Flex Place
Employee Guide

BACKGROUND

The purpose of effective Flex Place work arrangements is to support Okanagan College and its employees with work/life balance, personal well-being, recruitment, and retention.

The key objectives of Flex Place work arrangements include, to:

- Continually identify opportunities to enhance or improve service offerings to students that will positively impact the student experience and learner success
- Attract and retain employees by creating a more flexible workplace environment and an enhanced employee experience
- Enable departments to action key considerations, opportunities and barriers related to flexible work arrangements
- Optimize service levels, as well as employee productivity, through flexibility and the use of technology
- Reduce carbon emissions through lower levels of commuting and strain on campus facilities
- Support employees' well-being, work/life balance and locus of control.

Decisions regarding Flex Place work arrangements will take into consideration institutional guiding principles of:

- Learner success and the student experience
- Physical and mental wellness of employees and students
- Instructional and service modality
- Service levels and productivity measures
- Collaboration and teamwork needs
- Campus culture and vibrancy
- Operational requirements
- Alternate work environment suitability
- Optimized space utilization and financial sustainability considerations.

Managers may review the validity of a Flex Place work arrangement at any time. This process is to ensure that manager can evaluate and adjust arrangements to address health/safety, performance challenges, team dynamics, and operational needs.

INTRODUCTION

Definitions

A Flex Place work arrangement is defined as a working pattern that is a mix of working on-site or off-site at another location. This can also be referred to a hybrid working.

In general, employees in Flex Place work arrangements will work a mixture of on-campus and at-home arrangements as per the Flex Place Procedure no one will be approved to work remotely for 100% of their time (except in specific short term emergency situations and arrangements that pre-

existed prior to the pandemic). However, there is no minimum attendance required on campus, as that will be determined between you and your manager.

Eligibility
Flex Place work arrangements can potentially apply to all employees of Okanagan College.

Flex Place work arrangements do not apply to all jobs and positions. These arrangements may not be suitable in cases where:

- the functions of the position require a face-to-face, on-campus presence to meet student and employee needs;
- team projects require in-person collaboration; or
- departmental operational requirements demand an on-campus presence.

Constraints
You must live and work in in B.C. due to collective agreement jurisdiction, WorkSafeBC considerations and tax implications. Employees with a Flex Place work arrangements will work under the same terms of employment, collective agreement, and regulatory statutes as if they were working on-campus. You must still comply with all rules, policies, practices, and instructions that would apply if you were working onsite at an OC campus.

Please note: Flex Place work arrangements are not entitlements; **all Flex Place work arrangements are voluntary** unless that requirement is already a part of their job description.

Employees will continue to have a primary campus identified as their work location. A workstation/office will remain available for you, and it may be shared with another employee, or group of employees, depending on the number of days per week you work on campus.

APPLICATIONS AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Flex Place work arrangements must be approved in advance by your manager in consultation with the applicable VP, AVP, Dean or Director. All Flex Place work arrangements will be determined on an individual basis with consideration given to the operational needs of the department and the impact on the team, and it is at the sole discretion of OC to approve or deny a Flex Place request.

Formal applications and agreements will be required, but before any forms are completed, you are encouraged to have a conversation with your manager about the possibility of a Flex Place work arrangements. Factors that should be discussed in advance include:

- whether your work can be accomplished by working remotely
- the impact on service to students and other employees
- the operational needs of your department or team
- your ability to work independently with minimal supervision
- suitability of the proposed workspace in your home
- impact of Flex Place work arrangements on the space occupied by the employee on campus, employees maybe required to share their workspace
- whether the Flex Place work arrangements will adequately address the privacy and confidentiality requirements concerning data protection and records management
- any potential associated costs or any other relevant factors or circumstances.

Process steps

1. **Discussion**: Discuss with your manager and/or team to assess whether remote work is suitable for your position/department. Department/team discussions could include:
    a. "Who on your team do you work with daily and how will a Flex Place work arrangement affect them?"
    b. "What interactions do you have with other team members that will need to be considered?"
    c. "What are your team members concerns about your Flex Place work arrangements? What adjustments do they need to make?"
    d. "What type of work are you planning to do while working remotely?"
    e. "What additional technology needs do you have in order to work from home effectively?"

2. **Application:** Managers will notify staff to complete the Flex Place Request and Safety Assessment Form (in Etrieve), and to review the Flex Place Safely Review PowerPoint.

3. **Approval:** Managers review the application, consult with their VPs, AVP, Dean or Directors. The manager will then approve or deny the Flex Place work arrangements request.

4. **Implementation:** Upon approval, the manager makes an implementation plan, and activates appropriate IT resources and safety arrangements.

WORK EXPECTATIONS AND PERFORMANCE

You will be expected to perform duties consistent with how you perform while working on campus.

Communication

Flex Place work arrangements must not impact your ability to complete regular work functions and duties, including communications. You will be expected to be available by telephone, e-mail, Teams, and any other electronic means during work hours. You will need to agree to regular communications, including video meetings with video cameras are turned on.

As part of all Flex Place work arrangement, you agree to keep your manager informed of work progress and of any issues that arise, just as you would if you were in the workplace.

Additional requirements

- Hours of work, compensation, leave scheduling and sick time notification must conform to applicable policies, terms of employment, and collective agreements.
- You must not hold in-person business visits or meetings with colleagues, students or the public in their home.
- When working remotely you must ensure, in advance, that you have appropriate dependent care arrangements in place, Flex Place work arrangements are not a substitute for dependent care.

Changes to Flex Place work arrangements

- Adjustments to Flex Place work arrangements may be required to meet operational needs, with the highest priority placed on meeting the needs of students and operational outcomes.
- Flex Place work arrangements may be cancelled or altered at any time and do not eliminate the requirements to attend a campus in-person at any time with reasonable notice, considering the location and circumstances of individual employees.
- You are responsible for any costs associated with the requirement to attend work on campus.
- In the event that you change roles within the College and are seeking to establish a Flex Place work arrangements in your new role, this needs to be discussed with your new manager and a new Flex Place Request Form will need to be completed. Having had a Flex Place work arrangement in a previous job does not guarantee you will be able to continue such an arrangement in your new role.

EXPENSES

While Okanagan College will provide the required technological equipment (laptop, monitor, keyboard, mouse), employees are expected to cover other potential expenses of working from home at their own cost. Expenses that will not be reimbursed by OC include, but are not limited to:

- adequate internet services with sufficient bandwith
- personal cell phones
- home maintenance
- insurance
- utilities
- office furnishings including desk and suitable chair) at their own cost.

OC will supply the employee with appropriate basic office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

You are responsible for all costs and transportation associated with requirements to attend work on campus when requested.

Note: OC follows Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) guidelines with respect to the declarations of conditions of employment for working from home. Okanagan College will not provide a T220 for employees working in Flex Place arrangements. Issuing a T220 is only applicable if the employee is required by the employer to work from home. All Flex Place arrangements are voluntary (unless specifically identified due to terms and conditions of the work) and therefore do not fall under the T220 guidelines.

EQUIPMENT AND HOME WORKSPACE

Setting up a workspace

You must have a suitable workspace at your home to allow for professional and confidential work, free from distractions and interruptions. OC is not responsible for costs associated with the setup of your remote workspace, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home workspace.

Workspaces should be ergonomically optimized with proper furnishings and adequate space that supports working efficiently and safely. Learn about ergonomic considerations from OC's Health and Safety team.

Equipment
OC will determine the appropriate equipment needs, software, and programs to be used while working remotely to maintain data security and confidentiality. Employees must comply with OC's IT policies and procedures, guidelines, and best practices, including locking your computer when not in use. All employees must Read the Use of Information Technology Resources Policy.

OC will maintain all equipment supplied by the institution; however, employees must take all precautions to protect OC equipment from theft, damage, or misuse. Physical on-site IT and Facilities support is not available to participants when they are working off-campus.

You must ensure that you take the appropriate equipment and resources you require to work effectively from the remote work location. Employees may be required to share a laptop that they use when working from home.

For phone requirements, there are two options:

1. For internal and external calls, employees can use the Microsoft TEAMs call functions.
2. For employees with an OC provided cellphone, that service/equipment that can be used for calls when working from home.

PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Employees will continue to be bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of British Columbia and any other applicable legislation when working in Flex Place arrangements. You must take all reasonable precautions to ensure the protection of data and personal information accessible from their remote location. You can refer to the College's Privacy Policy for more information. Employees in Flex Place work arrangements must review the Use of Information Technology Resource Policy.

All employees in Flex Place work arrangements acknowledge and agree to:

- Follow all data security guidelines, policies, and procedures.
- Save all documents dedicated OC systems so that the information can be available to other employees who may require access.
- Conduct work-related telephone and video call in private.
- Only take campus-based physical files home when necessary to complete the work.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

OC is responsible for ensuring that safety guidelines and procedures exist at all work locations, including remote work sites. You are covered by WorkSafeBC for job-related injuries that occur in the course of employment within their designated workspace and during periods of remote work.

The College is not responsible for any injuries at your remote work location that are not work-related. You are liable for any injuries to third parties that occur at your home, as you should not be having any meetings or work-related visitors in your home for work related purposes. Employer representatives

may make on-site visits (or virtual visits) at an agreed time to ensure that the workspace is safe and free from hazards.

Employees participating in Flex Place work arrangements are responsible for the following:

1. Maintaining a designated and dedicated workspace that is safely maintained, free from hazards, and that meets occupational safety standards for workplaces and office ergonomics.
2. Complying with all safe work procedures. This includes complying with operational requirements of the Working Alone procedures (where identified as appropriate for working within the scope of this program).
3. Reviewing OC's Work Alone Procedures document, if appropriate.
4. Timely reporting of all work-related injuries, incidents, or accidents to your manager.
5. Agreeing to comply with and complete workday 'check in' and 'check out' protocols agreed to between manager, team, and employee.
6. Reporting unsafe conditions or hazards to your manager immediately and resolving unsafe conditions or hazards and reporting the resolution to your manager.
7. As part of the application form employees will complete the Flex Space Safety Assessment Checklist (as part of the Flex Place application form) which the manager will review as part of the application process.
8. Download the OC Safe app and register for appropriate safety protocols, i.e., Working Alone.
9. Complete OC's Flex Space Safety Review training.

OC provides a variety of health and safety resources for all employees. Those employees involved in Flex Place work arrangements will continue to have access to all these resources.