



National  
Defence

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# Department of National Defence Guidelines for Hybrid Work

UNCLASSIFIED

## Common Hybrid Work Model

In December 2022, the Government of Canada announced the implementation of a [Common Hybrid Work Model](#). This guidance is to ensure consistency, collaboration, and cohesion across the federal public service.

In May 2024, this direction was updated to indicate that, effective September 9, 2024, all public service employees must work on-site a minimum of three days a week and executives are expected to be present at the worksite four days a week. At the Department of National Defence (DND), executives are defined as:

An employee appointed or deployed or an employee acting in one of the following groups and levels:

- Executive (EX) Group, levels 01 to 05
- Defence Scientific Service (DS) Group, levels 7A, 7B, and 8
- Law Management (LC) Group, levels 01 to 04

The primary purpose of the direction is to establish a consistent minimum requirement for all public servants to come to their designated worksite three days per week. The 60% requirement is an alternative that only applies when certain operational requirements or job types (e.g., part-time workers, students) are such that a three days per week minimum is not possible. Under this model, the employer has the exclusive management right to designate the location of work and to require employees to report to their designated workplace. Managers should plan and manage their operations in accordance with the primary purpose of the direction, which is establishing a minimum on-site presence of three days per week. Many at DND are already doing so or more to meet operational requirements and ensure collaboration and engagement among colleagues.

This Common Hybrid Work Model applies to all federal public service employees in the core public administration who are working in a hybrid model. At DND, compliance for Information Technology (IT) professionals will be gradually implemented under a phased approach following the rescindment of the general IT exception under the previous Common Hybrid Work Model. By adhering to these requirements, employees are delivering service to Canadians and the Defence Team and strengthening their confidence in the public service, while upholding the [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](#) as a condition of employment.

## Hybrid by design

A hybrid work environment enables the Defence Team to have an agile, inclusive and responsive workforce that is ready to deliver on [DND and the Canadian Armed Forces \(CAF\)'s mandate](#). As we transition to the updated [Common Hybrid Work Model](#) for the federal public service, we are putting in place the tools that employees need to optimize their hybrid work experience and create a safe, healthy, and productive workplace.

Many teams at DND have operational requirements that prohibit a hybrid work posture. This guide provides information and supports to ensure compliance with applicable Treasury Board and DND policy, regardless of their work posture, and offers guidance and best practices for those looking to implement flexible or hybrid approaches in their work.

This guide provides direction and resources for L1s, managers and employees to ensure they have the equipment, accommodations, and information necessary to have a meaningful and

productive in-office experience. It is intended to help managers and employees better understand compliance and reporting requirements, scheduling in-office days, and the equipment and IT infrastructure available to them to support this transition. It also provides guidance to L1s on key issues such as office space allocation and personal storage.

The guide is centered around three themes:

- [People](#)
- [Digital](#)
- [Workplace](#)

# People

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## Introduction

Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Human Resources, Civilian (HR-Civ) is leading the “People” component of the implementation of the Common Hybrid Work Model and the Return to Office (RTO) directive. The following provides direction and guidance on core aspects of [hybrid work](#) (accessible only on the DND network), including compliance, monitoring, the duty to accommodate, exceptions, and optimizing hybrid work. The application of these guidelines will contribute to an accessible, inclusive, meaningful, and productive workplace across the Defence Team.

## Accountabilities for hybrid work

Managers/supervisors are accountable for:

- Ensuring all employees have a valid work agreement.
- Tracking and monitoring the compliance of their employees' work agreements and attendance with the Direction on prescribed presence in the workplace.
- Taking appropriate administrative and, if necessary, disciplinary action to ensure their employees' compliance with the terms of agreements, in consultation with [Labour Relations \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#).
- Fulfilling their duty to accommodate.
- Promoting meaningful compliance, including by optimizing hybrid work within their organizations to foster collaboration, cohesion, and a sense of inclusion for all employees.

Employees are accountable for:

- Ensuring they have a valid work agreement.
- Complying with the terms of their work agreement.
- Complying with the [Common Hybrid Work Model](#) and the terms of the [Direction on prescribed presence in the workplace](#).
- Proactively discussing with their manager any barriers they may encounter in the workplace.
- Contributing to meaningful compliance, including active participation in optimizing hybrid work within their organizations to foster collaboration, cohesion, and a sense of inclusion.

## Compliance requirements

On site presence is determined by operational requirements and some positions may require an employee to be on-site more than the minimum requirement. The employer has the exclusive right to designate the location of work and to require employees to report to their designated workplace. Therefore, hybrid work is not an entitlement and not all employees are hybrid workers by default.

Full-time DND public service employees must have a valid agreement. Effective September 9, 2024, full-time DND public service employees with a hybrid work agreement must maintain a minimum of three days on-site per week (executives are to be present at the worksite four days a week) and update their work agreements to reflect this.

If a manager or supervisor has concerns around attendance or notices a pattern of absences,

they should raise this with the employee promptly. If the employee does not adhere to the requirements in the Direction, it may lead to disciplinary action. In such cases, managers are encouraged to consult the [DAOD 5016-0, Standards of Civilian Conduct and Discipline](#) and seek guidance from their [Labour Relations advisor \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#).

### Compressed schedules

Employees working compressed [schedules](#) (accessible only on the DND network) must also maintain a valid work agreement. Employees are required to meet the requirement of working three days onsite per week.

### Part-time schedules

Employees working part-time or varied schedules must also maintain a valid agreement. Those with a hybrid work agreement must work from their designated worksite for a minimum of 40% of their regular schedule on a weekly or monthly basis until September 8, 2024, and then a minimum of 60% on-site per week after September 9, 2024. Employees not working every month or on an 'as needed' basis should apply for an exception under category 4 "other" only if the other categories and sub-categories (1 – 3 and 4 a – e) do not apply.

### Monitoring and reporting

In accordance with the [Government of Canada's Privacy Act](#), the [Direction on prescribed presence in the workplace](#), [Guidance on optimizing a hybrid workforce](#), as well as the [Directive on Telework](#), DND is responsible for [monitoring](#) (accessible only on the DND network) the location of work for all employees. Monitoring allows DND to ensure compliance with these directives.

Monitoring may be performed using different data collection methodologies, including network and site access. Managers may also be asked to report on their team's compliance with the Direction. To determine whether they are reporting to their correct work location the requisite number of times, managers should rely on observations or information directly collected from the employee. The compliance reporting calculation excludes employees who have an approved or pending accommodation, and those with an approved exception or pending exception under categories 1 – 3 and 4 a – 4c.

As a reminder, DND networks are subject to monitoring, including users connected remotely. This information is collected and reviewed to enforce acceptable use, policy compliance, and to protect against cyber threats.

### Leave

Time spent on leave reflected in the Human Resources Management System (HRMS/PeopleSoft) reduces the number of working days in each month. It is **not** included in the on-site presence requirement. Therefore, employees are not expected to "make up" days while on leave that is reflected in HRMS.

Leave includes:

- Annual or vacation leave
- Sick leave

- Family-related leave
- Bereavement
- All leave as described in the employee's [collective agreement](#) or the applicable [Directive on Terms and Conditions of Employment](#).

#### Designated statutory holidays

Employees are required to make up previously scheduled in-office days missed due to statutory holidays.

#### Working sick

If an employee does not feel well enough to work, they should take sick leave. If they do not feel well enough to work on site, they should discuss with their manager whether the option of working from home is reasonable.

#### Repeated absences for on-site days

Concerns around attendance and compliance to the [Common Hybrid Work Model](#) should be raised by the manager/supervisor if a pattern of absences is observed, i.e., employee regularly requests leave on the on site days. Managers are encouraged to consult [Labour Relations](#) (accessible only on the DND network) for advice.

#### Scheduling on-site days

It is strongly recommended that managers and their employees cooperate to establish an on site schedule that maximizes in-person contact and fosters cohesion and collaboration.

On-site days can be scheduled in several ways:

- **Fixed days:** On-site work is prescribed according to a fixed schedule (the days remain the same each week).
- **Flexible days:** On-site work is prescribed on a flexible schedule. Days may be different week to week depending on operational requirements.
- **Combination fixed/flexible week:** Combination of fixed and flexible work making up the minimum on site requirement.
- **Operational basis:** Based on operational requirements (up to five days per week). Onsite work is prescribed based on the operational requirements of each position, the nature of the work and the equipment needed.

When determining which days an employee is on-site, the following should be considered:

- Operational realities such as:
  - Teamwork/opportunities for collaboration
  - Accommodation requirements
  - Availability of office space (building and cubicles)
  - Safety restrictions such as:
    - Hours of work must abide by respective [collective agreements](#) and be during office opening hours.



- Other safety concerns such as being alone in the building (if alone, look at scheduling an alternate day). In conjunction with:
  - Employee preferences.

### Compliance and DND coworking

While not intended to replace an employee's designated (on site) work location, authorized use of locations such as the [DND coworking site](#) (accessible only on the DND network) at NDHQ (Pearkes) can contribute to an employee's minimum on-site requirement. The DND coworking site is meant to be used on an ad hoc, as-needed basis to facilitate on-site work, and therefore cannot be used as a work location in a work agreement.

### Work agreements and myWorkArrangements (mWA)

As we move forward in a hybrid work environment, managers have a responsibility to be aware of their employee's work location each day. In addition to ensuring a productive work environment and the effective management of their employees, this also fulfills managers responsibility to ensure the health and safety of the Defence Team's public service employees. Similarly, managers must seek to foster cohesion, a sense of inclusion, and ensure the well-being of their teams; doing so requires reliable knowledge of individuals' daily work posture.

To support this, **all DND public service employees must have a valid [work agreement](#)** (accessible only on the DND network). This includes:

- Full-time on-site employees, hybrid employees, and full-time remote employees
- Indeterminate employees, students, term, and casual workers
- Part-time and full-time workers
- Employees on secondment with DND (use [alternate form](#) (accessible only on the DND network))

Managers must first discuss the terms of agreements with employees and, once agreed upon, approve them in the [mWA application](#). Where groups of employees work full-time on-site and do not have access to mWA, managers must submit a [bulk work agreement](#) (accessible only on the DND network) request as soon as possible.

Those who **do not have access to the mWA application** must complete the [Alternative work agreement form](#) until access issues have been resolved. Once access to the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) Application Portal (TAP) is granted, employees will need to re-enter their agreement in the mWA application.

The duration of an agreement can be set for up to one year from the date of signature and a new agreement must be submitted:

- Before expiry
- If a change occurs, including:
  - change of position or manager
  - telework location
  - number of days teleworking
  - any other circumstance

If an employee does not have a valid work agreement, it will alter compliance reports to senior management and notifications will be sent to both the employee and the manager.

**Please note:** if an employee is on long-term leave, the manager can cancel their work agreement or let it expire.

### Modifying work agreements

It is the manager/supervisor's responsibility to approve any changes to the employee's work agreement. For operational reasons, a manager may need to change the schedule or conversely, an employee may need a change to accommodate their personal schedule. In either case, a conversation between manager and employee is required, and appropriate processes must be followed if an amendment, exception, or accommodation are needed.

For example, supervisors may, with reasonable notice, approve changes to an employee's in-office schedule where the employee may not be required to "make up" their day in the office, such as:

- If management requests the employee to work from home due to technical and physical issues or limitations.
- If management requests the employee work from a different worksite location
- The employee is required to take training off-site.
- The employee is required to travel for work during their on-site day or travel for off-site meetings.

In addition, a manager may approve an employee's request for a short-term, temporary change in work arrangement. These modifications do not require a formal change to their work agreement. For example, a short term, temporary change in work location or scheduled days on site. Such informal arrangements are at the manager's discretion and must ensure compliance with the Common Hybrid Work Model, as well as applicable policies and procedures, particularly those related to privacy and security. Such agreements are intended to provide management and employee flexibilities but must not replace or supersede the Exceptions to telework nor the Duty to Accommodate processes.

### Work agreements for employees seeking exceptions to the Common Hybrid Work Model

Employees seeking an exception to the Common Hybrid Work Model (more information below) under categories 1 to 3 and 4a to 4c are permitted to establish a temporary work agreement in partnership with their manager, until a decision has been communicated to them. A work agreement must be in place and aligned to this temporary agreement. Employees seeking an exception under category 4d, 4e and 4 "other" must have a work agreement in place that is aligned to the policy requirements for onsite presence and are expected to maintain compliance with the policy until a decision has been made by their L1 and communicated to them by their manager. Once a final decision is completed and communicated to them, employees should update their agreements if and as needed.

Employees seeking an accommodation under the Duty to Accommodate (more information below) can, with the consent of their manager, adopt a modified work agreement and should submit a work agreement for manager approval while waiting for a final decision from their manager with support from the Office of Disability Management. Once a final decision is

completed and communicated to them, employees should update their agreements if and as needed.

### **Ergonomic equipment**

Ergonomic hazards are a workplace condition that have a potential to pose a risk of injury to an employee. Ergonomic injuries can be minimized by ensuring that employees are properly set up by using the [ergo checklist \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#). Consult the Unit General Safety Officer (UGSO) in optioning an ergo coach or [ergonomic assessment](#) (accessible only on the DND network) depending on the requirement.

Where is the ergonomic equipment set up?

### **Management obligations or options for equipping employees to work in a location other than the primary work location**

- Management has no obligation to equip employees to work in a location other than the primary work location, except under certain conditions.
- Employees with a medical Duty to Accommodate are to be equipped by management to work at both the primary and secondary work locations, including ergonomic or other specialised equipment when required by the DTA. In these cases, the employee and their manager should consult with the [Office of Disability Management](#) (accessible only on the National Defence network).
- If, because of management direction, an employee is required to work from a secondary location (eg. due to flood/fire/space allocation issues in primary location), then management is responsible to equip the employee to perform their duties in the secondary location.

### **Exemptions from the Common hybrid work model**

There are two mechanisms for an employee to be exempted from the on-site requirements of the Direction on prescribed presence, these are:

- A workplace accommodation (duty to accommodate)
- An exception request

Before submitting any requests, employees must speak to their manager. Only one exemption request can be pursued at a time.

Workplace accommodations must be considered **first**, before pursuing exceptions. If an accommodation request is in progress, employees **cannot** also submit a request for an exception.

## Workplace accommodations

The accommodations process is distinct from the exceptions process, as managers have a Duty to Accommodate under the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. When an employee requests an exception to the Direction on Prescribed Presence in the Workplace in the form of telework, and the telework is being requested as a form of accommodation measure for medical grounds or any prohibited ground of discrimination under the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the request must be assessed via the accommodation process. The process for submitting an accommodation request, including who to consult, can be found on the [Exemptions from the Common Hybrid Work Model webpage \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#).

Employees should proactively discuss with managers any barriers they may encounter in the workplace, including those linked to accessibility, harassment, and discrimination and define solutions that will help address the barriers in the hybrid workplace. The Accessibility Passport can be used to outline barriers in the workplace as well as the accommodation solutions needed to address them.

Prior to requesting an exception to the Common Hybrid Work Model, managers must first determine whether a medical or non-medical accommodation would be a more appropriate measure, based on the employee's situation.

Managers should also ensure that individual circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis for an exception to the Directive, including human rights obligations, such as the Duty to Accommodate, or whether an employee has a reasonable explanation for absences from the designated workplace, such as family care obligations or illness.

## Exceptions to the Common Hybrid Work Model

Exceptions are outlined in the [Common Hybrid Work Model](#) and require approval at the ADM or Deputy Minister (DM) level. Exceptions are **not** accommodations associated with the Duty to Accommodate.

Exceptions to the hybrid work model include:

1. Employee was hired to work remotely full-time before March 16, 2020.
2. Indigenous employee whose location is critical to their identity to work from their community.
3. Employee works remotely 125 km or more from their designated worksite.
4. Exceptions for a limited or longer timeframe to be determined on a case-by-case basis. These exceptions have several sub-categories.

### Deputy Minister (DM) exceptions

- A business model has been previously established and not influenced by the remote-by-default COVID-19 management
- Exceptions are not intended to apply to internal and enabling services.
- L1s can prepare a business case to propose the following exception scenarios to a group of positions in their organization (not based on an employee's individual request)

Information on the process for seeking an exception is found on the [Exceptions within the Common Hybrid Work Model website \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#). Note that

exceptions must be reviewed annually, at a minimum. During the renewal process of an exception, employees should discuss arrangements that may be required with their manager.

### Exceptions grid

Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) Exception categories	Department of National Defence (DND) endorsed by the Compliance and Coherence Committee (CCC) (includes both current and future employees)	Approval	What to do while pending decision
<b>Category 1:</b> Employees hired to work remotely prior to March 16, 2020		L1/ADM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees are permitted to work with their manager to establish a temporary work agreement that does not meet the minimum required days on site until a decision has been communicated to them</li> <li>• A work agreement must be in place and aligned to this temporary arrangement</li> </ul>
<b>Category 2:</b> Indigenous employees whose location is critical to their identity to work from their community			
<b>Category 3:</b> Employees working remotely 125km or more from their designated worksite.			
<b>Category 4:</b> Exceptions on a case-by-case basis, on a time-limited or longer duration	<b>a)</b> Virtual second language training <b>b)</b> There is no physical space for the employee at their designated work site (temporary exception and subject to regular review)		
	<b>c)</b> For compassionate/urgent/emergency circumstances, a temporary exception up to 60 calendar days	L4 managers	
	<b>d)</b> Employees hired to work remotely between March 16, 2020, and December 16, 2022	L1/ADM	

	<p>e) For military spouses when their Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) spouse or common-law partner is posted within Canada in a different location from their designated work site, or other unique temporary circumstances</p>		<p>to the policy requirements for onsite presence and are expected to maintain compliance with the policy until a decision has been communicated to them</p>
	<p>f) All other requests. Exceptions that are for exceptions on a case-by-case basis, on a time-limited or longer duration</p>		

- Email the signed Application for Exception form to the CCC at [Exceptionalcases-RTW-Casexceptionnels-PLT@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Exceptionalcases-RTW-Casexceptionnels-PLT@forces.gc.ca) for tracking and reporting, regardless of whether the exception was approved or denied

### Information technology exception

The Common Hybrid Work Model and associated directive also applied to exempted Information Technology (IT) personnel. Personnel in IT-01 to IT-04 nonsupervisory positions performing work in one of the following work streams **were** eligible for exception:

1. **IT Software Solutions:** application configuration and development using modern DevOps or DevSecOps, quality assurance and control, release management, database administration, accessibility testing, and design, legacy systems, and critical business applications work
2. **IT Security:** cyber security and security architecture, where roles can be performed remotely as determined by DND and security requirements
3. **IT Cloud Solutions:** cloud architecture, cloud support, and cloud specialists

These exceptions were **rescinded**, with transition back to the workplace three days per week to be fully implemented by September 9, 2025. Compliance for these groups of IT professionals will be gradually implemented using the following phased approach: two days per week on January 6, 2025, and the final third day per week no later than September 9, 2025. This transition phase will apply to current IT staff that have exceptions as well as new staff that fall within one of the above-noted workstreams. Managers/supervisors are required to work with their affected IT personnel to respect the phased implementation approach, where operational requirements allow, by updating work agreements accordingly. This approach will ensure DND remains an employer of choice for digital talents while aligning with the remaining of the public service.

### International telework

International telework is a voluntary and employee-driven **request** to telework **outside of Canada** at a location other than the employee's normal designated workplace. Working outside of Canada has security, IT, and human resources implications. The Directive on International Telework provides parameters within which international telework may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Requests to telework internationally are only granted in very limited and prescribed circumstances where the request is:

- In line with Canada's Defence Policy to support military family members, when a DND public service military spouse or common law partner accompanies a CAF member on an OUTCAN, including UN, NATO or EU postings.
- In support of OUTCAN postings when a DND public service spouse or common law partner accompanies a DND public service employee appointed to work in a DND OUTCAN role, including UN, NATO or EU.
- In support of situations when a DND public service employee accompanies a spouse or common-law partner who is a federal public servant and, as part of their official Government of Canada position, is posted to work abroad for work purposes. For example, Global Affairs Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RCMP.

In addition to the prescribed circumstances, the following requirements must be met:

- The requestor must be an "indeterminate employee" having completed their probationary period, as defined by the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA), and the TBS Directive on Terms and Conditions of Employment.
- An exception to this requirement can be granted in the case of a term or a public service military spouse, whereas the completion of the probationary period may not be required.

An employee seeking approval for international telework must meet the requirements of the duties of the position to which they will be assigned **and** their duties must be conducive to work in a remote environment. Approval for international telework agreements must be for a defined period and reviewed annually at minimum.

#### Approval authorities

International telework requests may be considered in **very limited and prescribed circumstances** and requires the following approvals:

- L1 endorsement approval via the Application for International Telework form
- DIM SECUR – DWAN ISSO
- Director General Defence Security (DGDS) – Travel and Contact Security Program

The final approval authority rests with ADM(HR-Civ).

For questions related to international telework requests please e-mail [Exceptionalcases-RTW-Casexceptionnels-PLT@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Exceptionalcases-RTW-Casexceptionnels-PLT@forces.gc.ca).

#### Optimizing hybrid work

The TBS [Guidance on optimizing a hybrid workforce – Canada.ca](#) contains overarching principles, steps to follow, and key considerations for organizations, managers, and employees when implementing a hybrid approach to work. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Organizations are encouraged to experiment and iterate as they optimize telework and on-site work to foster a diverse, inclusive, and productive workforce that will continue to deliver results for Canadians.

The following best practices are recommended for managers looking to [optimize hybrid and remote work](#) (accessible only on the DND network) in their teams:

- **Define and communicate expectations** - Clearly define roles and responsibilities, project goals, and deadlines. This helps team members understand their individual and collective objectives, leading to better virtual collaboration and productivity. [Team Charter Guidelines](#), [The Hybrid Work Model: Preparing to Work at a Government of Canada Office](#).
- **Clear and open communication** - Establish regular and transparent communication channels to ensure coherence and common purpose. This can include team meetings, one-on-one check-ins, and virtual collaboration tools. [User Guide to Me](#).
- **Foster a sense of community** - Encourage team members to get to know each other through virtual and in-person team-building activities, informal chats, and recognition of personal and professional achievements. [Resilience at Work – Building a Strong and Healthy Team](#).
- **Provide the necessary tools and resources** - Equip your team with the necessary tools and resources to work effectively in a virtual environment, such as project management software, video conferencing tools, and collaboration platforms. [Thrive Series: Team Toolkit](#).
- **Encourage flexibility and adaptability** - Recognize that hybrid work can present unique challenges, such as balancing work and personal life, different time zones and ergonomics issues. [Best Practices for Managers](#).
- **Promote a culture of trust and accountability** - Foster a work environment where team members feel trusted to do their jobs and are held accountable for their responsibilities. This can help increase team member autonomy and job satisfaction. [Civility and Respect at Work: Do's and Don'ts in Remote Work](#).
- **Offer training and development opportunities** - Provide virtual training and development opportunities to help team members grow professionally and stay up to date with industry trends and best practices. [CSPS Hybrid Workplace Series](#), [Toolkit for Virtual and Hybrid Teams](#).
- **Regular feedback and check-ins** - Schedule regular check-ins and provide constructive feedback to help team members improve their performance and address any issues or concerns. [Mental Health Job Aid for Managers](#).



## Direction to supervisors in a DND/ CAF shared work environment

In response to the [CDS direction](#) mandating work in office for Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel, Assistant Deputy Ministers are instituting common guidelines to assist managers in implementing this policy effectively as we have combined teams made up of public servant and CAF personnel. These guidelines are to be implemented as soon as practicable and fully solidified by September 9, 2024.

### 1. **Default work arrangement**

- The default expectation for CAF members is to work from a DND/CAF established workspace 5 days a week. This approach ensures we maintain high levels of productivity, creativity, and collective effectiveness.

### 2. **Team-based hybrid work**

- CAF personnel who are part of a team working on a hybrid schedule may follow the same hybrid arrangement as their public servant teammates.

Requests for CAF members to work on a hybrid schedule will be addressed at the Commanding Officer or Director level but may be delegated to Section Heads. Requests for exceptions to hybrid schedule for public service employees will continue to follow the established procedures. Leaders are encouraged to assess individual needs and operational requirements, allowing for remote or hybrid work, when necessary, without compromising mission objectives.

Please ensure these expectations are communicated clearly to your teams and that necessary plans are developed and implemented promptly. Your cooperation and leadership are crucial in maintaining our operational readiness and achieving our strategic goals.

## Digital

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## Introduction

The Digital Services Group (DSG) is leading the “Digital” component of the implementation of the Common Hybrid Work Model and the Return to Office (RTO) directive. To enable the Common Hybrid Work Model and the RTO, DSG is carrying out various digital initiatives to create a more adaptable, cooperative, and safe work environment for the Defence Team.

## IT equipment

To facilitate a flexible workforce, DSG is shifting from stationary workstations at each desk to personal mobile devices, such as laptops and mobile phones, while providing shared workspace with suitable peripherals to improve the work quality and efficiency, including dual monitors, and user-friendly docking stations for other peripherals. This approach resembles the military “One Person, One Kit” approach. While this may not be suitable for every unit and individual, it enhances the flexibility of the Defence Team to fully leverage our campuses and installations. To address accessibility issues and other situations, a limited number of fixed WorkPoint computers will remain and be clearly identified for shared use, as required. Additional peripherals for remote use maybe requested through Service Management Centre, subject to individual circumstances.

In the NCR, DSG team is working in close collaboration and in a consolidated effort with L1s accommodation to provide/replace IT assets in office spaces to address the hybrid posture and continuously modernize our digital tools and infrastructure.

If you have any issue with IT equipment in a workspace, please contact the service desk or leverage the [online IT service portal](#) (accessible only on the DND network).

For any other IT equipment needs, all L1s can communicate their priorities through their local Service Management Center and L1 IT representatives, who will work with DSG business requirement management team ([+DBRM@CIOG DBRM@Ottawa-Hull](mailto:+DBRM@CIOG DBRM@Ottawa-Hull)) to ensure your most pressing needs are attended to.

## Hybrid collaboration technology and boardroom enhancements

The DSG team and local IT services are continuously enhancing collaborative spaces and boardrooms with smart audio-visual bars and D365-enabled video-conferencing systems. Most rooms have already been upgraded in support of RTO and hybrid work. Users are reminded to please read printed instructions in these collaboration spaces and to never tamper with the installations to avoid issues for others. [Report any issues to your service desk](#) (accessible only on the DND network) with applicable details.

## Streamlined IT onboarding and device allocation

Service Management Centres (SMC), such as DIMEUS in the National Capital Region (NCR), continuously improve IT onboarding and device allocation processes to improve productivity for new staff and user experience during postings and job transitions. In order to provide Defence Team members with DWAN and D365 accounts, laptops, PKI cards and other required digital items in a timely manner, leaders and managers are encouraged to submit [associated service requests](#) (accessible only on the DND network) as soon as they receive confirmation of new staff (public service employees, contractors, and military members) joining their organization. In the NCR, DIMEUS will contact new employees to schedule appointments at one of the four IT kiosks spread across the region to provide simplified onboarding services.

### **Defence Digital Workplace Modernization (DDWM) Initiative**

As part of a strategic vision for a modern digital workplace, the Defence Digital Workplace Modernization (DDWM) initiative will continue to transition innovative user-centric solutions to ensure an accessible, collaborative, and productive work environment. These initiatives include a commitment toward enhanced mobility through portable IT and wireless, enhanced hybrid experience, leveraging D365/Teams, modern video teleconference rooms and workplace reservation applications, and solutions for classified environments. Most of these solutions are either available today or in pilot phase and will be scaled up over the Fall 2024 to meet L1s needs.

### **Advancing productivity with Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

The potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to revolutionize workplace efficiency is immense. As part of the DDWM initiative, the DSG is enabling the integration of AI tools, such as M365 Copilot, into the daily routines of staff. This initiative is not just about automating tasks but also enhancing creativity and decision-making processes within the D365 environment. The approach includes not only the implementation of Generative AI tools but also commencing exploration later this fall into how these capabilities can be expanded in the near future and refined to better serve the needs of the DND/CAF and its diverse functions.

### **Ongoing user engagement and feedback**

The DSG and its local partners work to continuously improve digital solutions that can better meet the different needs of DND/CAF users and enhance operational effectiveness. The Defence Team engagement and feedback is important to us. For any questions, suggestions or unique requirements, please contact your respective IT service delivery organisations, such as SMCs, or IT representative working with our business requirement management team ([+DBRM@CIOG](mailto:+DBRM@CIOG) [DBRM@Ottawa-Hull](mailto:DBRM@Ottawa-Hull)).

# Workplace

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## Introduction

ADM(IE) is leading the “Workplace” component of the implementation of the Common Hybrid Work Model and the Return to Office (RTO) directive. The following section will provide information on office space, how it is managed and assigned, as well as best practices when working from an office environment. The application of these best practices will contribute to a respectful, inclusive, and collaborative workplace now and in the future.

It is important to note that the DND office portfolio varies across the country. The core principles can be applied to all office space within the DND inventory, although challenges may be different for each site due to the varied furniture, infrastructure, multi-use space, as well as functional operations, to name a few.

At the aggregate level, DND currently has sufficient office space to comfortably accommodate all Defence Team (DT) members in office, even with an increased number of in-office days. However, it is expected that some units and teams may face workspace challenges.

While we are still navigating if changes to the workplace design is necessary to match the mix of full-time in-office and hybrid work model, the immediate and short-term objective is to maximize the use of current office layout, while possibly making adjustments if and where needed over time.

## Space allocation

At this time, L1s will continue to accommodate Defence Team members within their current space allocation (footprint). Although there is variability across L1s due to organizational changes, the allocated L0 footprint demonstrates sufficient space to meet operational requirements globally for DND. L1s will continue to be responsible for the dictation and management of how their spaces are used. Where there are specific L1 requirements, they will engage ADM(IE).

Defence Team members should follow L1 guidance on specific details of space allocation.

## Neighbourhoods/Work zones

Some L1 allocations may be separated by neighbourhoods or work zones as defined by the L1 or L2. These neighbourhoods can create a sense of belonging and comfort as part of the RTO.

## Enclosed offices

Enclosed offices are generally not assigned to public service employees. Based on the L1 allocated footprint, the direction on assigned enclosed offices will be at the discretion of the responsible L1. As part of DND’s long term plan for office space, assignment of enclosed offices may be reevaluated.

## Space booking tool

At this time, DND does not have a corporate tool available for booking space. Digital Services Group is supporting ADM(IE) in deploying a booking app, which will be piloted with ADM(Mat) in one location in the NCR; however, this solution will not be more widely available in September 2024.

## DND Coworking

The [DND coworking site](#) (accessible only on the DND network) is meant to be used on an ad hoc, as-needed basis to facilitate on-site work, and therefore cannot be used as a work location in an employee's work agreement. Exceptional and authorized use is at the manager's discretion. **Ad-hoc means on-occasion.**

Examples of appropriate use of a DND coworking site include using the space for the balance of a workday when at NDHQ (Pearkes) or in the downtown core:

1. to participate in meetings;
2. to collaborate with personnel working at NDHQ(Pearkes);
3. to use services only available at NDHQ(Pearkes); or
4. for work-related networking and appointment purposes.

It is important to note that participation of coworking is up to the responsible L1. Employees must [register](#) (accessible only on the DND network) and seek their L3 approval as part of the onboarding process.

- DND Coworking: NDHQ (Pearkes) - 101 Colonel-By Drive (12th Floor, South Tower)
  - Features 75 working stations.
  - Located in Ottawa's downtown core.
  - Equipped with basic IT equipment and furniture and can be booked through the space booking tool or system.
  - Can be used individually or with a team.

It is important to note that B10E, 2nd floor, at the Carling Campus (60 Moodie Drive, Ottawa) is not a DND Coworking site and has been assigned to specific L1s.

## The workplace environment

Although DND has not yet implemented a requirement to fully move to an unassigned workplace environment, it can be expected that DND will shift towards an unassigned and depersonalized model over the coming years as part of our future workplace. The objective of this change supports a transition to a modern workplace that attracts, retains, and enables our office-based Defence Team to work smarter, greener, and healthier to better serve Canadians.

In order to encourage flexibility, collaboration, and balance, an unassigned environment rethinks the office environment from an individual assigned "me" space to a shared "we" space.

Some of the benefits of an unassigned office environment include:

- Fair, equal access, and choice of workstation.
- Flexibility to accommodate a diverse group of users, tasks, and activities.
- Equipped with universal, modern technology to support new ways of working.
- Encourages collaboration with various teams and colleagues.
- Optimizes space utilization and supports a dynamic, hybrid workforce.

## Workstations

Whether an L1's allocated space is assigned or unassigned, workstations (cubicles) should include standard items such as a docking station, monitor(s), and an ergonomic desk chair. The workstation should be left clean at the end of the workday.

Employees are expected to transport their DND issued devices including, but not limited to, laptops, cell phones, and other portable equipment required to perform their work. When not in use, these items should be locked in the personal storage unit (locker) or securely locked to the workstation using the cable lock provided with the laptop.

#### Clean desk policy

Clean desk policies are central to office security and cleanliness. At the day's end, it is imperative that desks are kept clear of sensitive materials, personal belongings, papers, and files. A best practice of a clean desk policy includes wiping down the workstation when leaving for the day (clean in, clean out).

#### Ergonomic equipment and duty to accommodate

Should an employee have an ergonomic requirement that is not accommodated within the standard workstation in their L1 allocated space, they should speak to their manager. If an employee has portable ergonomic equipment such as a mouse, keyboard, web camera, headsets, etc. employees may be expected to transport these as necessary.

Employees should proactively discuss with managers any barriers they may encounter in the workplace, including those linked to accessibility. Please refer to the HR section of this guide for more information.

#### Personal storage units/lockers

Where lockers and personal storage units are available, these allow DT members to store their personal belongings and equipment when not in use and avoid cluttering or personalizing the workstations. Notably, personal storage also enhances the security and privacy of Defence Team members' personal items. In most traditional work environments (cubicle-style workstations), personal storage units are located within the workstation.

Each L1 should have rules and procedures for using personal storage, such as:

- The allocation and assignment of personal storage units.
- The process for clearing and cleaning personal storage units.
- The process for resolving conflicts or disputes.
- The consideration of day-use storage for Defence Team members who may not want/need an assigned storage space.

As a reminder, lockers and personal storage solutions are not intended to store or file documentation of any classification level. For more details on [information management \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#), please see [IT security policies & standards \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#).

#### Noise

It is inevitable that when more people are in the workplace, the noise level will increase. The following best practices will help ensure a positive and productive work environment.

- Be aware of own volume.
- Use headphones when using a computer's audio for Teams calls, videos or other "noisy" activities.
- Noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs are an option to filter out ambient noise.
- Keep computer volumes low or turned off.
- Hold two-person meetings in a collaborative or enclosed area if one is available.



- Move impromptu meetings, small gatherings and casual conversations to a meeting room, the kitchenette, a hallway, or some other area away from workstations.
- Avoid taking phone calls at workstations and instead use small meeting rooms, phone booths or collaborative areas.
- For collaborative work, choose an area or workstation within an interactive area as to avoid disrupting neighbours.
- Remind Defence Team members of best practices – it is acceptable to politely remind others to lower their voices or move discussions to a collaborative area.

### Scents/odours

Many people have sensitivities to scents. It is important to follow existing policies on scent-free environments:

- Scented products: avoid using perfumes and colognes in the workplace. Additionally, avoid the use of scented sprays (air fresheners, hairsprays etc.). Personal hygiene routines should be performed in private, outside the workplace.
- Be mindful of odours: keep shoes on and store gym bags/clothes in personal lockers and away from where others are working.
- Be mindful when bringing odorous foods and snacks.

### Unassigned workplace

What is an “unassigned workplace?”

In general terms, an unassigned workplace means the workstations (cubicles) are being used in a shared place of work, without personalization or identification to a single individual. The workstation can be a traditional cubicle-style work surface, a flat surface without side walls or enclosure or simply a touch-down surface to work from.

### Best practices: Unassigned workplace

Working in an unassigned environment is an exciting opportunity to experience new ways of working, being able to benefit from the flexibility that it offers. Here are some best practices when navigating an unassigned work environment:

- Choose a workstation that accommodates the type of task/activity being performed that day.
- Choose an area that suits the level of interaction or concentration required for the day.
- Do not remove equipment such as cables, docking stations, chairs, etc.
- Defence Team members are strongly encouraged to fully embrace an unassigned experience by sitting at different workstations and areas.
- If an employee is spending most of the day away from their chosen workstation, they should consider bringing their items with them (or storing them in a locker), allowing for another team member to use the workstation while they are away.

### Common use shared spaces

#### Boardrooms/meeting rooms/quiet rooms

The process for booking these rooms remains unchanged. Defence Team members should use the Outlook calendar to book boardrooms according to the size required. Booking of boardrooms should be based on requirement, with limited reoccurrences and for appropriate hours of operations. Should the booking no longer be required, it is understood that the room will be cancelled from the system.

For more information, please consult:

- [Microsoft Teams Meetings using DND/CAF Video Conference Equipment User Guide \(sharepoint.com\) \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#)
- [Conference room bookings for the NCR \(SSS\) \(mil.ca\) \(accessible only on the DND network\)](#)

Collaboration spaces/phone booths/etc.

These multi-use spaces are shared spaces which can be used by Defence Team members throughout the workday. It is important to keep these flexible areas clean and organized.

Best practices: shared spaces

Clean in, clean out is a great reminder when using shared space:

- The organizer of the meeting or an individual who attended the meeting must take the responsibility of ensuring the space is left clean.
- Remove all garbage and dispose items in the appropriate stations.
- If there are food and drinks being consumed in these rooms/areas, individuals are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- It is best to also wipe down commonly touched surfaces to have the room clean for the next meeting or group.
  - Meeting rooms and other collaborative areas are not meant to substitute the kitchenette and lounge areas.