

# Working Remotely

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## **1. About Remote Work**

### ***Introduction***

Remote working, also known as ‘telecommuting’, or ‘working from home’ is a work arrangement that allows employees to perform their usual job duties at an alternative location instead of going into the office. It is becoming more common for people to do at least some of their work remotely.

According to a survey of British Columbians conducted in May 2020:

- 30% of people in BC work remotely
- 60% of workers realize their job is doable outside the office
- 53% of employees would prefer to work remotely much more often

Technology has made it possible for remote workers to be connected to the office by telephone, computer, and internet. Statistics Canada estimates that 39% of Canadian workers hold jobs that can potentially be carried out from home. People with advanced education are more likely to work remotely. Almost 6 in 10 workers with a bachelor’s degree or higher education (59%) can work from home, compared with only 10% of workers with no high school diploma.

## Working Remotely

### *A guide for newcomers to British Columbia*

Employees can work on a full- or part-time basis from a remote worksite, including their home, a shared workspace or an alternate work location approved by the employer.

A recent study by Brookfield Institute reveals that more than 70% of Canadian firms in professional, scientific, and technical services, finance and insurance, and information and cultural industries consider remote work a possibility in the near future.

Larger firms have a greater ability for employees to work from home, with 60% of firms with 100+ employees stating that working from home is a possibility.

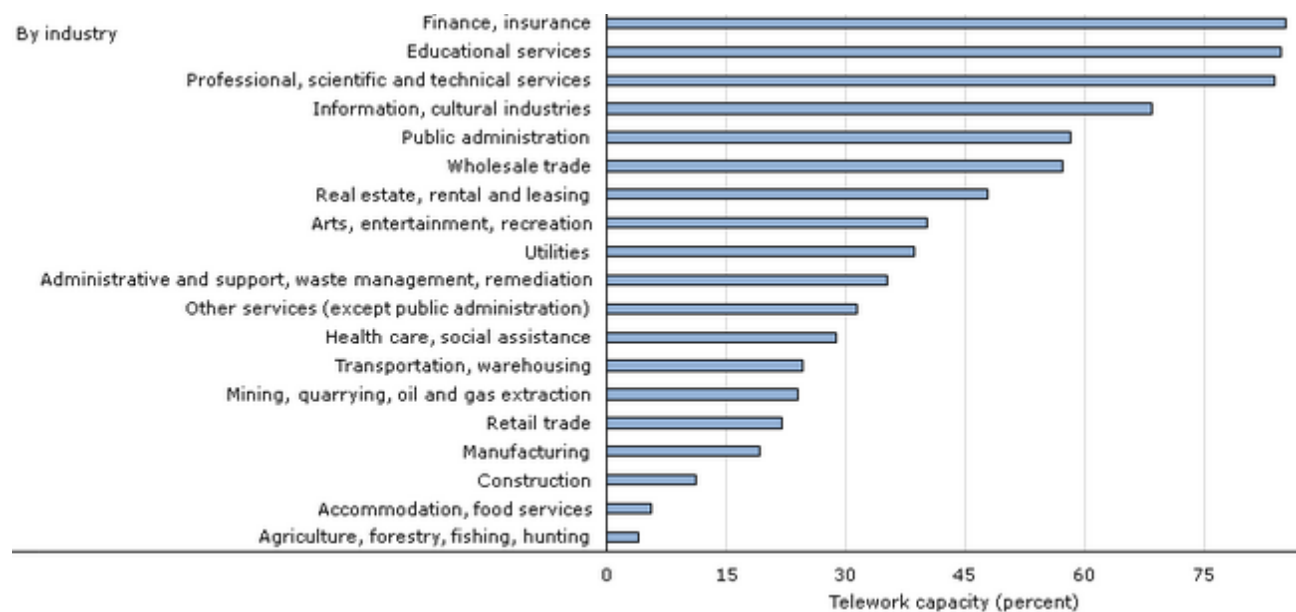
More information about Remote Work:

- **Remote Work in Canada. Brookfield Institute**  
<https://brookfieldinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/Remote-Work-in-Canada.pdf>
- **Working from Home in Canada: What Have we learned so far? Statistics Canada**  
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021010/article/00001-eng.htm>
- **Remote Work in Canada: Statistics and Facts. Statista**  
<https://www.statista.com/topics/7816/remote-work-in-canada/>
- **Returning to the Office: The Current, Preferred and Future State of Remote Work. Gallup**  
<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/397751/returning-office-current-preferred-future-state-remote-work.aspx>
- **Remote and Flexible Work Toolkit for Employers, City of Vancouver**  
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/remote-work-toolkit.pdf>

## 2. Top Industries & Occupations for Remote Work

The ability to work remotely varies across industries. Many jobs in finance and insurance, or in professional, scientific and technical services can potentially be performed from home. In contrast, less than 1 in 10 workers in accommodation and food services can do so.

### Remote Work Capacity, by Industry (% of Workers)



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2019 and O\*Net.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00026-eng.htm>

Remote work is now common in many occupations, especially ones that are office-based.

### Top occupations for remote work include:

- Computer & IT – software developers, data analyst, cybersecurity,
- Digital Marketing & Social Media Managers
- Accounting & Finance – accountant, bookkeeper
- Customer Service – call centre representatives, help-desk/IT support
- Administrative Assistant
- Education – tutoring, education consultants

- Project Managers
- HR & Recruiting – experts in workplace diversity
- Non-profit – grant writer, community outreach, data analysis
- Translation & bilingual job roles

More information:

- **Top 10 Remote Jobs Trending in 2022. Randstad.ca**  
<https://www.randstad.ca/best-jobs/best-remote-jobs-2022/>
- **Running the economy remotely: Potential for working from home during and after COVID-19. Statistics Canada**  
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00026-eng.htm>
- **Remote Work Statistics and Trends. FlexJobs**  
<https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/remote-work-statistics/>
- **Enterprises that offer employees the option to telework by industry and size of enterprise. Statistics Canada**  
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=2210012701#tables>

### **3. Finding Employment**

Working remotely gives you the opportunity to work with employers in your local community or further abroad. You can find remote job opportunities through a number of job posting websites.

#### **Job Sites focused on Remote Work:**

- **We Work Remotely**  
<https://weworkremotely.com/>
- **FlexJobs**  
<https://www.flexjobs.com/>
- **NoDesk**  
<https://nodesk.co/remote-jobs/canada/>
- **Remote.co**  
<https://remote.co/>

- **Remoters**  
<https://remoters.net/jobs/companies/canada/>
- **DynamiteJobs**  
<https://dynamitejobs.com/>
- **Remotive**  
<https://remotive.com/>
- **Hubstaff Talent**  
<https://talent.hubstaff.com/>
- **SkipTheDrive**  
<https://www.skipthedrive.com/>
- **JobSpresso**  
<https://jobspresso.co/>
- **Working Nomads**  
<https://www.workingnomads.com/jobs>
- **Himalayas**  
<https://himalayas.app/>
- **Remote4Me**  
<https://remote4me.com/>

### **Other Job Posting Sites:**

Regular job sites also include many opportunities for remote work. Filter your search using keywords such as “remote”, “work from home,” “telecommute,” “telework”, or “virtual job.”

Job posting sites to try:

- **Indeed.ca**  
<https://ca.indeed.com/>
- **WorkBC Job Board**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Find-Jobs/Jobs.aspx#/job-search>

## **Social Media:**

Social media platforms including Facebook groups, Twitter and LinkedIn provide networking opportunities with other remote workers as well as leads to remote job postings. Some social media sites to try:

**Facebook groups** and similar networking sites:

- **Digital Nomads**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/DigitalNomadJobs/about/>
- **Remote Jobs Work Anywhere. Inventive Hub**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/inventivehub/>
- **Remote Tech Jobs**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/remotestartupjobs/>
- **Remote Work & Jobs for Digital Nomads**  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/remotework.digitalnomads/?ref=group\\_header](https://www.facebook.com/groups/remotework.digitalnomads/?ref=group_header)
- **Pangian Community**  
<https://chat.pangian.com/>

**Twitter Accounts:**

- **Jobspresso**  
@jobspresso
- **We Work Remotely**  
@weworkremotely
- **FlexJobs**  
@flexjobs
- **WFH.io**  
@wfh.io

**LinkedIn Jobs:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/jobs>

- Filter job search by “remote.” LinkedIn jobs links your application to your LinkedIn profile.

## 4. Employment Arrangements

Most people working in British Columbia, even those working remotely, are governed by the ***Employment Standards Act of British Columbia***. This law sets the standards for working conditions and minimum wages for most workplaces in the Province.

More information:

- **Employment Standards**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards>

A remote work policy outlines what's expected when working remotely. Your employer should provide guidance on all aspects of remote work including expectations of working hours, location of work, methods of communication, legal rights, and IT security protocols. Ideally, the employer and employee create a written agreement that outlines the expectations of both parties.

### ***Work Schedule***

- A remote work agreement should specify your required working hours. This could be a precise schedule (ie: 9 to 5, Monday to Friday). Alternatively, your schedule may be more flexible, allowing you to work whenever you choose, as long as your weekly hours total a specified number.
- Remote workers have the same legal rights as other employees. In most cases, if you are expected to work more than 40 hours per week you are qualified for overtime pay.

### ***Workspace & Equipment***

- Your employment arrangement may specify where you are permitted to work and what equipment is required. In some cases, you may be allowed to work from anywhere, including your home, a coffee shop, or other remote location.



- However, most employers establish limitations on where you can work. For example, your employer may require that you have a private work space away from others to ensure confidentiality and limit distractions.
- A laptop and a Wi-Fi connection are generally essential for working remotely. Additional technology to help you engage with your employer and team members may also be required.
- You and your employer should have an agreement on who provides equipment (computer, chairs, desk, office supplies, etc) and utilities (home or cell phone, Internet, hydro, etc)

### ***Communication Guidelines***

The ability to communicate with your employer and members of your team are essential when working remotely. Some considerations include:

- What technology is required for you to work remotely? Will your employer provide collaboration tools and software in order to communicate with managers, teammates and clients?
- Will you be set up with video conferencing software and hardware in order to attend virtual meetings and brainstorming sessions?
- What are response time expectations? (For example, some employers expect teammates to answer instant messages within three hours and reply to emails within one day.)

### ***IT Security Protocols***

- Cybersecurity is a major concern in virtual offices. Your employer will likely require you to follow IT security protocols to ensure that all organization, client, and employee data remain secure.

Additional information:

- **How to Create a Remote, Flexible or Hybrid Work Policy. Owl Labs**  
<https://resources.owlabs.com/blog/remote-work-policy>
- **14 Best Work From Home Policies in 2022. Teambuilding.com**  
<https://teambuilding.com/blog/work-from-home-policy>

- **Remote and Flexible Toolkit for Employers. City of Vancouver**  
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/remote-work-toolkit.pdf>  
A sample Remote Work Agreement and Policy can be found on pages 9+ of the Toolkit
- **The Ultimate Guide to Working from Home. Investopedia**  
<https://www.investopedia.com/personal-finance/work-from-home-guide/>

## 5. Health & Safety Considerations

In BC, employers are legally obligated to ensure the health and safety of any workplace where their employees work, including home offices and other remote workspaces

At a minimum, employers are expected to make sure remote workspaces are safe and ergonomically sound. Many employers also have safety policies and checklists to ensure that remote workspaces are compliant with their workplace health and safety obligations.

When you are working remotely, it is important to follow health and safety guidelines. This includes setting up your workspace in an ergonomically correct way to avoid the risk of injury, being mindful of the importance of taking regular breaks while working at home and complying with your employer's health and safety policy even when working offsite. Your employer should also make sure that you know what to do if you are injured while working at home.

More information:

- **Telework / Remote Work / Working From Home. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety**  
<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/telework.html>

- **Four Potential Risks with Remote Working Arrangements. Small Business BC**  
<https://smallbusinessbc.ca/article/four-potential-risks-with-remote-working-arrangements>
- **Setting Up, Organizing and Working Comfortably in your Home Workspace. WorkSafeBC**  
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/setting-up-home-workspace?lang=en>
- **Working From Home: A Guide to Keeping your Workers Healthy & Safe. WorkSafeBC**  
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/working-from-home-guide-keeping-workers-healthy-safe>

## 6. Income Tax

If you work remotely in Canada, you pay taxes in Canada. Tax obligations in Canada are based on place of residence, not citizenship, immigration status, or employer. Canadian citizens, foreign workers, and visa holders who work in Canada must pay income taxes in Canada, whether you're employed by a local or global company. Taxation can be complicated and there are a number of factors to be aware of:

*Location of employment:*

- As a remote worker, your employer will deduct taxes for you in the province or country where *they* are located, not necessarily where you live. For example, if you live in Vancouver and are working for an Ontario company, your employer will tax you at the Ontario rate. Remote workers employed by an international business may likewise be taxed according to the rules of the country in which the company is located.
- As a Canadian resident working for an international company, you're taxed on your worldwide income, no matter where the income is earned. This applies to both contract/freelance work and full-time employment.

*Province of Residence:*

- While your employer will tax according to the rules of *their* location, you are required to pay provincial taxes where you reside. If there is a difference between what your employer has deducted and what you owe, this will be reconciled with the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) when you file for taxes. This could mean either a bill or a refund depending on the tax rates of you and your employer's home province.

*Freelance/Contract Work:*

- If you are hired as a contractor, you are considered self-employed. This means you are responsible for filing your own taxes.

As an employee or freelancer you may be able to claim certain home office expenses (work-space-in-the-home expenses, office supplies, and certain phone expenses). These deductions can reduce the amount of income you pay tax on.

- **Home Office Expenses for Employees. Canada Revenue Agency**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/deductions-credits-expenses/line-22900-other-employment-expenses/work-space-home-expenses.html>
- **Business Us of Home Expenses (for Self-Employed)**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/technical-information/income-tax/income-tax-folios-index/series-4-businesses/series-4-businesses-folio-2-deducting-business-expenses/income-tax-folio-s4-f2-c2-business-use-home-expenses.html>

More information:

- **Working Remotely Taxes. Canadian Payroll Services**  
<https://canadianpayrollservices.com/working-remotely-taxes/>
- **5 Tax Rules to Know about Working Remotely. TurboTax**  
<https://turbotax.intuit.ca/tips/5-tax-rules-to-know-about-working-remotely-14744>
- **Some Tax Implications to Keep in Mind for People Working Remotely in Canada. Talent.com**  
<https://ca.talent.com/advice/article/some-tax-implications-to-keep-in-mind-for-people-working-remotely-in-canada>

## 7. Additional Resources

Still looking for more information? Try looking at the following resources:

- **The Everything Guide to Remote Work:** the Ultimate Resource for Remote Employees, Hybrid Workers, and Digital Nomads, Jill Duffy, 2022  
VPL Central Branch, 658.3123 D85e
- **Working from Home:** Making the New Normal Work for You, Karen Mangia, 2020  
VPL Central Branch, 658.3123 M27w
- **Work from Home Zone:** Helping Entrepreneurs and Employees Integrate Work and Life, Angela Crocker, 2021  
VPL Central Branch, 658.3123 C93w
- **The Shift to Remote Work. Future Skills Centre**  
<https://fsc-ccf.ca/research/the-shift-to-remote-work/>
- **Remote Work. ALIS Alberta**  
<https://alis.alberta.ca/plan-your-career/workplace-trends/remote-work/>
- **Job Search Articles. FlexJobs**  
<https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/>

**Questions? Please ask the Information Staff, Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.**

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/sic/> .