

Telework Policy Frequently Asked Questions

What is telework?

Telework is a voluntary arrangement whereby an employee performs their job from a location other than the designated workplace (i.e. GN office building, GN facility) for a predetermined length of time. Such locations could include an employee's home or any other location within Nunavut or outside of the territory, within Canada.

Why was the Telework Policy put in place?

Flexible work arrangements like telework can help employee recruitment, retention and wellness and can have a positive impact on workplace productivity and job satisfaction. In recent years, the GN has introduced technological advancements, including digital platforms, that enabled some GN work to effectively and securely be carried out virtually and/or in locations other than a GN workplace.

How is the Telework Policy different than the Remote Hiring Policy?

Telework is a flexible work arrangement available to current GN employees. Remote hiring is a recruitment option available to staff certain specialized, hard-to-fill, professional-level GN positions on a temporary (3-year term) basis.

Are there different types of telework?

Yes. The Telework Policy outlines three (3) different types of telework:

1. **Short-Term Telework** – working away from the designated workplace for a duration of up to three (3) consecutive weeks to a total of no more than six (6) weeks per fiscal year. Only the Deputy Minister of an employee's department (or their delegated authority) can approve short-term telework requests.

2. **Long-Term Telework** – working away from the designated workplace for a duration longer than the three consecutive weeks to a maximum of six (6) months per fiscal year. Such requests must be for exceptional circumstances that are urgent in nature. Only the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee can approve long-term telework requests.

3. **Hybrid Telework*** – a specific type of telework arrangement where an employee works partly in the designated workplace and partly at another location (e.g. employee's home).

*Hybrid telework will be available as of July 1, 2025.

Why is the hybrid telework option only coming into effect July 1, 2025?

Prior to implementing hybrid telework, the Department of Human Resources will be carefully monitoring the implementation of short-term and long-term telework, as well as the new Remote Hiring Policy, to ensure the necessary tools and resources are in place to support employees who are working teleworking working remotely and to assist managers who are supervising staff at a distance. The evaluation of short-term and long-term telework will result in recommendations and guidelines for hybrid telework prior to its implementation.

Are employees allowed to telework on a full-time basis?

Full-time (permanent) telework is not available under this policy. Employees may only request short-term or long-term telework. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by Cabinet.

Who is eligible for telework?

The Telework Policy is a public service-wide policy. However, not all positions or tasks within the GN can be performed outside of the GN workplace. Telework requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. An employee is not eligible for telework during their probationary period. An employee on a performance improvement plan is not eligible for remote work. Employee suitability, including overall performance and reliability (including attendance), is a factor that will be used when determining whether a telework request is approved.

Is telework suitable for me?

Before submitting a request for telework, it is important to understand that telework is not an appropriate work arrangement for everyone. There are many important factors to consider before approaching your manager about a telework arrangement. Operational requirements, past employee performance, suitability of the position to telework, as well as the duration and location of the telework will all impact the decision about whether a request will be approved. Before completing an application, employees should familiarize themselves with the Telework Policy and its supporting guidelines, including the suitability criteria.

What criteria will my manager use to assess my request for telework?

The Telework Policy includes five (5) factors that need to be considered when a manager is reviewing a request for telework:

1. operational needs;
2. position suitability;
3. employee suitability;
4. position's amount of decision-making or influence; and
5. telework location suitability.

The Department of Human Resources has developed detailed suitability criteria for each of these factors to help guide management's consideration of the telework request.

I am a casual employee. Can I apply for telework?

A casual employee who has completed six (6) months of continuous employment in their position can apply for telework.

I am a relief employee. Can I apply for telework?

Given the nature of relief work (i.e. temporary, "as and when"), a relief employee would not normally be approved for telework. Exceptions might be considered for specific types of relief positions that are longer-term in nature.

I would like to request telework for a period that is longer than three (3) consecutive weeks allowed under short-term telework. What are my options?

Any request for telework in excess of three (3) consecutive weeks is considered an exception to the Policy and would need to be recommended by the employee's Deputy Minister and submitted to the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee for review. Such a request would only be considered in an exceptional, urgent circumstance.

Any request for telework that exceeds six (6) months cannot be considered by the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee and, if supported by the employee's Deputy Minister, would require approval by Cabinet.

What Deputy Ministers are members of the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee?

The Deputy Ministers of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Finance and Human Resources are the members of the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee.

I have already teleworked for the total of six (6) weeks this fiscal year. What are my options if I would like to request more telework?

The request would require approval by the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee. Such a request is outside of the Policy and would normally only be approved in exceptional circumstances; you will need to provide the details of the 'exceptional' circumstances

Can I work from home on telework?

Yes.

Can telework be from another community within Nunavut?

Yes.

Can telework be from outside of Nunavut?

Yes – within Canada.

Can I work from home while caring for my children or an elder?

No. Telework is not a substitute for dependent care. You should discuss other options, including flexible work schedules and/or paid and unpaid leave entitlements, with your manager.

Can I telework while I am on vacation?

Telework is not intended to be used instead of appropriate and applicable leave available to the employee. An employee can request telework for a period preceding or following personal leave. An employee must be working and fully accessible during their telework period.

Do I have to request consecutive days of telework or can I request a different telework schedule?

Provided your request does not exceed the maximum number of days of telework allowed in a fiscal year, you can request the schedule you require. For example, teleworking one day a week for 15 weeks would equal three (3) weeks of short-term telework.

Will the GN reimburse me for the expenses I incur while teleworking (e.g. per diems, internet)?

No. Telework is at the employee's request and they are responsible for related costs.

I am teleworking in another community. Will I receive the Nunavut Northern Allowance for that community for the time I am there?

No. You will continue to receive the Nunavut Northern Allowance that is applicable to your home community.

I am teleworking outside of Nunavut. Will I continue to receive the Nunavut Northern Allowance while teleworking?

If you are working outside of Nunavut for a period that exceeds the six (6) weeks of total short-term telework allowed in a fiscal year, you will not receive the Nunavut Northern Allowance. Your department will notify the Compensation and Benefits Division (Department of Finance) so that the necessary payroll adjustment can be made.

I do not have access to a desktop computer or laptop. Can I telework using only my cell phone?

Employees who telework are expected to perform their responsibilities as though they were in the GN workplace. It is expected that employees would have GN equipment (e.g. laptop, surface tablet) while teleworking.

What if I need to extend my telework arrangement?

You must submit the request in writing to your manager and it will be considered so long as the total length of the telework arrangement remains within the time limits prescribed under the Telework Policy. If the extension results in a short-term request becoming a long-term request, the Deputy Ministers' Telework Committee must approve the request.

Any extension to an existing telework arrangement will be considered using the same suitability criteria as when the request was initially approved. However, employees should be aware that changing circumstances may result in an extension being denied.

My request for telework was denied. Is there a process in place for me to file a complaint?

There is no complaint mechanism in the Telework Policy. Management has the right to approve or deny a request based on the Telework Policy and its operational guidelines, which include the Telework Suitability Criteria.

Is there a limit to how many employees can be teleworking at any one time?

The number of employees able to telework at the same time will differ across departments/divisions and will be based on operational requirements in addition to the suitability criteria for telework.

Am I expected to work regular hours (8:30-5) when teleworking, or can I do flex hours?

Employees should consider their duties and their normal work hours in making a request for telework. If an employee's duties require them to be available during their division's normal work hours, flex hours may not be appropriate. If an employee wishes to work outside of their regularly scheduled hours they should follow the process for requesting a flexible work schedule and discuss with their manager.

Can my telework arrangement be terminated?

The employer or the employee can end a telework arrangement by providing 30 days notice (applicable to long-term telework only), or other mutually agreed-upon period of notice, in writing.

The employer may end a telework arrangement immediately (without notice) with cause, such as a breach of employment conditions or policies, or a health and safety risk.

Where do I find a list of resources for the Telework Policy?

More information about the Telework Policy is available at <https://gov.nu.ca/human-resources/information/policies>. You can also contact your department's Human Resources representative for additional information.