
Procedure Section:	Human Resources
Procedure Title:	Alternative Work Environments - Pilot
Procedure Number:	RCJTC AP.05.26
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1. BACKGROUND:

The Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium (RCJTC) recognizes that there may be circumstances when it may be plausible and permissible for an employee to work at an alternate location or from their place of residence, as a complement to their designated, fixed office and/or work space. Due to the nature of the duties performed by position, as well as operational requirements of the organization, the ability to work remotely will vary significantly by position, as the requirements of many positions will not typically be suitable for such arrangements.

The following administrative procedure will outline the process and expectations for employees with respect to working remotely.

Note: For the purposes of this administrative procedure, the term 'supervisor' refers to General Manager or delegate.

2. Eligibility and Scope:

When possible and practical to do so, without compromising the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, the RCJTC may permit employees who have been authorized by their supervisor to work remotely.

A supervisor's assessment of operational feasibility of remote work for an employee will consider the ability to adequately complete the regular roles and responsibilities of the position and whether the position is replaced when absent from their work location. A remote work arrangement shall not introduce additional, ongoing operational costs to the organization, including replacement staffing. All arrangements are subject to the discretion of the RCJTC, and the RCJTC reserves the right to revoke the alternate work arrangement at any time if the operational requirements of the organization require.

Employees working from an alternate location or from their place of residence must consistently demonstrate their ability to work independently and meet the requirements of their job duties. Further, employees must be able to demonstrate work productivity in accordance with their scheduled hours of work.

Alternative work environments that are permissible, by employee group, have already been determined by the RCJTC and will be shared with employees via their supervisor.

All other requests from employees and/or their supervisors will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, through the General Manager or delegate, taking into account the specific nature of the position, the feasibility and operational requirements of the RCJTC, whether normal productivity standards can be met, as well as cost-benefit analyses of the arrangement.

3. Parameters for Alternative Work Environment:

In order to ensure the administrative procedure is utilized for its intended purpose, the following must be adhered to:

- working remotely shall not be considered an alternative to child care or elder care, sick leave or special leave;
- an employee's regular schedule should be maintained while working remotely;
- an employee must be available during the normally scheduled work hours, with the exception of their scheduled lunch or break periods;
- employees must identify a suitable remote work location and share this location with their supervisor in their request to work remotely;
- as per current practice, overtime hours will be permitted, but must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor;
- absences must be reported in accordance with the RCJTC's procedure for attendance management or the employee's respective collective agreement if/as applicable;
- working from home should not affect an employee's ability to complete day-to-day functions or projects; employees must stay updated on department and work events;
- employees must be able to participate effectively in any virtual meetings if/as required, and must keep supervisors informed on the progress of assignments and reach out for support if/as needed; and,
- if an employee's presence is required for a meeting, at any time, the employee must be available in-person.

Note: If applicable, an employee must make appropriate arrangements for dependent care, so as not to interfere with work obligations if working from their place of residence.

4. Workspace:

Employees who are approved to work remotely must have an appropriate, dedicated work area in their remote location. Internet service should be reliable and consistent with a typical office environment. Please see Office Ergonomics Checklist for ergonomic tips on setting up a home office.

5. Health and Safety:

In the case of an injury while working remotely, the employee must report the injury to their supervisor immediately (or as soon as circumstances permit). The supervisor will

maintain their reporting obligation to the Health and Safety Department, who will fulfill our obligations for reporting to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), where required. In addition, the employer maintains the right to investigate any alleged accident or injury claims that occur at the remote location.

Note: The RCJTC may make on-site visits at a mutually agreed upon time to ensure the work area is safe and free from hazards or in follow up to an incident report.

6. Equipment and Supplies:

Employees should utilize RCJTC designated electronic devices while working in an alternative work environment. Hardware can be transported to and from the employee's designated, fixed office and/or work area, alternate location or place of residence if/as needed. For convenience, at the approval of the supervisor, an employee may be supplied with available hardware (i.e. printer, docking station, monitor, etc.) to enable ease of transition between locations as part of the alternate work arrangement.

Employees are responsible for ensuring they have a dedicated, ergonomically safe workspace, including a desk and office chair.

Any items purchased by the RCJTC remain the property of the RCJTC and may not be used for personal or other purposes. All equipment and supplies must be returned if the arrangement ceases, or the employment relationship ends.

Employees must take all reasonable steps to protect any RCJTC property from theft, damage and misuse. Depending on the circumstances the employee may be responsible for any damage or loss of RCJTC property.

7. Travel and Other Expenses:

Where approved work travel is required, mileage will be paid following RCJTC's AP.06.07 Reimbursement for Expenditures Incurred on RCJTC Business Procedure. AP.06.07 applies the Canada Revenue Agency's interpretation of personal vs business use of a vehicle (the cost of travel from home to the worksite and the worksite to home is considered a personal expense and is not reimbursable).

No mileage will be paid for an employee who has been requested to attend to their work location.

Employees who are approved to work remotely will not be compensated for any additional costs (i.e. data usage, home insurance, long distance charges to personal phones, etc.). Any increases to the employee's home utility costs are the responsibility of the employee. Should an employee meet the Canada Revenue Agency's eligibility criteria for home office expenses, Form T2200, Declaration of Conditions of Employment will be signed by the Manager of Finance.

8. Confidentiality and Security:

It is the responsibility of the employee to take all necessary precautions to secure all business related information and to prevent unauthorized access when working remotely in order to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of information.

Steps must be taken to ensure information is secure, particularly information as it relates to medical files, payroll information, and personal data. These steps may include the use of locked file cabinets or desks; regular password maintenance; and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

Employees must ensure compliance to all District policies and administrative procedures, as well as privacy legislation such as Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) at all times.

Alternative Work Agreement and Alternative Work Environment Safety Checklist for Employees is to be completed and submitted to your supervisor for approval (still in development).

The *Alternative Work Agreement and Alternative Work Environment Safety Checklist* must be submitted by supervisors to their affiliated member of senior staff and to be collected by the General Manager or designate, annually.

Related RCJTC Policy

- P.05.14 Hours of Work*
- P.05.15 Attendance and Absence from Work*
- P.05.16 Reporting for Work During Inclement Weather*

Related RCJTC Forms

- F.05.26.1 Alternative Work Environment Agreement - Pilot*
- F.05.26.2 Alternative Work Environment Safety Checklist for Employees - Pilot*