, cabinets and bookcases are sturdy and properly installed (for example, anchored to the wall, if necessary);
 - iii. The workstation is adjusted properly: the desk, chair, computer monitor and keyboard are at appropriate heights (for example, the employee's head and wrists are in neutral positions);
 - iv. The employee is aware of how to prevent musculoskeletal injuries (for example, the employee takes breaks to avoid extended hours of repeated motions or of being in the same body position);
 - v. The lighting is properly arranged and appropriate for the work of the employee (for example, there is no reflection or glare from the computer monitor);

- vi. The employee has control over levels of ventilation, temperature, light and sound; and
- vii. The employee has made sure that there are no tripping hazards, such as frayed or wrinkled carpets, obstructed halls, walkways or entries, and that any guardrails are properly installed;

b. Electrical safety

- i. Any extension cords are in good condition and positioned properly;
- ii. There are no cords or cables that could act as tripping hazards;
- iii. Outlets are grounded and not overloaded;
- iv. Outlets are safe and are not in need of repair;
- v. There is surge protection for electrical equipment; and
- vi. There is sufficient ventilation for electrical equipment;

c. Fire protection

- i. There is a smoke detector that is checked regularly near the employee's workstation at the telework location;
- ii. Paper materials and any chemicals are stored safely away from all heat sources;
- iii. Any hazardous product is properly stored to prevent accidental exposure;
- iv. The employee has complied with prescribed fire safety standards and emergency measures; and
- v. An evacuation plan has been established;

d. Other

- i. The first aid supplies are adequate;
- ii. A regular method of communication (daily) is established between the employee and manager to ensure that the employee is safe and healthy;
- iii. The office contact knows how to reach someone near the employee in the event of an emergency;
- iv. The employee is aware to report immediately to the supervisor any accident or injury that occurs during working hours; and

v. Any other health and safety hazards that have been taken care of;

- A.2.2.4 A list of the equipment supplied by the employer;
- A.2.2.5 Considerations related to:
 - i. Information technology;
 - ii. Information management;
 - iii. Security; and
 - iv. Privacy;
- A.2.2.6 Confirmation that the employee has the appropriate insurance coverage for their telework location;
- A.2.2.7 Confirmation that the employee will assume the cost of equipping and maintaining the telework location, including the cost of utilities and office furniture;
- A.2.2.8 Clauses pertaining to;
 - i. Early termination of the telework agreement;
 - ii. Review and extension of the agreement; and
 - iii. Review and completion of the agreement; and
- A.2.2.9 Area for the employee and their manager to sign and date the agreement.

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