

Working Alone Guide

Key considerations and expectations for employees working alone and/or working from home.

Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting our ability to work in the usual way. Wherever possible, plans are being developed and implemented within each work area to allow for a greater number of employees to work from home while continuing to deliver critical services to Albertans. This also means that an increasing number of employees are finding themselves working alone either at home, in an alternate location, or in their usual worksite. Some employees may be working modified hours depending on their work location and depending on conversations and approval with supervisors. Working alone covers a range of situations, from being the only worker at a work site, in an office building, on an office building floor, in a work area where the employee does not have contact with other employees or a supervisor, to working in a remote or isolated work site where assistance may not be readily available.

These times are challenging and it is important to work together to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone, through communication and support.

What is Required

Departments with employees who are working from home or off site must ensure that preventive measures are in place to eliminate or minimize hazards associated with these situations. This includes communicating regularly with the employee and ensuring their safety. The employer is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of all their employees while working alone, off site, or from home.

Managers should ensure appropriate measures as far as it is reasonably practicable are in place and available to eliminate or minimize the risks associated with working in these situations.

The following are key considerations/expectations for working safely, staying connected and maintaining productivity.

Daily Check-ins and Managing Expectations

- Establish a communication procedure to ensure employees remain connected to their supervisors and colleagues, have meaningful work assigned, and are safe.

- This should be discussed in advance with an agreed upon form of communication- i.e.: daily team meetings in the morning, and scheduled check-ins with each employee using texts, emails, or phone.
- Where possible, use available tools such as Skype or WebEx to connect virtually. This is a great way to feel connected to the team and others. [Remote access and collaboration tools](#)

Working Alone Essentials

- Emergencies: Employees should know where emergency supplies are located at home or if needed know they are to use external resources such as 911 for emergencies.
- Communication: Establish a check- in and check- out system and use devices such as cellphones to connect with supervisors, colleagues, family.
- Safety: Stay alert in your surroundings and report anything suspicious to the appropriate source. [Personal Security Handbook](#)
- Report: contact your supervisor immediately if you are injured while performing work from home or become ill.

Risk Management/Insurance Liability

- Employees should have homeowner insurance (which includes “personal liability”).
- WCB coverage is provided to the employee working at home; here is the link to more information: <https://rmi.alberta.ca/>

Health Related Information

The health and wellbeing of employees remains our most important consideration. Key resources of support include:

- Employee and Family Assistance Program – A voluntary, confidential no-cost service available to all GoA employees and their immediate family members. This service offers a variety of supports and resources related to physical and mental health, counseling, work/life solutions, and much more. They can be reached on phone, website, or through online chat. More information can be found directly on their [WorkHealthLife](#) site.
- COVID-19 Information – Refer to alberta.ca for up-to-date information on COVID-19. myAPS is your source for COVID-19 workplace-related information.

Additional Information

Additional resources to assist employees working alone from home or an alternate work site:

- Home Office Safety Check List – This checklist can be used to help employees in creating a safe workspace when working from home.
- Additional Technology Information can be found [here](#)