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1. Introduction

Queen’s University (the "University") continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation and in doing so has created this Guideline to help managers best meet the ongoing needs of their department or faculty while working remotely where possible. This guide applies to those staff that have been deemed non-essential, and can perform work remotely. Staff designated as performing essential functions will maintain work on campus.

This Guideline is **NOT** intended to apply to employees who are self-isolated or quarantined and are not feeling well enough to work from home. Employees who are sick will be treated in accordance with the usual terms, conditions, and processes applicable when they are unable to work due to illness. Please refer to [http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/policies/time-away/sick-leave](http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/policies/time-away/sick-leave) for the Queen’s sick leave policy and procedures.

2. General Principles

- Determine what work is essential and must be performed on-campus. All other positions are considered for remote work arrangements, where possible.
- Ensure that the employee understands that the arrangements are temporary, based on unique circumstances, and does not change the terms or conditions of employment.
- It is recommended that remote work arrangements be given in writing, if possible, with guidelines around what duties will be performed, and how the manager will maintain contact with the employee.

3. Best Practices in Managing Remote Workers

Working remotely is necessary for all non-essential operations at the University to minimize the risks of community transmission of COVID-19. Unless a faculty/department leader determines that an employee performs an essential operation as defined by the Provincial Government, all employees are encouraged to continue to support the University’s operations by working remotely or from home.

Exception: If an employee is ill and unable to work, they should not be expected to work from home until they are medically fit to resume working.

**Determine What Work Needs to be Completed on Campus**

Review the work assigned to your employees to determine which functions are essential to the operations of the University. Unit leaders will determine which activities are essential and must be performed onsite and direct the necessary employees to attend work. All employees in non-essential positions will work remotely and perform the work as assigned to them, if possible.

Depending on the nature of the duties, you may be able to temporarily modify duties and limit remote work to critical and essential functions that can be performed online, via telephone or video conference, or other methods. If regular duties are not able to be performed, but alternative duties can be (e.g. develop a training manual), you may assign alternative work and reassess during the remote work arrangement.

**Arrange Necessary Equipment, Supplies and Systems**

Determine what equipment, access and supplies your employees will need to work remotely. Refer to the [Home Office Health and Safety Standard Operating Procedure](#). Specific requirements in terms of
equipment (e.g., connectivity via internet, Virtual Private Network (VPN), remote desktop), may be set out in a remote work arrangement created by the department and specified in writing.

ITS has developed a great resource for connecting remotely: [https://www.queensu.ca/its/connecting-collaborating-and-teaching-remotely](https://www.queensu.ca/its/connecting-collaborating-and-teaching-remotely). Please visit this page frequently to view new information as it becomes available.

Establish Communication Channels
Ensure that your employees know how to reach you via email, land line phone, cell, text or other method. Develop a contact list to share among your employees if required. Ensure that employees know how to use the virtual meeting tools (e.g. Microsoft Teams) to enable team communication when necessary.

When employees are working remotely, you will need to check in with them on a regular basis to assign work, review progress, monitor outcomes and ensure their health and well-being. Establish a protocol early as to who will contact who at what frequency to ensure ongoing communication as necessary.

SUGGESTION: Set up regular and consistent online meetings with your team as necessary to maintain regular contact, assign work, discuss issues and manage operations.

Ensure your employees continually monitor the University’s website for important communications and announcements.

Maintain a List of Your Staff
Keep an up-to-date list of all your employees, emergency contact information, and whether they are working remotely or deemed to perform an essential function and required to work on campus so that you can ensure you maintain continuous contact.

Leader Expectations
- Please carefully review this guide in its entirety.
- Familiarize yourself with all the referenced resources in particular the COVID-19 information sites: [https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/](https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/) and [http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/coronavirus](http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/coronavirus)
- Make yourself familiar with the COVID-19 Quarantine or Self-Isolation Form
- Ensure all employees in non-essential positions are working remotely, if possible.
- Maintain a calm and reassuring demeanor; this is a stressful time for everyone.
- Be as flexible as possible as employees adapt to these extraordinary changes to work and home environments.
- Share information as it becomes available. Discourage sharing of gossip, rumours, assumptions and misinformation.
- Encourage open communication and discussion with you.
- Contact your Human Resources Advisor for guidance.

Managing Stress and Anxiety
- Maintain a calm and reassuring demeanor. Be empathetic and compassionate.
- Share information as it becomes available.
- Counselling is available from the Employee and Family Assistance Program at 1.800.663.1142
- Over the next few weeks, EFAP will provide services over the phone in place of face-to-face counselling. This measure will be in place until the spread of the virus is contained.
• Encourage colleagues to read information about the virus from reputable resources like this website, the World Health Organization, Public Health Ontario and the Government of Canada.

5. Other Resources

1. If you are a leader of a team, here are five things you can do right now to ensure that your team stays productive and engaged working in a remote environment: ‘If you lead People Today, do these 5 things’

2. Harvard Business Review has developed a dedicated section of their website for COVID-19 news and developments. They also have
   a. How to Actually Work When You’re Working from Home - Video
   b. What It Takes to Run a Great Virtual Meeting
   c. How to Collaborate Effectively If Your Team Is Remote
   d. 15 Questions About Remote Work, Answered
   e. How to Run a Great Virtual Meeting
   f. If Your Team Members Work Remotely, Find Ways for Them to Bond

3. Gallup at Work are tailoring some of their content to assist during these times of adjusting to working from home; some of the offerings include:
   b. How to Manage the Loneliness and Isolation of Remote Workers
   c. Do Your Remote Workers Feel Seen?

4. LinkedIn Learning related course offerings:
   a. Building Resilience
   b. Working Remotely
   c. Managing Virtual Teams
   d. Time Management: Working from Home
   e. Cultivating Mental Agility