

AU1300 – FLEXIBLE WORK LOCATION POLICY

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, Syilx, and Tšilhqot'in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace includes the protected characteristics under the human rights code of: race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to foster an environment where eligible Employees can safely carry out their assigned duties and responsibilities away from their designated IH worksite. This Policy supports the use of Flexible Work Location options available to Interior Health (IH) Employees and sets out the eligibility and approval process for Employees working from a Flexible Work Location.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<i>Employee:</i>	Full-time, part-time, casual, and term-specific Employees
<i>Designated IH worksite:</i>	The designated IH site where an Employee would ordinarily perform their work when not at a Flexible Work Location
<i>Flexible Work Location Arrangement:</i>	A work arrangement, whereby an Employee performs their work away from their designated IH worksite and at another specified location (e.g. the Employee's home)
<i>Flexible Work Location:</i>	The specific location where an Employee has been approved to work in accordance with the Flexible Work Location arrangement
<i>Non-Contract Employee:</i>	An Employee that is covered by the Terms and Conditions of Employment rather than a Collective Agreement

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3.0 POLICY

3.1 General

Offering Flexible Work Locations provides options for Employees to work in environments that best suit their job functions and work styles, and supports a more diverse, inclusive, engaged, and healthy workforce. IH supports Flexible Work Locations in order to improve the recruitment and retention of Employees from diverse locations, to optimally utilize space, and to effectively respond to events that impact the functioning of its workforce (i.e. pandemic, extreme weather events, etc.).

3.2 Scope and Eligibility

This Policy applies to all full-time, part-time, casual, and term-specific IH Employees.

Flexible Work Location arrangements may be requested by either an Employee or Manager and must be approved by the Employee’s Manager.

Employees who are covered by a Collective Agreement may request a Flexible Work Location arrangement within the IH region.

IH may employ Non-Contract individuals who reside within the boundaries of British Columbia (BC). Eligibility for residence within BC but outside the IH region requires additional assessment to ensure that all job functions are able to be completed remotely and the Employee is available to travel, where required. Flexible Work Location arrangements requiring travel must be pre-approved by the portfolio-specific Vice President.

Temporary out of province arrangements must be pre-approved by the Vice President, Human Resources & Professional Practice based on the recommendation of the portfolio-specific Vice President in order to allow flexibility in transition and relocation to BC.

Temporary or permanent remote work arrangements outside of Canada are not permitted.

3.3 Flexible Work Ergonomics

Employees working from a Flexible Work Location 50% or more of their scheduled hours are eligible for a one-time stipend to be used towards equipment that enables an ergonomic set up.

Employees are required to provide their proof of purchase(s) within one year of purchase and must submit all receipts to their Manager for approval.

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3.4 Emergent Situations

During emergency situations (such as wildfires, natural disasters, power outages, etc.), the Manager, Director, or Vice President may direct an Employee or group of Employees to work from alternative locations, as necessary, to ensure continuity of operations.

3.5 Determining if Work is Suitable for a Flexible Work Location Arrangement

When determining whether work is suitable for a Flexible Work Location arrangement, the Manager will consider the Employee’s position, job function, operational feasibility, business continuity, suitability and safety of the Flexible Work Location, as well as the Employee’s performance and any impacts on department protocols, workflow, productivity, and staff engagement.

When assessing eligibility for a Flexible Work Location arrangement, the *Employee Work Location Assessment* (Figure 1) in the [Flexible Work Location Guide](#) must be followed.

An Employee may dispute the decision of the *Employee Work Location Assessment* to their Manager’s direct supervisor; however, this may or may not result in a change to the final decision.

3.6 Travel

In the course of conducting authorized IH business, travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the [IH APO300-Travel and Meeting Expense Policy](#). Eligible Employees must exercise prudence and care in incurring travel expenses as well as demonstrate fiscal and environmental responsibility, as outlined in the [Travel User Guide](#). Employees are responsible for any non-Employer requested travel expenses from their Flexible Work Location.

Non-Contract Employees who reside within the boundaries of BC, but outside the IH region, may be required to travel at the request of the Employer from their Flexible Work Location (e.g. home) to an IH site or alternate location (e.g. ministry office, union headquarters, etc.) for work purposes. To support requests that are relevant to the Employee’s roles and responsibilities, pre-approved travel allocations are outlined in the [Flexible Work Location Guide](#) and allow for Manager discretion, in consultation with the portfolio-specific Vice President, based on portfolio needs and budgetary constraints.

Eligible individuals that have a temporary out of province Flexible Work Location arrangement may be required to travel to an IH site or alternate location for business reasons at the request of the Employer. Prior approval for

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out of province travel must be provided by the portfolio-specific Vice President and be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.7 Termination of a Flexible Work Location Arrangement

While this Policy is intended to provide flexibility, there may be times, at the Manager’s sole discretion, when participating Employees are required to adjust or terminate their Flexible Work Location arrangement to meet operational needs. Managers will review any terminations to a Flexible Work Location arrangement on a case-by-case basis and will determine an appropriate timeline for a return to office, in consultation with the Employee. The [Flexible Work Location Guide](#) provides additional information on timeline considerations when terminating a Flexible Work Location arrangement.

Employees may also request to terminate a Flexible Work Location arrangement and discuss the reasons with their Manager. Flexible Work Location arrangements are non-transferable if an Employee changes roles within IH.

3.8 Employee Requirements

Employees approved under this Policy must:

- Ensure they understand the Flexible Work Location Policy and [Guide](#)
- Submit the *Flexible Work Location Request* via iSite for Manager approval
- Ensure their Flexible Work Location workstation meets all requirements in order to maintain a healthy and safe work environment
- Consistently achieve all job expectations outlined by their Manager
- Maintain professional and ethical behavior at all times
- Attend their designated IH worksite, as agreed with their Manager
- Keep all IH business private and confidential by adhering to all IH Privacy and Security Policies
- Adhere to all IH Policies and Procedures, including those for requesting time off work and regarding occupational health and safety
- Remain current with all applicable IH communications, including communications via the IH Intranet, bulletins, and operational circulars
- Use of IH provided business equipment is exclusively for the purpose of conducting IH business

The provisions of all relevant Collective Agreements, workplace policies and guidelines, legislation, Terms and Conditions of Employment continue to apply to Employees participating in Flexible Work Location arrangements. An Employee’s designated IH worksite is the Employee’s “worksite” for application of the applicable collective agreement language, if any.

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This Policy outlines additional terms and conditions that are incorporated into the [Flexible Work Location Guide](#).

4.0 PROCEDURES

Employee:

1. Review the Flexible Work Location Policy (AU1300), [Flexible Work Location Guide](#), and [Flexible Work Location Technology Agreement](#)
2. Submit a *Flexible Work Location Request* via iSite to their Manager, which includes the Employee's Flexible Work Location address, [Flexible Work Location Requirements and Safety Checklist](#) and [Flexible Work Location Technology Agreement](#).
3. Upon Manager approval of a *Flexible Work Location Request*, the Employee will receive a confirmation email of the approval and can begin working from their Flexible Work Location.
4. If the request is denied, the Employee may dispute the decision of the Flexible Work Location Assessment by contacting their Manager's direct supervisor.

Manager:

1. In e-Staffing, open 'Events that Require My Approval' to review any recently submitted *Flexible Work Location Requests*. To determine eligibility, availability of technology, and job requirements, review the *Employee Work Location Assessment* (Figure 1) tool in the [Flexible Work Location Guide](#).
2. Review the Employee's responses to the questions in the submitted *Flexible Work Location Request*, specifically the [Flexible Work Location Requirements and Safety Checklist](#)
3. Ensure the appropriate equipment is available for a remote work set-up. If the Employee requires any additional equipment, the Manager must submit a request via the Service Desk portal and cover any additional costs. See the [Flexible Work Location Technology Agreement](#).
4. If there are any questions prior to approving the *Flexible Work Location Request*, discuss them with the Employee and/or the assigned Employee Relations Consultant.

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5. If a *Flexible Work Location Request* is deemed appropriate, and the Employee resides within the boundaries of BC, but outside the IH region, submit the request to the portfolio-specific Vice President for their review and endorsement.
6. If a *Flexible Work Location Request* is deemed appropriate, and the Employee has a temporary work site outside of BC, submit the request to the portfolio-specific Vice President for their review and endorsement. Once approved, they must submit the recommendation for final approval to the Vice President, Human Resources & Professional Practice.

5.0 REFERENCES

1. [Community, Facilities, Nurses and Health Science Professionals Association Collective Agreements](#)
2. [Terms & Conditions of Employment for Excluded & Non-Contract Staff](#)
3. [AV0100 Occupational Health & Safety Program](#)
4. [IH Occupational Health & Safety Program Manual](#)
5. [AP0300 Travel and Meeting Expense Policy](#)
6. [Harvard Business Review – How Managers Can Support Remote Employees, April 2020](#)
7. [Harvard Business Review – How to Keep Your Team Motivated, Remotely, April, 2020](#)
8. Provincial Health Services Authority – Employees – Working from home with a virtual/ distributed team, November 2019

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