

Redeployment FAQs

Redeployment General Questions

Q. Why are staff being redeployed to other divisions?

During critical incidents like COVID-19, we need to ensure essential, critical and priority services are delivered effectively so that needs of individuals and the community are met. City staff who are not assigned to supporting COVID-19 or other essential and/or critical services may be asked to assist the City where help is needed most.

Staff who were previously redeployed have been contacted about undertaking a similar redeployment. The knowledge and experience gained from the first round of redeployment will be invaluable for this next phase. Additional staff may need to be redeployed in order to assist the City where help is needed most, both immediately and in the near future. Staff new to redeployment assignments will be trained in order to do that work safely.

Working together to make a difference is a key part of the culture of the Toronto Public Service. During this difficult time, the public is relying on us more than ever before. Redeployment helps the City ensure we are meeting the needs of the public and are using our workforce in a manner that is aligned to current demands.

Q. Is redeployment mandatory or optional?

Staff in a temporarily suspended service as a result of [Provincial guidance](#) will be redeployed or placed on Emergency Leave if they decline a redeployment assignment.

Staff who are working in a continued service and opt out of redeployment will remain in their division.

Q. Can I volunteer to be redeployed?

Yes, all staff in the Toronto Public Service who are not currently supporting critical and essential services can volunteer to redeploy. Please [fill out this survey](#) to express your interest in redeployment, then email redeployment@toronto.ca to advise you have completed the survey.

Volunteers cannot be accepted from the following essential or critical service areas:

- Children's Services
- Seniors Services and Long-Term Care
- Shelter Support Housing and Administration
- Strategic Public And Employee Communications
- Toronto Fire Services
- Toronto Paramedic Services
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Water – critical and essential workers

Q. Can my manager/supervisor stop me from volunteering?

No, managers/supervisors cannot stop staff from volunteering for redeployment assignments. The Senior Leadership Team have advised division heads that staff who volunteer for redeployment roles must be released from their base role to take on this important work.

Q. What incentive do I have to redeploy?

Redeployed staff will receive an additional \$2.00 per hour incentive pay on top their regular wages or the wage of their redeployed position, whichever is higher.

Redeployed staff will also be supporting the people of Toronto and their colleagues in the public service.

Q. How were staff redeployed within their own divisions in the past? How will they be redeployed now?

During the first round of redeployment in 2020, many divisions reassigned employees internally within the division to support COVID-19 response and recovery, and adapt their work to the new COVID-19 realities. Staff can expect similar internal reassignment efforts this round as well.

At this time, there are key areas in need of redeployed staff from other City divisions including public health, shelters and long term care.

Q. What gives the City the authority to redeploy staff?

In March 2020, the unprecedented worldwide COVID-19 pandemic led to Declarations of Emergency from the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto, and a number of Provincial Orders in Council or Regulations under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA)*, and the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 ("ROA")*. Regulation 157/20 authorizes municipalities to take any reasonably necessary measure to respond to, prevent and alleviate the effects of COVID-19 and in particular, to prevent, reduce or mitigate the effect of COVID-19 on critical municipal services delivered by their employees, including redeployment of staff. The City also negotiated Emergency Framework Agreements with its Unions, which remain in place until the City rescinds its Declaration of Emergency.

Q. How are decisions being made about where staff are being redeployed to?

Redeployment efforts will support the growing needs of the City's shelter system, long-term care facilities, vaccination clinics and any other areas where additional support is needed to continue to deliver essential and critical services. The City must ensure it has appropriate staffing levels to meet the demands of the community in these service areas.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has deployed staff to meet the highest-priority needs as they arise and will continue to allocate staff as needed to ensure key services continue. Robust mitigation plans are in place to ensure that essential services continue to be delivered across the city without interruption.

Q. How were staff identified for redeployment assignments?

The City has outlined a [tiered staff redeployment plan](#) to combat a high number of unplanned staff absences due to illness and COVID-19 isolation requirements, with worst-case plans accounting for absences as high as 60 per cent.

The City's tiered staff redeployment plan includes the following four stages:

1. Staff previously redeployed in the initial wave of COVID-19 in 2020.
2. Staff assigned to City services that are scaled-down and/or temporarily suspended as a result of the Province's latest protective measures, including Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PFR) part-time staff as well as some seasonal staff who were not currently working.
3. Staff identified as being able to pause their current work to support areas in greater need.
4. Staff volunteering to be redeployed and able to leave their base position.

After identifying employees for work opportunities (based on staffing requirements, temporary and part-time status, availability and qualifications) the City will make every effort to consider seniority for unionized staff members where possible.

Q. When are new assignments coming up?

The Redeployment Team is working with City divisions to determine their ongoing staffing needs. Assignments will be offered as the needs arise.

Redeployment Options

Q. What happens if I choose to opt-out of redeployment?

Staff in a temporarily suspended service who opt out of redeployment will be provided a 48 hours' notice and placed on Emergency Leave – redeployment is not optional for these staff. This means they will no longer receive a salary from the City of Toronto.

All other eligible staff are encouraged to volunteer for redeployment.

Q. What if I am identified for redeployment but I have vacation time or a leave booked?

In order to effectively maintain the delivery of essential or critical municipal services, if staff are identified for redeployment, the City may defer or cancel vacations, absences or other leaves with the exception of Pregnancy/Parental Leaves and Earned Deferred Leave. Earned Deferred Leaves that have already started or have already been approved to begin during the pandemic emergency will be allowed.

Q. I opted-in/volunteered for redeployment but have not received an assignment.

The City will match staff who opt in or volunteer for redeployment with new assignments based on the City's operational needs. Employees who volunteer should work in their continued services until they have been redeployed to an assignment.

Q. If there are not enough redeployment positions for all staff who opt-in, how will the City decide who gets redeployed first?

The City has committed to considering seniority where possible in placing unionized staff members after identifying employees for work opportunities based on staffing requirements, temporary and part-time status, availability and qualifications.

Q. Can I decline a redeployment assignment and wait for a different one?

Declining a redeployment assignment will be treated the same as opting out of redeployment. Staff in a temporarily suspended service who decline a redeployment assignment will be placed on Emergency Leave.

Q. Once an employee is in their redeployed position, and they find that they cannot handle it for various reasons, can they opt to go on a leave then or request to be transferred?

If a redeployed employee requests to be removed from the assignment and they came from a continued service, they will return to their division. Staff in a temporarily suspended service will be placed on Emergency Leave.

Q: I have opted-in but received no assignment. Will I still be eligible for redeployment opportunities after I am placed on an Emergency Leave?

Yes, as opportunities present themselves the City will be recalling employees who have opted for redeployment and are on Emergency Leave to take on those roles.

Emergency Leave

Q. What does an Emergency Leave entail?

Emergency Leave will provide staff with access to Employment Insurance, the same health and dental benefits in which they are currently enrolled, including OMERS if applicable, and continued accumulation of seniority. These staff will not report to work, will not be paid their regular pay and not be eligible for Supplemental Employee Benefits.

Emergency Leave does not apply to employees who are required to work in divisions subject to a provincial emergency order providing for work deployment measures, including Toronto Public Health, Seniors Services and Long-Term Care and Toronto Water.

Q. What is Supplemental Employee Benefits? Who is eligible?

Supplemental Employee Benefits is a top up payment made by the City to eligible employees in receipt of the Pregnancy/Parental Leave Employment Insurance benefit.

Q. How will I access Employment Insurance if I am on Emergency Leave?

Staff Record of Employment (ROE) will be issued and sent electronically to Service Canada five days after the last pay period in which they were paid. Staff do not need to

access a hard copy of their ROE for submission. Their ROE will be coded as a shortage of work. They can visit canada.ca for information about how to apply for these benefits.

Q. Will I lose my seniority if I go on an Emergency Leave?

Employees who voluntarily go on an Emergency Leave or are placed on an Emergency Leave shall accrue service and seniority for the duration of the leave and for the duration of any unpaid leave of absence.

Employee Communications

Q. What information is being communicated to the redeployed staff?

Once the corporate Redeployment Team obtains the employee's availability and preference regarding the shift and location (i.e. preferred quadrant of the City such as North, South, East, West of Yonge & Bloor), staff are informed that they could be redeployed to a certain number of locations based on operational needs. While staff are asked to indicate their preferred shift, they are informed that there are no guarantees the employee will be slotted for their choice.

Q. When can staff expect to be contacted by the receiving division after they are contacted by the Redeployment Team?

A receiving division might reach out to an employee within a few hours or a few days depending upon their redeployment needs.

Q. Are staff provided with an offer letter?

While no offer letters are provided, the host division confirms their assignment directly with the employee, usually via email or phone.

Redeployment Assignment Details

Q. Will redeployed staff's requested preferences (location, shift hours) be honoured?

While staff's shift requests will be taken into consideration, ultimately the receiving division will determine shifts based upon their operational needs. Accommodation needs will be considered in determining redeployment assignments (see Accommodation section of this FAQ).

In terms of location, staff are asked in the survey to identify the area that is most accessible to them. Although the information will be taken into consideration when identifying placements, ultimately the receiving division will decide on the location based on their operational needs.

All redeployment opportunities at the moment are for in-person work, i.e. there are no remote work assignments.

Q. What are the typical shift hours?

Shift hours will vary depending upon the needs of the receiving division. At this time, there are a variety of shifts ranging from day shifts to over nights, weekdays and weekends.

Q. When will I start my new role?

The receiving division will contact staff regarding all the details of their assignment, including their work location, start date and time. Some staff may be contacted to start soon, while others may not be contacted until a later date, depending on how operational needs evolve over the coming days and weeks.

Q. What is the duration of redeployment?

The redeployment assignment duration will vary depending on the circumstances and ongoing operational need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The receiving division will provide staff with details of their redeployment assignment. Please continue to monitor the [staff ELI resource page](#) for ongoing updates on the overall situation.

Q. What kind of training do divisions provide to redeployed staff?

Staff will be provided with the training they need to complete their work safely. Staff will receive further information about training once they receive their redeployment assignment. The type of training required will depend on the division and role staff are assigned to work in. Staff will be trained on how to complete any work, safety measures and any other important information.

Q. Are full-time staff guaranteed full-time hours if they are redeployed?

Yes, they are.

Q. Can a redeployed staff member refuse a certain shift? If so, what are the consequences or options?

The expectation is if staff are redeployed, they will work the shifts to which they are assigned.

Staff may request accommodation through the redeployment process. Where an approved accommodation includes a limitation on specific shifts this will be considered as part of the redeployment assignment.

Q. There is a particular division where I feel I would be of benefit based on my skills. Can I 'apply' for redeployment there specifically?

The redeployment survey does ask questions that will help place staff in suitable positions. Ultimately, the operational needs of the City will be the deciding factor.

Q. What is the process if a redeployed staff member's situation changes (i.e., health, personal issues, etc.) and they can no longer complete their assignment?

Staff in this situation should advise their redeployment supervisor and the People and Equity Redeployment Team to explore next steps.

Compensation, Payroll and Benefits

Q. If I refuse redeployment, can I take vacation, lieu time or sick days instead of going on Emergency Leave?

Staff in a temporarily suspended service who refuse redeployment will be provided a 48 hours' notice and placed on Emergency Leave until further notice. They can choose to use available vacation and lieu time banks prior to starting the Emergency Leave.

Q. What if I commenced sick pay prior to the Agreement and continue to be sick and unable to report to work?

If staff continue to be sick and are unable to return to work, they will remain eligible to receive sick pay for the period they are unable to work, provided they comply with collective agreement requirements for medical certificates. If they are on a short-term illness and anticipate that they will be fit to return to work in the near future, and if they received the survey, they should complete the survey and return it to the City to ensure they protect their rights under the Emergency Framework Agreement. If they continue to be sick for a longer period, they will be contacted in accordance to the regular process for applying for long-term disability.

Q. What if I am currently off on sick pay and exhaust my sick bank?

If an employee exhausts their sick bank and is not able to return to work, with or without accommodation, they can use their available vacation and lieu time banks. Once vacation and lieu time banks are exhausted, the employee are entitled to 20 days of sick leave paid at 66 ^{2/3} per cent of salary annually. Please reference the associated [Sick and Isolation Pay policy](#) for more details. When all banks are exhausted then the employee would then be placed on sick leave with no pay, and they can apply to Service Canada for Employment Insurance sick benefits.

Q. Does Redeployment incentive/premium pay continue if I take sick time during the redeployment assignment?

No, Redeployment incentive/premium pay is only applied to hours worked.

Q. The job I was redeployed into is a higher/lower wage grade than my base position. What will I be paid?

Redeployed staff will continue to receive their regular wages or the wage of their redeployed position, whichever is higher, plus an additional \$2.00 per hour incentive pay on top as long as they are working.

Q. If full-time staff who are redeployed are not guaranteed full-time hours, do these staff only get paid for the time they do work?

Full-time staff who are redeployed will receive full-time hours.

Q. How are length of service or seniority affected if I am a full-time employee but only get part-time redeployment hours?

Staff will not have their length of service or seniority affected by redeployment or Emergency Leave.

Q. Do part-time staff fall under their current collective agreement and current rate of pay?

Employees will maintain their current rate of pay or will receive the rate of pay for their redeployed assignment, whichever is greater, plus an additional \$2.00 per hour incentive/premium pay on top.

Q. How are non-union staff compensated under redeployment?

Non-union management are compensated at their current rate of pay, plus an additional \$2.00 per hour incentive pay on top.

Q. If I am placed on Emergency Leave, will I still be contributing to employee benefits?

Union and non-union employees on an Emergency Leave will continue to receive the same benefits they would have been entitled to previously or under their collective agreement. The City will continue to pay its share of benefit premiums, unless the employee elects in writing that they do not wish to continue benefit coverage. The employee will be responsible for paying their share of any benefit premium, and such payment is to be paid directly to the City.

Q. If I am placed on Emergency Leave, will I still be contributing to OMERS?

This Emergency Leave is deemed an ESA-related (Employment Standards Act) break in service, and this service can be purchased by the employee after the leave period has ended. The cost to purchase will be sent to the employee at the conclusion of the leave, and the employee will have until December 31 of the following year to purchase the leave. For example, if the leave ends in June 2022, the employee will have until December 31, 2023 to purchase the leave. The cost to purchase this leave will match what the employee would have had deducted in contributions had they been working, with the City paying a matching contribution.

If the employee does not purchase the leave by the end of the following year, the employee can still purchase the service through the OMERS "buy back" provision. The cost will likely be much higher and will be based on the OMERS buy back policy in place at the time of the request. If this break in service is not purchased, the duration of this Emergency Leave will still count as "Eligible Service" for OMERS purposes, meaning it will still count toward the "30" and "90" factors that allow an employee to retire without penalty.

Q. What is the difference between incentive pay and premium pay?

Incentive pay is for staff who are redeployed, while premium pay is for staff who are doing the same job as someone who has been redeployed to that same position and at the same location. Both incentive pay and premium pay are an additional \$2.00 per hour on top the eligible staff's regular wages or the wage of their redeployed position, whichever is higher.

Q. I work with a redeployed employee and we do the same job – do I qualify for premium pay?

Employees that are working in the same job classification and location as the redeployed employee(s) are eligible for premium pay of \$2.00 per hour to coincide with the duration of the redeployment assignment. Premium pay is only applied in situations where incentive pay is applied.

Q. What code should I use to track my incentive/premium pay?

Employees are required to track all hours of work eligible for incentive or premium pay. The pay code for incentive/premium pay is under development. In the meantime, redeployed employees are to continue submitting their time through the Bi-Weekly Attendance Recording (BWAR) [form](#). The new code will be communicated as soon as it is available.

Q. Is incentive/premium pay retroactive to December 31, 2021?

Yes, incentive/premium pay is retroactive to December 31, 2021.

Q. I started my redeployment before December 31 – can I receive incentive/premium pay for hours worked from December 24 – 30?

No, incentive/premium pay is only retroactive to December 31, 2021.

Q. I have been redeployed within my own division/work location – do I qualify for incentive/premium pay?

No, incentive/premium pay only applies to employees who have redeployed outside their base division and/or work location. Employees are only eligible for incentive pay if they have been officially redeployed through the redeployment process to meet business needs approved by the Emergency Operations Center.

Q. What is meant by "base work location"?

Base work location refers to the employee's regularly assigned work location, where the employee typically reports for work during regular business hours.

Examples include: City Hall, Metro Hall and civic centres, yards, shelters, Seniors Services and Long-term Care Homes, or a division-specific leased and/or free standing building.

Q. Why is the premium pay only available to employees who are working in the same job classification and location as the redeployed employee(s)? Does this mean that some employees doing the same job but in different locations will be compensated differently?

Each work location presents unique challenges during the pandemic. When a location requires redeployed staff, premium pay will be available to employees who are working in the same job classification and location as redeployed employees, as they will be working side-by-side, doing the same work as redeployed staff in that location.

Q. Who do redeployed staff submit their Bi-Weekly Attendance Record (BWAR) timesheet to?

Redeployed staff should have their timesheets signed by their Location Officer each day and submit them to their Divisional Payroll Coordinator (DPC) at the division they are redeployed to at the end of each pay period. The full list of DPC's can be found in the [Bi-Weekly Attendance Record Timesheet Guide](#).

Q. What if I am scheduled to retire when on a redeployment or leave?

There will be no impacts to the retirement process. Staff should contact their benefits representative for direction on how to move forward.

Q. Will there be an option for early retirement?

Employees will be able to retire based on their years of service. Staff should visit the [OMERS website](#) or contact their member services at 416-369-2444.

Q. What if I am scheduled to go on maternity/parental leave while on redeployment or leave?

Maternity and parental leaves will not be affected. Staff should contact their benefits representative for direction on how to move forward.

Q. I am scheduled to come back from a long-term disability leave. What do I do?

Employee Health and the staff's base division will be in touch with them regarding their return-to-work options.

Q. Are there any supports available to me to help me through this stressful time?

The City has implemented a recently negotiated increase in coverage for psychological services of \$1,000 per person per benefit year for non-union, CUPE Local 79 Full-Time, Rec and Part-Time B employees. This benefit is already in place for TCEU Local 416 (CUPE) members.

Also available is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which offers confidential short-term counselling, information and referral services to members of the Toronto Public Service and eligible family members. For more information, visit the [EAP page](#) on InsideTO or to access these services call 416-392-6633 or TTY 416-338-2916 – 24/7.

Accommodation

Q. How do I request an accommodation?

Individuals will be able to request accommodation through the redeployment survey based on human rights related reasons such as disability/medical condition, family status, or other protected grounds such as creed (religion) in accordance with the City's [Accommodation Policy](#).

Staff should not contact their current supervisor or manager for accommodation requests relating to redeployment. Accommodation requests related to redeployment

will be managed through People and Equity, and staff have an opportunity to request accommodation in the survey they received.

Q. What do I need to provide to request accommodation?

Those with accommodation needs (medical, family status or other) are expected to cooperate with the process and provide information to support their request, such as supporting documentation. Employees requesting medical accommodation or family status accommodation will be provided with an additional form that must be completed as part of the assessment process.

Q. I am willing to be redeployed but have physical limitations. Does this mean I go on Emergency Leave?

No. Staff would opt-in to be redeployed and state their accommodation needs in the survey. They will be contacted and will need to provide appropriate documentation. A suitable assignment will be looked for to accommodate staff. If no suitable accommodation can be found, a People & Equity representative will share next steps with them.

Q. What will happen if my accommodation request can't be fulfilled?

If the City is unable to accommodate a request that has been substantiated or staff are required to work from home, they will remain in their division and work in their continued service. Staff in a temporarily suspended service will be provided a 48 hours' notice and placed on Emergency Leave. A People & Equity representative will share next steps with them.

Q. Will staff have access to child care if they are redeployed?

As a result of the new measures recently introduced by the Province, emergency child care services will be available for essential workers in Ontario beginning January 10. City employees working in essential services roles such as in child care, long-term care, shelters, fire, police, paramedic, water treatment, waste collection and public transit services may be eligible for emergency child care services during this period. For more information regarding eligibility, how to access these services and for the list of emergency child care providers, visit the [COVID-19: Emergency Child Care for Essential Workers](#) page.

Q. What if I opt-in for redeployment but can only work from home and require an accommodation?

All redeployment opportunities at the moment are for in-person work, i.e. there are no remote work assignments. Staff requiring a work-from-home accommodation will be provided a 48 hours' notice and placed on Emergency Leave. A People & Equity representative will share next steps with them.

Q. What happens if an employee's requested accommodation is not substantiated?

Should an accommodation request of staff working in a continued service be denied as unsubstantiated and the employee refuses to accept a redeployment assignment, they

will remain in their division and work in their continued service. Staff in a temporarily suspended service in a similar situation will be provided a 48 hours' notice and placed on Emergency Leave.

Q. Who makes the final decisions on accommodations?

Employees who opt-in to the redeployment survey will be required to provide additional details related to their accommodation needs. This information will be reviewed and assessed by staff within the People and Equity Division.

Accommodation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis following a review of objective information provided by the employee and in consultation with appropriate subject matter experts.

Q. Is a doctor's note required for medical accommodations?

Employees requesting medical accommodation must provide documentation as specified in the form they will receive. This form must be completed by a medical physician. Accommodation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis following a review of objective information provided by the employee and in consultation with appropriate subject matter experts.

Q. Will employees currently on LTD (or WSIB) continue to be paid?

Yes, as long as staff are still off on a Long-Term Disability or WSIB, they will continue to be paid.

Health and Safety

Q. What steps is the City taking to protect staff from COVID-19?

The City is committed to taking every precaution reasonable in these circumstances to protect staff health and safety. The City has implemented appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of staff delivering essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes initiating controls such as the screening of clients and employees, making changes to work processes and the set up of facilities to create physical distancing, heightened cleaning and disinfecting and, where appropriate, issuing personal protective equipment (PPE).

In order to make sure employees at risk as a result of their work activities are protected, the City has established a PPE Task Force at its Emergency Operations Centre. One key role of this task force is to ensure the availability of PPE, such as surgical masks and N95 respirators, etc., for those job functions that require it. In order to provide personal protective equipment appropriate to the risks encountered in job duties, the City is evaluating each job's level of risk and required PPE based on the advice of reputable public health and occupational health and safety authorities.

Q. What sort of PPE will staff receive when they are redeployed?

The receiving divisions will provide the redeployed staff with information on PPE. Receiving divisions have been working with the Occupational Health and Safety team and have taken several steps to ensure that staff are provided with appropriate PPE for their assignments as required.

Q. When are staff provided with their PPE?

Staff will be provided with any required PPE, depending on the role, once they report in to their work location.

Q. If I am not satisfied with the PPE provided to me, can I bring my own?

On November 28, 2021, the first case of the more transmissible Omicron variant of concern was detected in Ontario. Emerging evidence of community spread of the Omicron variant has it quickly becoming the dominant strain, although the level of its severity is not fully understood. In taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of City workers, all staff are required to wear a face mask at all times in the workplace.

The City is adopting this universal masking policy for all staff in all workplaces, and in combination with other existing public health and workplace safety measures. The required mask type is the City issued disposable surgical mask. The mask must be worn in a manner which covers the mouth, nose and chin.

Masks and physical barriers provide added layers of protection, but are not substitutes for physical distancing.