Supplemental Report

Flexible Workplace (FWP) Program – One Year Update

October 2023

Human Resource Services

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Introduction

At the September 21, 2023 meeting of the Executive Policy Committee (EPC), the City of Winnipeg Public Service presented a written Administrative Report titled *Flexible Workplace Program - Year One Update* as well as a number of additional Flexible Workplace (FWP) Program data points. EPC laid the report over until its October 17, 2023 meeting in order to request supplementary information from the Public Service, which follows below.

Part 1 – Flexible Work – Requested Statistics

Breakdown of Participating WAPSO Employees

- The Winnipeg Association of Public Service Officers (WAPSO) Collective Bargaining Unit represents staff with professional designations (engineers, city planners, programmers, etc), as well as professionals who supervise staff.
- Out of a City complement of 965 WAPSO staff, 573 are participating in the FWP Program.
- Out of the 573 WAPSO employees participating, 127 are full-time remote, and 446 have hybrid (part-time) remote arrangements.
- Out of the 573 WAPSO employees participating in the program, 252 directly supervise staff.
    - It is important to note that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and now, the Public Service's leader-to-employee ratio has not allowed for constant direct daily supervision. In other words, the FWP program has not impacted daily supervision. We maintain a collaborative approach to supervision, which includes regular contact with employees and monitoring of work performance. HR Services provides tools and resources to leaders to assist in managing work performance and productivity in the workplace. See Appendix A of this supplemental report for further remote work resources and tools information.
- Out of the 252 WAPSO employees participating in the program, a total of eleven (11) supervise front-line service position. These eleven have hybrid arrangements, not full-time remote.

Front Line Service Positions

- For this exercise, a front-line service position was defined as a staff who has direct contact with the public during their day-to-day customer service duties.
- To date, 120 front-line service positions have FWP program arrangements in place.
- Of the 120 employees providing front line service to the public, eighteen (18) work in a role that provides face-to-face service. These are:
    - **4 Planning, Property & Development (PPD) Positions**: Three (3) Clerk B and one (1) Clerk A positions under the Housing Plan Exam area of Housing Branch provide front line service to the public at the Zoning and Permits Office, including rotation to the front window to serve the public. No reduction of face-to-face service has occurred.
    - **14 Public Works Positions:** These positions participate in hybrid remote work on a rotational basis to ensure face-to-face coverage is available to the public; five (5) Winnipeg Parking Authority Screening Officers who adjudicate fines/penalties; three (3) Winnipeg Parking Authority Clerks who work with taxi drivers/ride sharing services licenses; three (3) Customer Service and three (3) Permit Clerks at 1155 Pacific. No reduction of face-to-face service has occurred.

- Of the remaining 102 front-line service employees who have been approved for FWP arrangements, all are call centre positions which at no point provided direct face-to-face service before, during, or after the COVID-19 Pandemic. This includes:
    - **29 Water & Waste Department (WWD) Positions**: Utility Billing Clerks (UBC); Billing Representative; Billing Support Representative; Senior Billing Representatives; Contact Centre Specialist; Systems Coordinator – Business. These positions maintain the call centre service previously offered prior to COVID.
    - **10 PPD Positions**: Five (5) Clerk B (Scheduling and Occupancy) and three (3) Housing Clerks provide service via phone, email, or the online portal for scheduling Commercial inspections, which is status quo from prior to the pandemic; Two (2) Central Files Clerks work remotely 1 day/week, providing frontline service to the public via email and phone calls in response to requests for documents such as plans, permits, etc. These documents are uploaded to a SharePoint site where members of the public access the information in response to their requests. These positions do not provide face-to-face service.
    - **25 Transit Positions**: Twenty-three (23) Transit Contact Centre with Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), one (1) team leader, and one (1) Coordinator. The CSR's continue to provide phone-based support in a call centre environment, same as prior to the pandemic. This service has always been provided over the phone and uses a computer system to schedule rides.
    - **38 311 CSRs**: The Front Counter Customer Service Representatives do not work remotely as they work at the front counter and provide onsite service to customers. Employees are available to back them up at the counter if needed. All other CSRs provide a call centre-model phone and email service, not a face-to-face service. CSRs can work remotely in a hybrid model, working both in the office and remote. No 311 CSR's work remotely full-time.

NOTE: Effective September 2023, PPD re-opened the Zoning and Permits Office to provide full in person service to the public. As a result, 21 Zoning Staff have returned to the workplace full-time.

Part 2 – Customer Service Impacts

As noted in the previous section, three customer service call centres at the City of Winnipeg have staff participating in the FWP program: Water & Waste Billing (29 full-time remote employees), Transit (25 full-time remote employees), and 311 (38 part-time remote employees). For the Water & Waste Billing and Transit call centres, staff did not provide face-to-face service prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore the FWP program has had no customer service impact.

Call Center jobs provide excellent opportunities for flexible work for many reasons:

- **Call Centre Productivity is carefully monitored**: The unique productivity monitoring of the telephony systems allows leaders to deal with performance adjustments in real time.
- **Difficult to retain staff**: Call Centre type jobs are constantly recruiting, and the majority allow for remote work options. The City of Winnipeg needs to remain competitive to ensure turnover does not disrupt service quality.
- **Flexibility**: When there are vacancies or illness the ability to respond quickly to cover and have staff pick up shifts or overtime to compensate assists with ensuring there are less gaps or wait times in our services.

The FWP Program has had positive impacts on turnover rates for both the Water & Waste and Transit Department Call Centres. Stabilizing staffing levels have had a large impact on customer service levels.

The 311 Call Centre does not currently provide full-time remote options. New hires must work 6 months and demonstrate good performance before they are able to apply for hybrid FWP arrangements. 311 continues to struggle with turnover rates and has not seen a decrease in the years since remote work has been introduced. See Part 4: Risks & Liabilities for more details on turnover rates.

The FWP Program has not changed the mode of service delivery for these City call centres. They continue to offer the same phone and email service that was offered prior to the pandemic. Since the FWP Program launched, we have seen the same, and in some cases improved, levels of customer service.

Part 3 – Important Data Points

Environmental Sustainability

- Employees who work remote either part-time and/or full-time are having a positive impact on the environment by helping to reduce the City's carbon footprint and by reducing car emissions.
- Working remote supports city streets lasting longer by reducing wear on roads.
- There are less cars in rush hour, reducing time spent in traffic overall.

Technology and Tools

- Microsoft TEAMS and Office 365 have improved the way we work by enabling effective digital communication and collaboration with all employees, including those who work remotely.
- SharePoint activity has increased substantially with the introduction of Office 365.

Transaction Volume	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unique employees using Teams	-	2400+	2400+	5,000+
Teams Meetings	-	46,238	76,418	104,687
Chat/post messages	-	2,659,389	3,989,916	4,535,257
Meeting participants	-	63,233	109,185	352,129
Notes: Microsoft Teams was available to employees in March 2020. All staff with an email address were migrated to Office365 in 2022, enabling additional staff use. Over 12,000 files have been shared in SharePoint since it was deployed in 2022.				

Cost Savings

- Stationary savings of $119k.
- Employee Sick Leave is down:
    - Total % of sick leave hours paid went down from 2019 (42.15%) to 2022 (36.38%) in top 5 departments with highest FWP Program participants.
    - Having FWP arrangements in place allows staff to stay home when unwell to limit the chance of spreading germs for self or children, reduces the spread illness to others at work, and allows staff to still stay connected to work where possible.
    - This aligns with COW health and safety guidelines to "stay home when sick" and supports parents when their children are temporarily unable to attend school or daycare because of illness, as long as parents are able to maintain full productivity.
    - 2023 sick leave usage is trending lower than 2019.

Downtown Workers

- 964 City of Winnipeg employees participating in the FWP program work downtown, representing this is 1.4% of the 70,000 people who make up the Downtown Workforce.
- 145 City employees are full-time remote; this represents 0.02% of the 70,000 downtown workforce.
- 15% of COW employees participate in the FWP Program, of which 9.3% are downtown. This statistic is lower than six other major public service employers with staff downtown, whose employee participation rates range from 20% up to 44% of their workforce (see table below).

Manitoba Employer Competition

- The City of Winnipeg compares itself regularly as part of the 8 large publicly funded organizations in Manitoba. Below are the percentages of the workforce eligible for remote work:

University of Manitoba	44%
MB Hydro	33%
University of Winnipeg	32%
Province of Manitoba	25%
Manitoba Liquor/Lotteries	20%
City of Winnipeg	15%
Shared Health	4-5%
Manitoba Public Insurance	unknown

- City of Winnipeg in comparison to direct competition (Large public funded organizations):
  - Reciprocal pension plans;
  - Unionized environments;
  - All have FWP programs, some offer more flexible work options at higher % (ex: reduced work week/every other Friday off);
  - Most offer better enhanced benefits than the City of Winnipeg (Flex benefits, paid education, extended health/ psych services etc./ health spending account); and
  - All offer intrinsic value in that they serve the community and make a difference to the public.

Leadership Survey Results - Improved Productivity

- Leader opinion and observations are key to understanding productivity. A Leader survey was sent out to all leaders who have at least one direct report working remotely. Response rate for this survey was 64%.
  - 92% of leaders did not notice a reduction in productivity with flexible work;
  - 61% of leaders noticed an increase in productivity with flexible work.
- Leaders provided 132 responses to what they saw as improvements since the FWP Program. Answers included:
  - More focus, less distractions/socializing;
  - More willing to work overtime due to elimination of commute;
  - Part-time FWP has increased collaboration and teamwork;
  - Electronic versions increased efficiency/staff more agile due to technology;
  - Allowing work from home when sick/fewer sick days;
  - Staff are happier and more engaged/reduced stress;
  - Better manage work/life balance with families;
  - Less travel to off-site meetings increase time for productivity;

- Timelines reduced/more output/increased quality of work;
- Increased motivation, appreciation, and willingness to do more;
- Access to wider talent pool & increased retention; and
- More accountability.

Online Training Statistics - Remote Workers

- Virtual Learning and Online Learning Module (OLM) Completions have increased by 600% post COVID. Employees and leaders are embracing the power of virtual and online learning. It is faster, cheaper, and available 24 hours to assist with multiple shifts and workers.

2019:	**2022:**
Virtual Course Completions: 7512	Virtual Course Completions: 12457
OLM Completions: 5467	OLM Completions: 11203
Total: 12,979	Total: 23,660

Leadership Training Data

- Leadership preparation and information sharing was an important part of the Flexible Workplace Program launch for the City of Winnipeg. In May 2020, in addition to the program framework and corresponding Administrative Standard, online tools and courses were provided to leaders.
- Course completions have continued to see a substantial increase since the launch of the FWP Program in May 2020.
  - 3,008 completions for our leadership virtual courses (with presenter)
  - 5,804 completions for our leadership online learning modules
  - Total: **8,812 leadership course completions**

Part 4 – Risks and Liabilities

Difficult to Recruit Positions

- Deloitte Talent Acquisition Report emphasized the importance of FWP Programs; noting that people will give up pay and benefits for flexibility.
- To be a competitive employer, the City needs to match and exceed what the competition is doing if wanting to compete and retain talent. Not having this program would remove us from the competition for talent with the other 8 large public funded organizations.
- Retention and Employee satisfaction will be negatively impacted and thus our ability to recruit and retain would cause employees to start to look for work elsewhere.
- Call Centre work is in high demand. Many offering full remote work and same or better wages (43 to 51 jobs posted at any time locally). Other employers offer equal or more money, and full-time remote work options. This makes it hard to compete even with a remote work option.
- IT skills are in high demand, and it is also highly competitive in Manitoba. So are roles such as: Business Analysts, Network Designers, Software Developers, and Project Managers.
- Technical or specialist roles such as HR Information Systems (HRIS), technician roles, Labour Relations Officers/ Analysts, HR Consultants, mechanical and trades positions are also in high demand and at higher risk of leaving.
- Noticing limited quality in applicants for entry level clerical and admin support roles.
- Employees in PPD regularly receive cold calls from industry competitors looking to attract COW staff to work elsewhere.

- The City-Wide employee engagement survey stated that for 91% of employees the ability to work remotely impacts the decision of where they choose to work.

City of Winnipeg Turnover

- Turnover across the Call Centers is down across the City:
    - Average turnover rate in Transit has reduced from 36% to 18% since providing remote work.
    - Average turnover rate in Water & Waste has reduced from 74% to 42% since providing remote work.
    - Turnover remains high for the 311 Call Centre. Average turnover rate was 26% in 2019, 35% in 2021 and 60% in 2022. Currently for 2023 the rate is 40%.
        - Noting that significant more recruitment occurred in 2022 and so the higher turnover could be related to the higher number of hires.
        - Noting also that this is the only call centre that does not offer full-time remote work as an option and the majority of CSRs are not working remotely with the number of front line staff working on site (58) than remote (34).
    - Turnover citywide remains less than 10% and is meeting COW Corporate Strategic Plan targets.

Appendix A – Data Tables

Training Information

- **Online Module** (OLM) courses you take at your own pace and are automatically recorded in PeopleSoft on completion
- **Virtual** – Courses led online by an instructor and recorded in PeopleSoft as completed if marked as participated

Total Completions for OLM & Virtual Leadership Courses from March 2020 to September 2023

Virtual Courses: 3008 completions
OLM courses: 5804 completions
Total: 8812

Completion Data for Virtual Leadership of Courses from March 2020 to September 2023

Effective Group and Meeting Facilitation (CE1075): 7 completions
Effective Problem Solving & Decision Making (CE1078): 100 completions
Organizational Leadership: Key Skills (CE1258): 57 completions
Managing Quality Customer Service (CE1168): 32 completions
The ABC's of Supervising Others (CE1165): 58 completions
Communication Strategies (CE1076): 102 completions
Coaching: A Leadership Skill (CE1166): 66 completions
Conflict Resolution (CE1072): 255 completions
Giving and Receiving Feedback (CE1073): 196 completions
Personal Resilience (CE1101) 216 completions
Leading Through Ambiguity and Change: (CE1116) 166 completions
Emotional Intelligence (CE1081): 71 completions
Management vs. Leadership (CE1268): 15 completions
Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork (CE1269): 1 completion
Leadership's Role in Mental Health (CE1347): NEW
Editing Skills for Leaders (CE1161): 23 completions
Positive Workplace Communication (CE1162): 74 completions
CORE Communication (CE1364) NEW
Integrative Leadership (CE1359) NEW
Right Quest Right Time Coaching Skills (CE1360) NEW
Introduction to Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace for Leaders NEW
Leading through Ambiguity and Change (CE1116): 166 completions
Coaching and Employee Recognition (CE1113): 82 completions
Employee Retention (CE1167): 69 completions
Indigenous – Chi Ki Ken Da Mun (CE1196): 111 completions
Investigating Workplace Safety Incidents (CE1117): 225 completions
Leadership Skills for New Managers & Supervisors (CE1257): 21 completions
Leadership, Performance Well-being (CE1112): 95 completions
Leading in the City Environment (CE1145): 59 completions
Live Well Lead Well (CE1115): 233 completions
Leadership Skills for New Supervisors & Managers (CE1257): 21 completions
Leadership, Performance Well-being (CE1112): 95 completions
Leading in the City Environment (CE1145): 59 completions
Live Well Lead Well (CE1115): 233 completions
Leadership Skills for New Supervisors & Managers (CE1257): 21 completions

Employee Retention - How to Motivate and Develop Your Top Performers (CE1167): 69 completions
Key Leadership and Management Skills (CE1169): 73 completions
A Reason to Act: Motivation and Morale (CE1164): 49 completions
Building on Service (CE1212): 22 completions
Citizen & Customer Service for Frontline Supervisors (CE1109): 166 completions
Leading Teams Remotely (CE1103): 41 completions
The Leader & Workplace Today (CE1240): 35 completions
Managing Virtual & Remote Teams (CE1261): 40 completions
Total completions: 3016

Completion Data for OLM Leadership Courses from March 2020 to September 2023

Coaching and mentoring (CE0969): 472 completions
Communication Skills – Frankly Speaking (CE1123): 553 completions
Communication Skills (CE0970): 651 completions
Creating a Positive and Productive Workplace Culture (CE1353): 18 completions
Delegating Tasks (CE1181): 194 completions
Developing a Thriving Team (CE1304): 31 completions
Discovering Motivations (CE1292): 66 completions
Enhancing your Listening Skills (CE1127): 435 completions
Ethical Decision Making (CE1128): 203 completions
Foundations of Conflict Resolution (CE1298): 18 completions
Giving and Receiving Feedback (CE0972): 731 completions
Introduction to Labour Relations (CE1114): 389 completions
Labour Relations Workplace Incident Investigation (CE1157): 251 completions
Leading by Motivating Others (CE1180): 133 completions
Leading with Care (CE1358): 4 completions
Managing Change (CE1130): 185 completions
Managing Conflict Application (CE1131): 138 completions
Managing Conflict Concepts (CE1124): 132 completions
Managing Conflict Styles and Methods (CE1132): 116 completions
Managing Customer Service (CE1294): 23 completions
Managing Difficult People (CE1291): 66 completions
Managing Employee Performance Issues (CE0973): 237 completions
Motivating through Empowerment (CE1179): 94 completions
New Frontline to Supervisor (CE1315): 70 completions
Respectful Workplace Leaders (CE1138): 318 completions
Return to Work (CE1216): 142 completions
Return to the Workplace: Psych (CE1186): 45 completions
Missing Component in Leadership (CE1357): 14 completions
Understanding your Leadership Style (CE1295): 45 completions
Overcoming Common Challenges of Remote Managers (CE1303): 30 completions
Total completions: 5804

Approved Remote Employees By Department

Latest Report on FWP Statistics (2023 Q2) - Updated August 2023

Department	# of Full-Time Remote Employees	# of Part-Time (Hybrid) Remote Employees	TOTAL # of FWP Agreements Ended post-Trial
Assets & Project Management	0	56	0
Assessment & Taxation	0	86	0
Audit	0	4	0
CAO Office & Divisions	3	11	0
City Clerks	0	0	0
Community Services	0	141	0
Corporate Finance (Corporate Divisions)	0	79	0
Customer Service & Communications	0	50	0
Human Resource Services (Corporate Divisions)	20	30	0
Innovation Technology (Corporate Divisions)	85	41	0
Legal Services	2	27	0
Planning, Property & Development	2	246	26
Public Works	34	159	2
Transit	36	48	0
Water & Waste	87	253	1
WFPS	6	44	1
TOTALS	**275**	**1274**	30

Approved Remote Employees by Union

Department Name	Out of Scope	WAPSO	CUPE & CUPE EXEMPT	WFPSOA	UFFW	MGEU
Public Works	17	95	85	0	0	0
WWD	15	168	185	0	0	0
WFPS	9	14	15	4	3	0
PPD	10	88	145	0	0	0
APM	3	32	20	0	0	0
Community Services	14	38	93	0	0	0
Transit	7	9	45	0	0	0
HRS	37	4	10	0	0	1
Audit	4	0		0	0	0
Legal	18	0	11	0	0	0
Innovation & Technology	6	91	29	0	0	0
CAO's Office & Divisions	5	7	2	0	0	0
Corporate Finance	8	23	44	0	0	0
Corp Communications (CSC)	18	4	46	0	0	0
Assessment and Taxation		9	82	0	0	0
Totals	**171**	**582**	**812**	**4**	**3**	**1**

Participating WAPSO Numbers & Supervisory Information

	Total WAPSO Employees	Total Full-Time Remote	Total Hybrid Remote	Total # of Supervisors	Total # of Front-Line Supervisors
Assets & Project Management	37	0	37	16	0
Assessment & Taxation	8	0	8	8	0
CAO Office & Divisions	12	1	11	6	0
Community Services	30	0	30	24	0
Corporate Finance - Corporate	29	0	29	15	0
Customer Service & Communications	5	0	5	1	1
Human Resource Services - Corporate	7	0	7	4	0
Innovation Technology - Corporate	90	67	23	20	0
PPD	84	3	81	42	7
Public Works	91	20	71	48	4
Transit	19	8	11	6	0
Water & Waste	148	24	124	59	0
WFPS	13	4	9	7	0
Totals	**573**	**127**	**446**	**256**	**12**

Positions currently with Full-Time Remote Arrangements

Department	Division	# of FT Staff (in Division)	Types of Positions FT Remote
Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS)	WFPS - Operations	1	Assistant to the Medical Director's Office and Service Quality
Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service	WFPS - Fire Prevention	1	Paramedic Public Education Coordinator
Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service	WFPS - IT	1	Specialist Info Systems
Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service	WFPS - Service Quality	3	QI Analyst
Water & Waste (WWD)	Customer Engagement and Strategic Services Division: Utility Billing Centre (UBC) Branch	29	All UBC Staff: Billing Representatives; Billing Support Representatives; Senior Billing Representatives; Contact Centre Specialist; Systems Coordinator - Business
Water & Waste	WWD - IT	29	Data Scientist; Coordinator, Data & Analytics; Senior Data Engineer; Systems Operations Engineer; Clerk B, Administrative Support; Information Systems Specialist; Programmer Analysts; Supervisor, Data & Applications; Business Systems Analyst; Supervisor, Business Systems Analysis; Coordinator, Data & Applications; Project Coordinator; Project Manager; Coordinator, Utility Solutions & Architecture; Coordinator, Desktop & Mobility; Manager IT
Planning, Property & Development (PPD)	PPD – Innovation & Technology	3	Manager; IT Coordinator; Information Systems Specialist
Planning, Property & Development	PPD – Development & Inspections	1	Plan Examination Engineer

Innovation Technology	Divisions: Corporate Services, Asset & Investment Management, Service & Infrastructure, and Architecture & Risk and Office of the Director	83	Developer; Analyst, Coordinator; Architect; Admin; Project Manager
CAO	Economic Development	3	Neighborhood Profiles Coordinator; and Economic Analyst
HR Services	Labour Relations Division	4	Labour Relations Officers & LR Cost Analyst
HR Services	Total Comp. & Benefits Division	6	Manager, Compensation & Benefits; Senior Compensation Consultant; Compensation & Benefits Coordinator
HR Services	HR Systems & Research Division	8	Manager, HR Systems & Research; PeopleSoft Module Analyst; PeopleSoft Coordinator
HR Services	HR Programs (Employee Development)	1	HR Development Consultant (Due to Accommodation)
HR Services	Corporate HR - IT	1	HR Consultant (IT Portfolio)
Public Works (PWD)	Directors Office	4	Asset Strategic Investment Planner; Communications Officer; Executive Assistant; Coordinator Records and Information Mgmt.
Public Works	Parks & Open Space	2	Asset Management Analyst; GIS Technologist
Public Works	Engineering	4	Bridge Ops Technologist; Project Manager; Engineer
Public Works	PWD - IT	6	Systems Specialist
Public Works	Transportation	8	Engineer; Data Scientist; Technologist 3; Technician 3; Clerk C
Public Works	Streets Maintenance	3	GIS Technologies; Junior Data Scientist; Clerk B

Transit	Transit - IT	17	Programmer / Analyst 2; Information Systems Specialist; Coordinator of Data & Applications
Transit	Client Services	11	Full-time/hybrid configuration in the Transit Contact Centre with customer service representatives (CSR), team leads (TL), and Coordinator

311 Average Annual Call Scores

2019	2020	2021	2023
85.17	86.32	86.25	86.36

Administration reviews a sample size of calls every year and scores them for quality assurance. Anything higher than a score of 80 is considered a pass. Score calls have increased since the implementation of the FWP program.