

# Hybrid Workplace Guidelines

An Overview of the Guidelines Governing Hybrid Work Arrangements **for CNC Employees**

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## Purpose and Background

CNC's Strategic Plan – Ihulh whuts'odutel'eh – includes the objective to empower and enable employees and promote employee health and wellness. One way CNC plans to support this objective is through encouraging hybrid work arrangements that are appropriately supported. Hybrid work is a planned situation in which a proportion of the employee's work is performed at a remote site.

**Some of the key benefits to CNC supporting hybrid work arrangements include:**

- Supporting employees' well-being, work/life balance;
- Fostering collaboration, diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Offering hybrid arrangements contributes to CNC being seen as an "employer of choice," with positive impact on elevating and sustaining employee engagement;
- Furthering institutional sustainability goals (reduced carbon footprint, reduced commute, etc.); and
- Alleviating space pressures on campus, and over time creating opportunities to free up space to reconfigure for student usage.

Hybrid work arrangements may be appropriate for some employees and some roles, but not for others. Positions with a high level of autonomy and minimal requirements for in-person interactions are best suited for hybrid work arrangements. Positions that require all or most of the work to be completed on campus, such as facilities maintenance, frontline residence staff, and frontline client services (such as food services) are not appropriate for hybrid work arrangements.

These guidelines are focused on non-instructional employees of CNC. Instructional faculty will be supported by the guides, materials, checklists, and other associated materials within the Hybrid Work Framework, but they will not be required to submit hybrid work arrangement requests. Instructional faculty have historically had autonomy to work offsite outside of their designated office hours and teaching obligations.

Hybrid work arrangements must be authorized and approved in advance by the supervisor of the position. To ensure consistency of approach within CNC, the supervisor will consult others as needed, including their direct supervisor and/or the Executive Director of Human Resources or the Associate Director of Human Resources.

Subject to the express terms of the agreement, any arrangement made will be initially on a trial basis for a determined period and may be discontinued by CNC or the employee at any time (whether during or after the trial period). The supervisor and employee are both

responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the arrangement in meeting the needs of the department, and CNC as a whole. Every effort will be made to provide a minimum of 30 days advance notice of such discontinuation. There may be instances when notice is not possible.

This framework does not alter or replace the existing terms and conditions of employment, and does not subvert or alter the terms of any collective agreement applicable to the employee. Employees must still comply with all rules, policies, practices, and instructions that would apply if the employee were working onsite at a CNC campus.

## Approval Process

In order to be considered for a hybrid work arrangement, an employee must submit a *Hybrid Work Arrangement Request Form and Assessment* to their supervisor (or designate), stating the reason for their request. As part of the request form, the employee and supervisor will complete an assessment that evaluates key factors in a successful hybrid work arrangement.

Hybrid work arrangements will not be approved for employees who have performance and/or attendance issues, or for employees on probation.

Before entering into any hybrid work arrangement, the employee and supervisor (or designate) will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement. The employee and supervisor will take into consideration relevant factors such as:

- whether the employee's work can be accomplished by working remotely;
- the operational needs of the employee's department or team;
- the employee's demonstrated ability to work independently and with little oversight or minimal supervision;
- suitability of the proposed workspace in the employee's home;
- whether the hybrid work arrangement will adequately address the privacy and confidentiality requirements concerning data protection and records management; and
- potential associated costs and savings for the College.

## Institutional Principles Guiding Hybrid Work Arrangements

The successful implementation of hybrid work arrangements depends on addressing the following principles.

## **1. Sustaining the Vibrancy of Campus Life**

CNC offers programs and services primarily on our physical campus locations. Sustaining effective services on campus and ensuring a vibrant campus life are overarching priorities.

## **2. Suitable Student Support and Effective Operations**

All arrangements must prioritize student and client service, team effectiveness, and operational needs. While hybrid work arrangements are individualized within a team or department, they must be constructed considering the impact within the team/department and all of its members.

## **3. Team and Institutional Culture**

Maintaining connections and collaborations on our campuses is necessary, to greater and lesser degrees, for all roles. Supervisors and employees have responsibilities to maintain connections and ongoing interactions. Employees with hybrid work arrangements are expected to engage with their team and the larger institution to the same degree as employees who work fully on campus, including in-person attendance for regularly scheduled department/team meetings and events.

## **4. Monitoring and Managing Individual Employee Success**

Hybrid work arrangements require clear objectives and results, and they require trust, professionalism, and flexibility to be effective. Supervisors need to consider and establish means and methods for supervision to monitor workload and results. Hybrid work arrangements cannot negatively affect employees' ability to complete their day-to-day functions.

## **5. Hybrid Work Arrangements are Voluntary and Individualized**

Hybrid work is not an entitlement and is normally initiated by individual employees. Given the voluntary nature of the arrangement, employees are responsible for costs and expenses incurred by working from home. All requests must satisfactorily address the principles identified in this guideline, as well as all institutional policies and critical institutional elements (e.g. IT network security, privacy and information security, employee health and safety, etc.).

## **Hours of Work, Availability, Flexibility, and Working Conditions**

The regular and consistent daily and weekly working hours of the position shall remain unchanged as a result of the arrangement, unless otherwise specified or varied in writing. An

employee working remotely is expected to be available by telephone, email, and any other electronic means as if they were working at their regular workplace. Employees should ensure that their supervisor (or designate) is aware of any times when the employee may not be available while working remotely, and that the supervisor has approved of such unavailability. Employees will ensure that colleagues and their supervisor are able to determine when they are working remotely (typically through the use of Outlook Calendar), and employees will ensure that their calendar is up-to-date.

Employees working remotely are expected to be free from distractions or interruptions. Employees will maintain regular levels of accessibility, communication, and productivity during their regular hours. Employees working remotely must ensure, in advance, that they have appropriate dependent care arrangements in place. Alternative arrangements must be made for those who require care during the working from home period, just as the employee would make for their dependents when working on campus.

Work hours, compensation, and leave scheduling will continue to conform to applicable policies and collective agreement provisions.

Employees will continue to have a primary campus identified as their work location. A workstation/office will remain available for the employee, which may be shared with another employee (or other employees), depending on the number of days per week the employee attends campus. Employees with approved hybrid work arrangements, where they are on campus less than 3-4 days per week, may be assigned a shared workstation/office. Employees must still be available to report to their home campus on their normal working-from-home days, as and when required by CNC, to attend meetings, training, or other events. Advance notice of a minimum of 24 hours for all such events will be provided by the supervisor, save for in exceptional circumstances.

In the event that an employee changes roles within the college and is seeking to establish a hybrid work arrangement in the new role, a new request will need to be completed. Should an employee working under an approved arrangement change hybrid office locations, a new safety inspection checklist must be completed.

## **Performance**

A hybrid work arrangement must not impede an employee's ability to complete regular work functions, including communicating with supervisors and team members. Evaluation of performance will be consistent with that received by employees working on campus.

Hybrid work arrangements depend upon technology and video communication. All employees are expected to participate in meetings using video conference technology, and, if requested, with video engaged (as opposed to participating using audio only). CNC will provide access to training and support to ensure employees are supported in using collaborative technologies. It is the employee's duty to ensure that they access these resources to ensure technical proficiency.

Depending on role and/or departmental practice, employees working remotely must continue to track their hours as they would if working on campus.

Supervisors must review the continued validity of hybrid work arrangements for their team members annually, as well as whenever necessary. This process ensures that supervisors can evaluate and adjust arrangements to meet operational needs.

## **Home Workspace Setup and Equipment**

In collaboration with supervisors, employees will determine the appropriate equipment needs, software, and programs to be used while working remotely in order to maintain data security and confidentiality. Employees must comply with CNC's IT policies and procedures, guidelines, and best practices, including software updates, anti-malware software and scanning, authentication factors (e.g. multi-factor authentication, password policies), file sharing and downloads, remote access procedures, and locking the computer when not in use. Employees must ensure that they take the appropriate equipment they require to and from the remote work location and their home campus.

Equipment supplied by the institution (such as an employee's laptop) will be maintained by the institution, and is subject to all applicable rules, policies, and practices relating to use of IT equipment. Employees must take reasonable steps to protect any CNC property from theft, damage, or misuse. CNC reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. CNC assumes no responsibility for any damage to, wear to, repairs for, or loss of an employee's personal property. The employee is responsible for obtaining and maintaining adequate insurance, and for consulting with their insurer on any insurance implications due to their hybrid work arrangement.

The employee will establish an appropriate, professional workspace free from distractions and interruptions, and work with the employer to complete a workspace assessment. A remote workplace inspection will be conducted by the employee and signed by the employee and their supervisor before any remote work begins. Workspaces should be ergonomically optimized with proper furnishings and adequate space that supports working efficiently and

safely. The employee's internet must function consistently with sufficient bandwidth so that the employee can work effectively and meet the expectations outlined in both this guide, and the Hybrid Workplace Policy. CNC is not responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's remote workspace, such as remodeling, furniture, or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the space.

## Privacy and Information Security

Consistent with CNC's privacy and information security policies and expectations, as well as applicable privacy laws, employees with hybrid work arrangements will take all reasonable steps to ensure the protection of personal and/or confidential information accessible from their remote location. This will include the following requirements, at a minimum:

- Employees working remotely will be provided with secure access to the institution's system. Given the security risks associated with remote access, it is of utmost importance that employees comply with all data security policies and procedures, and privacy laws.
- All CNC property (including documents, equipment, and devices) must be kept secure to minimize or prevent loss or theft.
- All completed and working copies of documents must be saved on CNC's shared drives, OneDrive, and/or MS Teams so that information is secure and available to those who may require it. (Note: S:\ and U:\ drives will be retired once stability in the M365 environment has been achieved)
- Personal email accounts must not be used to transfer or transmit institutional information. Only CNC email accounts must be used, to ensure that all proprietary institutional information continues to reside on secure servers.
- Telephone calls and video meetings involving personal information, confidential institutional information, and employment or other sensitive matters must be conducted in private so that others in the remote space cannot hear or see the conversation.
- CNC-provided laptops should be for the sole use of the employee in the hybrid work arrangement. During the initial rollout of hybrid work arrangements, some employees may be authorized to use personal computers. In this circumstance, and if that device is shared with others in the household, employees must ensure they limit access to files containing personal, sensitive, or confidential institutional information, and that all passwords are kept secure.

- Physical files should be taken from the office only if they are essential to carry out the employee's job duties, and if the employee has prior authorization from their supervisor. Physical files held in one's home workstation must be kept separate from other personal documents and should be kept private from other individuals. Any physical files that contain personal or confidential information must be stored in a secure and locked location.
- Employees must exercise diligence in relation to their security and discuss it with supervisors in the collaborative assessment process.

Employees will continue to be bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of British Columbia, as well as any other applicable legislation.

## Health and Safety

Employees in a hybrid environment are expected to maintain the remote office space in a safe manner, free from safety hazards, and to report any unsafe conditions as soon as possible to their supervisor, including any risk of violence. CNC provides each employee with a safety inspection checklist that must be completed and reviewed with the supervisor when the agreement is signed, and safety training is provided for all employees. At minimum, employees working remotely will utilize this safety checklist to assess their workspace for any hazards and dangers that could foreseeably affect them, and to confirm that their remote workspace is safe, healthy, and ergonomically sound.

The employee's supervisor (or delegate) may conduct worksite visits virtually using videoconference technology or may request photos of the worksite/workstation. A virtual workstation assessment is recommended prior to starting work to ensure the home set-up supports and fits the employee appropriately. Arrangements for a virtual assessment can be made by contacting Facilities Services at (250) 561-5821 extension 5821.

CNC may also request periodic safety or inspection reports from the employee. If the workspace is unsafe and cannot be made safe, the hybrid work arrangement will be cancelled.

Employees working remotely must follow safe practices and report all work-related accidents or injuries to their supervisor when the injury first occurs (or pain/discomfort is first noticed), or within 24 hours of the incident/injury.

Injuries requiring time off work or a visit to a doctor must be reported to WorkSafeBC by CNC within 72 hours of the incident/injury. In the case of incidents or accidents that occur in the remote work location, the employer and/or WorkSafeBC may perform an investigation at the



employee's home office. The employee agrees to actively participate in any investigation following a work accident occurring at home.

Employees on a hybrid work arrangement will be covered by WCB for job-related injuries that occur in the course, and within the scope, of employment. CNC will not be responsible for any injuries that occur at the remote work location that are not related to work.

The employee remains liable for injuries to third parties that occur on the employee's premises.

## **Ad Hoc Arrangements**

Temporary hybrid work arrangements may be approved for unique situations or circumstances, such as inclement weather and special projects. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance. The hybrid workplace guidelines apply under ad-hoc circumstances.

## **End of Arrangement**

At the end of a hybrid work arrangement, employees must return all CNC property and supplies to their department/campus on the next scheduled workday.