

# CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, INC.

## REMOTE WORK LOCATION POLICY: STAFF (REV 5/2021 EFFECTIVE 8/1/2021)

### INTRODUCTION

**Concordia University, Inc.** (“**Concordia University** or the “**University**”) encourages on-campus worksite locations; however, the University allows remote work for staff where there is a business need, as determined by the University, for such an arrangement. Each remote work arrangement is unique depending on the needs of the position, manager, employee and overall University needs. All employees who work remotely must have an approved, signed Remote Work Location Agreement (the “**Agreement**”) approved by and on file with the Human Resources Department. Employees must comply with this Policy and their Agreement. Please note: Faculty should review the information in the faculty handbook regarding faculty obligations.

Remote Work is not suitable for all employees and/or positions. Human Resources, in conjunction with supervisor(s), will make the final decision about whether an employee is eligible to work remotely and whether any particular position is suitable for Remote Work. Remote Work will only be approved in the University’s sole discretion and based upon business needs.

Concordia University reserves the right to unilaterally interpret, change, modify, suspend, amend, delete, or cancel any provision of this Policy or procedures discussed herein or in the Agreement at any time and in its sole discretion. Generally either the employee or the University may end an employee requested remote work arrangement by providing no less than 7 calendar days’ written notice, unless it is for alleged misconduct or an emergency, in which case the agreement maybe discontinued immediately. This Policy is not intended to be a contract of employment, express or implied, or any other type of contract.

### DEFINITIONS

**Remote Work:** Defined as work and transportation alternatives that substitute home-to-work commuting with the option of working at a home-based office location while meeting the business needs of the University. There are a variety of working arrangements:

*100% In Physical Office Schedule:* You are 100% in Physical Office if you work almost 100% of the time at University-based office location. On occasion, if your job offers the opportunity to work remotely, you may work from home-based office location (i.e. Campus closure due to inclement weather, etc.)

*Split Schedule:* You are a split schedule employee if you routinely work three or four days a week in a University-based office location and one to two days a week at home-based office location. An employee that works on split schedule may be required to share office space on their days at the university-based office location.

*Fully Remote Schedule:* You are a fully remote employee if you work almost 100% of time in a home-based office location, but you could do your work from a University-based office location.

**Home-based office location:** Defined as the space in the employee's home that is designated and approved by the University as a remote office space to conduct Concordia University work.

**University-based office location:** Defined as the University work space that the employee is assigned to report to and work at when not working at the home-based office location.

## **GUIDELINES**

To ensure an effective, productive Remote Work program, the following guidelines will apply to all Remote Work arrangements.

### **A. General**

1. While working from a home-based office location, the University expects that employees will demonstrate professionalism in terms of job responsibilities, work products and customer or public contact. Employees working from home-based office locations must meet the same high standards that **Concordia University** employees are currently meeting when working from University-based office locations. This includes maintaining the confidentiality of all University information and documentation and preventing unauthorized access to any University system or information.

2. The employee's duties, obligations and responsibilities remain unchanged under the Agreement, unless explicitly directed and approved by the employee's supervisor, supervising Vice President/Provost, and/or President, and Human Resources. A current and updated position description that delineates the employee's duties to be performed shall be attached to the Agreement upon submission. **[Update job descriptions, as necessary.]**

3. In order for the employee to be approved for Remote Work, the employee must be self-motivated, be in a position that has minimal requirements for face-to-face daily supervision and have demonstrated appropriate productivity and use of work time on a consistent basis.

4. Remote Work is not suitable for all employees and/or positions. The Human Resources Department, in conjunction with supervisor(s), will make the final decision about whether an employee is eligible to work remotely and whether any particular position is suitable for Remote Work. Remote Work will only be approved in the University's sole discretion and based upon business needs.

5. Remote Work is not, nor should the employee construe Remote Work as, a University benefit. Participation in the University's Remote Work program is voluntary. No employee has the "right" to work remotely. The University may approve, modify or terminate the employee's Remote Work arrangements at any time, with or without notice, and will not be held responsible for costs, damages or losses resulting from cessation of Remote Work under this Policy or the Agreement.

6. The employee remains obligated to comply with all of the University's policies, practices and instructions while working remotely. The employee understands violation of any of the foregoing may result in preclusion from working at home and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

7. While working remotely, the employee must comply with the applicable notice and certification requirements as outlined in Concordia University Employee Handbook and/or Remote Work policies before taking leave and must comply with notice requirements when the employee is unable to perform work due to an “absence.”

8. The supervisor and employee will formulate objectives, expected results and evaluation procedures for work completed while the employee is under the agreement. The supervisor and employee will meet at pre-determined intervals to review the employee’s work performance.

9. Remote Work is not a substitute for dependent, medical, or family care. Remote Work employees shall not perform personal business or activities during agreed-upon work hours. The University reserves the right to request documentation verifying that third-party dependent/medical/family care is being provided to any dependent child or family member that is present in the employee’s home during scheduled work hours.

10. While working remotely, the employee must be reachable via telephone and/or electronic means, such as e-mail, zoom, etc. during agreed-upon work hours. The employee, supervisor and Human Resources will agree on how to handle work-related communications. When working from home-based office location, employees must be available during scheduled hours for phone and online communication. It is recommended that employees have their CUWAA telephone phones forwarded to their cell or home phones. The University is not responsible for any costs incurred by the employee.

11. The employee may be required to come to the University-based office location for face-to-face meetings and training, as directed by the employee’s supervisor. Unless required by applicable law, an employee who is working remotely is not entitled to reimbursement for travel time and/or gas allowance to attend work meetings or training.

12. The Agreement will set forth additional, specific conditions relating to the employee’s Remote Work arrangement. The employee, employee’s supervisor, supervising Vice President/Provost, and/or President, and Human Resources must approve and sign the Agreement prior to commencement of the employee’s Remote Work arrangement. Human Resources will retain a copy of the approved and signed Agreement in the employee’s employment file.

13. The employee agrees to participate in all studies, inquiries, reports, and analyses related to the Remote Work program.

14. In the event of campus closure due to inclement weather, emergency, etc., employees that can remote work will be expected to continue their normal work schedule. If a campus closure occurs on a scheduled physical site day on campus, the employee is not required to work physically on site, but via remote means when applicable.

## **B. Schedule and Recordkeeping**

1. A consistent schedule of work hours and days is required to ensure regular and predictable contact with University staff and others. The employee’s Agreement will include a specific, required work schedule. Generally, exceptions to the employee’s work schedule will be limited to when the employee’s presence is required for a function or activity that cannot reasonably be rescheduled.

2. The employee is responsible for accurately recording his/her time. Non-exempt employee shall understand the hours recorded must give the hours actually worked on a daily basis to the minute. If the employee makes an error in recording his/her time, the employee is required to report the matter to their supervisor immediately. Failure to report accurate time records is considered falsification of records, which may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

3. A non-exempt employee shall not work overtime without prior supervisory approval. The employee understands that failure to obtain prior approval for overtime work may result in discontinuance of the employee's Remote Work arrangements and other appropriate disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the University.

### **C. Home-Based Office Location**

1. The employee shall designate a home workspace that is quiet, free of distractions and kept in a clean, professional and safe condition, with adequate lighting and ventilation.

2. To ensure that safe working conditions exist, the University retains the right to make on-site visits (without advance notice) of the employee's home-based office location, including home workspace. The University will provide advance notice, when possible. Upon request by the University, the employee may be required to submit photos of the home-based office workspace to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources for review.

3. Employees must immediately report to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources any accidents or injuries and/or property damage sustained during working hours by the employee to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources within 24 hours of the event or claim.

4. The employee is required to maintain adequate amounts of liability insurance. The employee will be responsible for accidents and injuries and/or property damage to third persons and/or members of the employee's family while on the employee's premises.

5. Remote Work employees are advised to contact their insurance agent and tax consultant for information regarding home-based office locations and coverage for equipment that is damaged, destroyed or stolen. It is the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. The University will not provide tax guidance, nor will the University assume any additional tax liabilities

6. The University will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, property or liability insurance, or other incidental expenses, including but not limited to, employees' own offsite workspace furniture, network connectivity, office supplies, utilities, cleaning services, etc. associated with the use of the employee's residence and home-based office location within that residence.

7. The employee will not conduct business meetings with other individuals in the home-based office location and will schedule any necessary meetings in the nearest local University office or location or via electronic means such as zoom.

#### **D. Intellectual Property**

Products, records, documents, inventions and other intellectual creations made while on a remote location are the property of the University. The employee is expected to comply with the University's policies regarding intellectual property regardless of the work location or whether work was performed on equipment owned by the University or the employee.

#### **E. Supplies, Equipment and Software Usage**

The employee working from a remote location will follow all procedures outlined in the University's Technology and Remote Access policies as located in the Employee Handbook Section 6. In addition, the employee working from a remote location must ensure the following:

- When working from home or the University, ALL employees must work on university managed platforms (H drive, S drive, One Drive, and SharePoint). Personal storage locations (such as Google Docs), whether used by the department or yourself and not managed by the Department of Information Technology, are NOT allowed by the University. This creates numerous risks to the University, such as Security, loss of data, and loss of business continuity.
- The protection of organization data on disk, hardcopy, or on portable devices from theft, loss, or unauthorized access during transit and at the Remote worklocation.
- That approved firewalls and anti-virus software are on all CU remote work location computers and are updated daily with current definitions.
- The computer that the employee uses is a single-user computer on which no other person has login credentials and must be password protected.
- Utilize dual-factor authentication VPN and log off of it when not in use
- That flash drives or other portable drives are scanned for viruses before used for uploading or downloading data.
- Sensitive information in hardcopy form is returned to the central work place or shredded.
- All work is backed-up according to the university procedures, consult the IT department.
- The university network is not accessed from the remote work location unless with advance approval and for approved purposes.
- The employee agrees to follow the University's guidelines pertaining to the handling of public records.

The University will typically not provide duplication of office equipment but will only provide the necessary equipment needed for working at the approved home-based office location. Personal IT equipment may not be used for work performed at the home-based office location. All of the items and materials provided, or reimbursed, by the University remain the property of the University. The employee must immediately return to the University upon request or termination of agreement all University items and materials.

In the event of equipment malfunctions, the employee agrees to notify Information Technology and his/her supervisor immediately. The employee understands that if a malfunction precludes him/her from working from their home-based office location, then the University may ask that the employee report to the University-based office location or that assign the employee other work.

### **Determining Positions that are Appropriate for an Remote Work Location Agreement**

In making decisions about which positions are appropriate to designate or approve for a split or fully remote work location, departments should thoroughly analyze the duties of positions and how the work is performed. [Employment days to be eligible for Remote Work to be determined by the employee's supervisor, supervising Vice President/Provost, and/or President, and Human Resources.]

Supervisor(s), in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, will analyze the nature of a position and how the work is performed and determine which positions are appropriate to designate or approve for remote work. Several factors should be considered in determining the feasibility of remote work, including the university's ability to supervise the employee adequately and whether any duties require use of certain equipment or tools that cannot be replicated at home. Other critical considerations include whether

- there is a need for face-to-face interaction and coordination of work with other employees;
- in-person interaction with outside colleagues or students is necessary;
- The position in question requires the employee to have immediate access to documents or other information located only in the workplace;
- the remote work arrangement will impact service quality or university operations, or increase workload for other employees;
- the position can be structured to be performed independently of others with minimal need for support; and
- performance can be measured by qualitative or quantitative results-oriented standards

Typically, a position being designated as remote work eligible indicates split schedule (fully remote needs to be discussed and approved by Human Resources). Human Resources, in consultation with supervisors, will also identify positions which are generally not eligible for remote work, including but not limited to, Campus Safety, Buildings and Grounds, Library services, in person instruction (faculty), in patient care/clinic, student health, residence life, coaches, etc. The list of positions is not exclusive, and Human Resources reserves the right to identify other positions that are not eligible for remote work.

## **Employee Qualities that are Appropriate for an Remote Work Location Agreement**

In making decisions about which employees are approved for a remote work location, departments should review the work qualities of employees, in addition to ensuring that their positions are appropriate for a remote work location. Split Schedule employees must be employed by Concordia University, Inc. for a minimum of 15 days of continuous, regular employment and must have exhibited satisfactory performance. Fully remote schedule employees must be employed by Concordia University, Inc. for a minimum of 30 days of continuous, regular employment and must have exhibited satisfactory performance. [Employment days to be eligible for Remote Work to be determined by the employee's supervisor, supervising Vice President/Provost, and/or President, and Human Resources.]

Generally, employees who are successful at working from a remote work location:

- Are able to work productively on their own
- Are self-motivated and flexible
- Are knowledgeable about the job
- Have a low need for social interaction
- Are dependable and trustworthy
- Have satisfactory performance history
- Are organized
- Have a secure and reliable internet connection (not public WIFI, i.e., coffee house or restaurant locations not acceptable)
- Has no active formal disciplinary actions on file for the current or immediately preceding review period

## Guidelines for Remote Work Locations

Setting up a remote work location requires some advance planning to ensure you have an adequate workspace and the necessary equipment and supplies. Important considerations to keep in mind when planning the remote work location are:

- When working from home-based office location, employees must be available during scheduled hours for phone and online communication. It is recommended that employees have their CUWAA telephone phones forwarded to their cell or home phones. The University is not responsible for any costs incurred by the employee.
- The work area must be quiet and free of distractions.
- Lighting must be adequate and without glare. (The employer will not pay for reconstruction of the employee's alternative work space to develop a home office.)
- Distracting noise should be kept to a minimum.
- Your alternative work space must be adequate and designed to safely accommodate the equipment needed to perform job duties.
- Your chair should be comfortable with adequate back support (employer will not provide furniture for employee's alternative work site).
- Equipment, such as computer, must be available for your exclusive use while working from the remote work location.
- Each employee must make arrangements with his or her supervisor regarding the use of University owned equipment in the employee's home, but in no event may the use of such equipment impede Concordia University, Inc.'s access to such equipment, nor change Concordia University, Inc. ownership of such equipment.
- The employee must coordinate closely with the supervisor regarding the use of Concordia University, Inc. supplies.
- When working from home or the University, ALL employees must work on university-managed platforms (H drive, S drive, One Drive, and SharePoint). Personal storage locations (such as Google Docs), whether used by the department or yourself and not managed by the Department of Information Technology, are NOT allowed by the University. This creates numerous risks to the University, such as Security, loss of data, and loss of business continuity.

Be aware that Concordia University, Inc. is not responsible for insuring your equipment nor your remote work site. If you are using your own equipment and it breaks, malfunctions or is damaged while performing work for Concordia University, Inc. the University is not liable.

Employees are responsible for contacting their property insurance provider to ensure proper coverage of the remote work location.