Remote Onboarding

[Talent, Public Service Commission]

When should I start a new employee?

Our day-to-day is changing. It is okay to pause and reflect to determine when and how a new employee can contribute to the Government of Saskatchewan. Some questions to consider include:

- Is the position required at this time?
- Given the nature of the job duties, is it practical to have the employee work remotely (if applicable)?
- Do you feel you can effectively onboard this employee and have them fulfill the needs of the role, both short-term and long-term?

Contact your HR Business Partner if you would like to discuss further or require assistance in changing or cancelling the start date.

If you have decided to proceed, please have the commencement date effective the first date of the pay period to ensure time for administration processing, timecard entry, and on-time payment. If an in-scope employee's commencement date is effective in the middle of a pay period, we do not guarantee that individuals will be paid on-time in accordance with the Saskatchewan Employment Act.

Remote Onboarding

Working from home is new for many of us. Hiring a new employee and having them work from home may seem like unusual territory. However, many of the good practices you use on a regular basis to orientate and onboard employees can be applied to employees working remotely too.

In addition to following the steps in the *Manager's Guide to Orientation for New Employees,* outlined below are some additional considerations for onboarding remote employees.

What are some tips that can assist me in being successful at onboarding employees remotely?

- Refer to the *Working from Home: Considerations for Managers* guide to help employees understand where, when, what and how they will perform their work.
- Become familiarized with the technology available to communicate with your employees. Remember, this will be your main source of communication while your employee is working remotely.
- Think of ways to focus on the onboarding activities most important for your new employee. Consider if the work can or cannot be done in a remote environment.
- Ensure you introduce your new employees to all members of your team. Consider asking your new employee for a picture to include in your welcome e-mail and schedule a virtual meeting to introduce them to the team.
- Encourage team members to schedule one-on-one meetings (video conference or phone calls) to make them feel welcomed while preventing isolation. Take advantage of video-chats and instant messages.
- Be highly organized. Use a shared document that contains all necessary links, onboarding plan, tasks and timelines for projects that need to be completed during onboarding phase.
- Be flexible and remain open to make adjustments with regularity. Collect feedback from your new employee often and improve/adjust your onboarding plan as necessary.

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How do I help with a new employee with their forms?

Information on the online commencement process and the required forms are available on Taskroom. Please email the Human Resource Service Centre at hrsc@gov.sk.ca or call 1-877-852-5808 (outside of Regina) or 306-798-0000 (within Regina) if you or your employee have any questions.

Additional considerations:

- A temporary process has been implemented for the Oath of Office to be part of the online commencement process. New employees will be contacted by the HR Service Centre in the future to request the original physical form for Oath of Office to be signed by the employee and the Commissioner of Oaths then returned to the HR Service Centre.
- Benefits forms requiring witness will have interim process information provided ASAP (currently, reach out to the HRSC for questions)
- Photo ID can be requested via email, if needed.
- Don't forget to get the new employee building access or onto your ministry's parking waitlist, as applicable.
- Ensure you have their correct address and contact information in case there are other items you may need to mail or courier to them.
- Additional information on how to make arrangements for a new employee to start can be found on Taskroom.

How do I request IT services?

Resources for requesting IT services for new employees can be found on Taskroom.

Additional considerations:

- Submit a *Service Now* request for hardware, software, network and file access, and any common mailbox access as soon as the start date for the new employee is established (preferably a minimum of two weeks before the start date for standard equipment).
  - ➢ If there is a laptop shortage, ITD will contact the service requestor to arrange for a desktop computer to be delivered. A patch cable and VPN will need to be requested if a desktop computer is deployed.
  - ➢ ITD Deployment Team will work with the manager and employee to decide the most effective way to transfer this hardware. It will either be from an ITD pickup location, or the ministry office.
- Prior to start date, confirm with the employee that they have received all necessary equipment.
- Ensure the new employee has their log-in information and understands the communication tools (Outlook web access, remote access, Skype, IBC phone system web app, etc.).
  - ➢ IT Tools and Resources
  - ➢ Telecommunications
  - ➢ Working From Home Guide
  - ➢ Password Manager Profile Setup
  - ➢ How to Reset/Unlock Your Password
- Ensure the employee understands how the virtual meeting space works (e.g. Skype, WebEx, etc.).
- For questions about IT services or troubleshooting, contact ITD at 306-787-5000.

How do I train a new employee remotely?

A New Employee Learning Path and additional resources are available on Learn. Ensure employees complete all mandatory training, as well as the *IT Acceptable Usage module* and *Security Awareness* module.

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Additional considerations:
- As part of the employee's work plan, create a training plan to cover the necessary topics and processes the employee will perform.
- Provide any training materials to your employee to review before a topic is covered.
- Take time to review any relevant material yourself to ensure you can answer any questions the new employee may have.
- Schedule blocks of time to cover material and break up the training into chunks.
- If possible, assign a buddy or different members of the team to provide different portions of the training or answer questions.
  - Ensure the assigned buddy is clear on expectations about their role and responsibilities and highlight any additional or different responsibilities for their virtual environment.
- Utilize screen sharing functions in the virtual meeting spaces (Skype, WebEx, etc.).
  - "Tell" – Explain the process to the new employee;
  - "Show" – Show the new employee the process in the system, by sharing your screen; and,
  - "Do" – Have the new employee do the process in the system, by sharing their screen.
- Ask the employee questions to ensure they understand and to keep them engaged.
- Allow the employee time to process and practice the new skills when possible.
- Check-in often with your new employee to let them know they have support.

How do I build culture and relationships remotely?

Review the resources on Staffroom about *Our Commitment to Excellence* and other culture-related information with the employee to introduce them to our culture.

Additional considerations:
- Consider assigning a buddy and/or peer mentor to help onboard and engage with the new employee.
- Set up meetings with their teammates and other key contacts.
  - This could be one-on-one or group calls, as appropriate.
  - During the first few days, it's important that remote employees meet with their coworkers, their manager, direct reports (if applicable), and anyone else they'll be working closely with. This can be done via Skype, WebEx, phone calls, etc.
- The new employee will be limited to the amount of observation time they have with colleagues to learn the culture, so be pro-active by explaining the *Our Commitment to Excellence*, the workplace culture and values.
- Show your appreciation and empathy to new employees.
- Prioritize your check-in with the new team members, keep updated on their work and wellness.

How do I set goals and expectations?

Follow the guidelines outlined in *Manager's Guide to Orientation for New Employees,* as well as the Work Planning page on Taskroom.
Additional considerations:
- Set remote working expectations.
- Create a work plan and define short term and long term goals.
  - Remember to create SMART Objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound).
- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings to discuss progress and resolve any issues.

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> ➢ It is recommended to formally check in daily and then move to weekly as the employee progresses.
- Be clear about expectations and share feedback/areas of concern if not meeting expectations in a timely manner as this is important for managers and new employees when the team is working remotely.

How do I ensure their safety?

The following resources can be found on the Staffroom and Taskroom:
> ➢ Occupational Health and Safety
> ➢ Guidelines for Managing Office Ergonomics in the Workplace
> ➢ Healthy Workplace
> ➢ Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP)
> ➢ Working from Home Considerations for Managers

Additional considerations:
- Confirm with the new employee that their remote work space is set up according to safety and health legislation:
  > ➢ Clear and unobstructed aisles, walkways, stairs and exits;
  > ➢ Suitable ergonomics;
  > ➢ Safe electrical and lighting;
  > ➢ Free of hazards; and,
  > ➢ Proper emergency procedures in place.
- Ensure they are aware of the information posted on the COVID-19 update page on Taskroom.
- Ensure they are aware of the mental health supports available through EFAP and the additional mental health supports listed on Taskroom's COVID-19 updates page.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your HR Business Partner.

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