

VPH guide for unit managers: Managing working conditions during the high-impact phase of construction projects

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As part of the preparations for the multiple construction projects, and in anticipation of its potential impact on certain employees, this guide has been created by the VPH for unit managers / line managers and aims to define possible adaptations to working conditions.

In the context of a demolition site generating vibrations, noise and dust, it is not possible to predict the precise impact for each employee, since this depends on the location of their workspace, their tasks and the tools they need to carry out their tasks. Unit managers therefore have the task of assisting their teams in assessing needs and adapting working conditions on a case-by-case basis, while respecting the framework outlined here.

Our recommendations are based on legal provisions, as well as on the regulations applicable to teleworking (LEX 4.1.8) and the regulations concerning the management of working time (RGT - LEX 4.1.4).

Working hours

- Working hours are generally between 7.30am and 6pm. If tasks can be carried out outside normal working hours, a temporary arrangement may be made in agreement with the employee (article 5 of LEX 4.1.4).
- This shift in working hours does not entail any special financial compensation. However, we encourage you to maintain your usual working hours (between 7.30am and 6pm) to ensure a good work-life balance, and we ask line managers to take special cases into account.
 - Evening (until 11pm) and Saturday work is possible as a last resort
 - Night work (11pm to 6am) and Sunday work are not permitted.
- The daily rest requirement must be respected: a minimum period of 11 consecutive hours of rest between two working days must be guaranteed.

Teleworking

- Teleworking requires agreement between the person concerned and his/her line manager (LEX 4.1.8). The rate may be authorized up to 40% per month for an activity rate of 100%. For lower activity rates, the pro rata rule will be applied wherever possible.

In the event of proven and significant nuisance, the line manager may temporarily impose teleworking, even in excess of 40% of working time, for those eligible.

It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that they work in an environment suited to the performance of their duties, in accordance with the provisions of LEX 4.1.8. We recommend that line managers ensure appropriate monitoring of the staff concerned and maintain regular communication throughout the teleworking period.
- Employees with cross-border worker ("frontaliers") status who are resident in France and exempt from withholding tax will lose their exemption as soon as their teleworking rate exceeds 40% of their contractual working time. They must contact salaires@epfl.ch as soon as they exceed this limit.
- For jobs requiring a physical presence, measures to mitigate nuisance can be put in place, the VPO has already anticipated the technical means to minimize this impact.

Vacations

- You can strongly encourage employees directly affected by the construction site to plan and take their vacation during the high disturbance periods, or even to reduce their vacation balance. For more information, please consult the EPFL vacation instructions [here](#).
- As a last resort, the line manager may set vacations unilaterally, subject to three months' notice for the balance of the current year, or one month's notice for the balance of previous

years. Apart from these conditions and periods of notice, the worksite does not constitute a situation in which staff can be required to take vacations.

Inability to work

- If nuisance mitigation measures are not sufficient, and teleworking is not an option, an employee may find himself or herself unable to work.
- This individual situation must be announced and discussed between the line manager and the HR manager. In this case, wages will be maintained.

Doctoral assistants affected by the construction work

If the nuisance caused by the construction site prevents PhD students from carrying out activities essential to their research project, and causes them to fall behind schedule, a case-by-case assessment may be carried out. A contract extension beyond 4 years could be considered in the event of proven impacts. Thesis directors are advised to report such situations to the Doctoral School as soon as possible, so that possible solutions can be explored.

- The extension form is available on the doctoral school's website and must be completed by the doctoral assistant after discussion with his/her thesis director. This form must then be validated and signed by the thesis director, the head of the doctoral program and, finally, by the doctoral school.
 - Once the form has been validated by all signatories, a workflow will be sent to the relevant HR Manager or Generalist to validate the contract extension.

External financing

Any questions concerning third-party funding should be addressed to the Research Office.

If you have any further questions, please contact your dedicated HR Manager or HR Generalist, who will help you with these assessments and, if necessary, refer you to other sources of information or support within or outside the VPH.