

# What else might be going on?

Workplace issues that are not related to remote work arrangements are sometimes amplified or magnified if the employee is working remotely or wants to work remotely. Rather than making the assumption that remote work is either the **cause** of or the **solution** to an issue, it can be helpful to ask, “what else might be going on?” The issue may be related to remote work, or there may be other ways the issue can be addressed.

WORKPLACE ISSUE	OTHER OPTIONS TO ADDRESS IT
An employee is reporting increased sick leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support/coaching/care and curiosity about what the employee needs</li> <li>• Refer to EFAP/Lifeworks if appropriate</li> <li>• Follow standard attendance management practices if appropriate (contact your HRC)</li> </ul>
An employee says they need to work remotely due to the cost of commuting and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide links to parking options provided by UVic</li> <li>• Explore bus pass/flex pass options</li> <li>• Consider alternate start and finish times</li> <li>• Encourage carpooling with colleagues</li> <li>• Clarify that these issues are not new—employees continue to be responsible for getting to and from work</li> </ul>
An employee seeks remote work as an accommodation for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family Status - child/elder care</li> <li>- Medical Issues</li> <li>- Mental Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options for greater flexibility in scheduling</li> <li>• <a href="#">Consider remote work if appropriate</a>, or use a formal accommodation request and process to explore other options</li> <li>• Connect with a Work Life consultant for advice</li> </ul>
An employee perceives workload issues can be mitigated by remote work, citing more demands on their time on campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify team norms, provide role clarity and ensure equitable work distribution on the team</li> <li>• Provide clear workload expectations and explore the concerns to assess if the issue is workload or performance related</li> <li>• Use regular 1-1 check-ins to assess workload and support needed</li> <li>• Create appropriate environments for focused tasks, including ad hoc remote work where feasible</li> </ul>
An employee seems reluctant to engage with team/students/clients, or they want to avoid contact with others due to introverted personality style or lack of communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan some team-building activities and structured team time</li> <li>• Re-evaluate team communication norms</li> <li>• Provide coaching/support/training</li> <li>• <a href="#">Check in on employee’s mental health</a> if the behavior is unusual</li> </ul>
An employee wants to work remotely to avoid interpersonal conflicts that exist with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be present, clear and engage early to address difficult conversations</li> <li>• Clarify and model expectations for addressing conflict in a healthy, proactive way</li> <li>• Refer employee to UVic’s <a href="#">Employee Learning Programs</a> for interpersonal communications training</li> </ul>

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<p>An employee is experiencing COVID related hesitancy/fear/anxiety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on UVic health and safety response and success</li> <li>• Acknowledge and address health and wellness concerns</li> <li>• Refer to UVic's <a href="#">"dealing with hesitancy"</a> guide</li> <li>• Consult your Work Life Consultant</li> </ul>
<p>An employee is unhappy with remote work decisions and cites favouritism or equity issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and communicate <a href="#">department criteria</a> for RWAs</li> <li>• Create transparent application and approval processes</li> <li>• Seek senior leadership support to ensure equitable decision making across larger departments</li> </ul>
<p>Concerns are raised about an employee who is working two jobs or runs a home business while working remotely</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify expectations for scheduling work, availability, equipment usage and clear work delineation</li> <li>• Refer to UVic's <a href="#">Conflict and Confidentiality policy</a></li> </ul>
<p>An employee wants the flexibility of remote work but does not want to share office space or work in an open concept office plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm that employees participating in RWAs are expected to give up dedicated office space as part of the process</li> <li>• Recognize that remote work can help manage office space issues for the university</li> <li>• Create clear office principles and space plans based on role needs</li> <li>• Support employees through the change that space shortages are creating on campus</li> </ul>
<p>Performance issues that existed before the pandemic continue to create challenges, and you suspect the employee wants to work remotely to avoid performance management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in active performance improvement planning—contact your HR Consultant for support</li> <li>• Clarify which aspects of the performance plan must be accomplished on campus</li> <li>• Remote work arrangement may be suspended during a performance improvement plan, but remote work decisions should not be punitive</li> </ul>
<p>An employee views remote work as an entitlement to offset low compensation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider other forms of non-compensatory benefits such as employee development, stretch assignments and job enrichment</li> <li>• Engage actively in employee appreciation and <a href="#">recognition</a></li> </ul>