

UNI GLOBAL UNION:

KEY TRADE UNION PRINCIPLES FOR ENSURING WORKERS' RIGHTS WHEN WORKING REMOTELY



The rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus over the past year, and the subsequent lockdowns, has accelerated the rise of remote work. To support trade unions around the world who are negotiating working conditions for this growing trend, UNI Global Union has developed key principles to advance remote workers' rights.

These guidelines help guarantee that our evolving world of work reconciles workers' requests for more flexibility while safeguarding labour protections. They are centred around the core value that **changing the geographic location of work does not alter the fundamental employment relationship.**

The implications of this tenet for collective bargaining are wide ranging. Employers cannot use remote work as a weapon to weaken trade unions, undermine collective bargaining, and diminish social dialogue. Barring a crisis like the coronavirus pandemic, any shift to remote work must be voluntary, and it should always be

negotiated with work-life balance, minimized surveillance, non-discrimination, and gender-neutrality as key priorities.

As remote work often saves operational costs associated with traditional worksites, employers should shoulder expenses related to telework. Employers must also remain responsible for remote workers' health and safety, including providing comprehensive insurance and liability, sick leave, quality work environments, ergonomics, and violence-free workplaces.

These fundamental principles, and the others discussed in this document, are critical to working people's success outside of traditional jobsites. They ensure that workers and employers can mutually benefit in the growth of remote work. Most importantly, they ensure that working remotely does not mean working without rights.

THE FULL SET OF PRINCIPLES



Employers must guarantee freedom of association and collective bargaining for remote workers.



Employers should remain responsible for the health and safety of workers.



Remote work should not undermine employment rights and the employment relationship with workers.



Work equipment and remote workspace costs should be the employer's responsibility.



Surveillance tools to monitor remote workers should be restricted.



Remote work should be 'gender-neutral' and open to all.



Remote work should be voluntary.



Remote workers should have equal access to training and career development as employees in the physical office.



Employers should respect regular working hours and the right to disconnect.



Prior to introducing or extending remote work rules, trade unions and employers should thoroughly assess and document their impact.