

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The goal of this guideline is to provide all employees and managers with best practices for working at home.

The guideline is a link between illness prevention and business continuity planning to minimize the impact of operational interruption due to the COVID -19 pandemic.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

This Best Practice is in response to the COVID- 19 pandemic and applies to all Backwoods employees that are working from home.

## **3.0 BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

### **3.1 Communication Plan**

- Managers and employees will determine how often they should communicate on work plan progress and what those updates should include. Managers should also communicate how quickly they expect the employee to respond while working at home and the best ways for the employee to contact the supervisor while working remotely.
- Maintain team meetings and one-to-one check-ins, altering the schedule if needed to accommodate any alternative schedules that have been approved.

### **3.2 Equipment**

Employees should use a Backwoods issued computer, laptop, If the only option is to use a personally owned computer, laptop, or other device, the employee is still responsible to maintain security on their device. Employees are required to have their own internet. Most internet providers are not charging for additional usage, however in the event your provider does not, you will be able to expense the overage costs.

### **3.3 Collaboration Tools**

Many tools are available (Skype for Business, Teams) and employees are encouraged to use them to stay connected to their teams while working from home.

### **3.4 Office Phone Lines**

If you have an office phone line that is not forwarded to your cellular phone, contact Carrie Sales-Dungale at [cdungale@backwoodsenergy.ca](mailto:cdungale@backwoodsenergy.ca) to have your line forwarded from the Edmonton office or contact Kim Bilodeau at [kbilodeau@backwoodsenergy.ca](mailto:kbilodeau@backwoodsenergy.ca) to have your phone forwarded from the Acheson office.

### **3.5 Confidential & Sensitive Data**

Employees must comply with all security precautions and measures that are intended to maintain confidentiality of confidential information. This includes but is not limited to not allowing family members to use Backwoods issued laptops and devices and ensuring that your computer is locked when not in use.

## **4.0 Meeting Best Practices**

### **4.1 Use Meetings Strategically**

- When a team is dispersed in many locations, try not call a meeting at a moment's notice. Think through the meetings that are upcoming, what can be postponed, cancelled, or done virtually. Plan your meetings ahead of time and plan them carefully. While sharing information is important, don't let this be the sole purpose of your meetings. Organize meetings to focus time together on activities that move the team forward, such as decision making, collaboration, and connection.
- It is possible that manager, and/or employee availability will be more limited than usual due to COVID-19 workforce planning, so keep this in mind when evaluating the necessity and urgency of meetings.
- Consider practicing remote meetings, particularly with employees who are currently not working from home.

### **4.2 Arranging, Facilitating, & Participating in Meetings**

- Encourage all team members to care for their wellbeing. Remote employees should factor their wellbeing into their home office set-up by maintaining good posture, working in comfortable lighting, etc. Encourage employees to leave their workstation for 5 minutes of every hour – this helps circulation, eyesight, and other elements of wellbeing.
- Employees who do not typically work remotely may experience challenges adjusting to a different environment, especially if they are accustomed to working very physically. Loneliness is also a common concern. Physical isolation at home combined with a feeling of work loneliness can be challenging for an employee. Use phone calls and video chats to increase interpersonal interaction.
- Unplugging from work can be more challenging for remote workers. Encourage employees to unplug when their work is done and to focus on their self and family care.

### **4.3 Health & Wellbeing**

Speak to employees about managing their health and wellbeing; employees may experience feelings of isolation and uncertainty during this time.

### **4.4 Working from Home Tips**

- Choose a location in the home that has limited distractions and ample natural lighting
- Maintain good posture where you sit
- Stay consistent with your eating, sleeping, and exercise routine as appropriate
- Structure your day, building in social time with colleagues and others
- If you have peripheral devices, connect an external keyboard, mouse, headphones, and/or monitor to increase your comfort
- Maintain boundaries to prevent overwork – unplug at the end of your work time