

Better Ways of Working - Flexible Working Guidelines

Overview:

Employees will need different types of flexibility at various times in their working lives. It is important that individuals have the opportunity, and that they feel supported to communicate this need with their managers and team. Beneficial outcomes for all are achieved by working together on finding innovative ways to deliver client services and meet the CSO's objectives.

Supportive leadership is critical for the successful implementation of flexible working arrangements. As 'enablers' of workplace flexibility, managers and supervisors play an essential role in the implementation of flexible working practices.

Teamwork plays a vital role in ensuring the successful implementation of flexible working arrangements. Work may need to be redistributed, and team members will need to actively work together to communicate, engage with the process, set expectations, ensure work is shared equitably and build understanding to ensure the business continues to operate effectively.

Setting up a Flexible Working Arrangement:

Flexible work arrangements can be agreed and established through things such as:

- Flexible start times (within bandwidth hours) through discussion between an employee and manager taking into account the team's operational requirements.
- Ad hoc arrangements: such as periodically working from home through discussion or email between an employee and manager considering the team's operational requirements.
- Ongoing or long-term arrangements taking into account the team's operational requirements.

Each team at the CSO is responsible for setting up flexible working arrangements. Flexible working arrangements always need to take the following into account:

- impact on service delivery;
- operational requirements (within the team and broadly across the CSO)
- work to be performed; and
- health and safety requirements of the individual and wider team.

A team-based approach:

We approach the implementation of flexible working arrangements by taking team-based and co-operative approach. To do this, it is important for managers and their staff to:

- Identify the outcomes that need to be maintained or improved.
- Challenge assumptions about jobs, work and what is the best way to achieve outcomes.
- Consider the possibility that jobs, and work can be designed differently.
- Identify flexibility options for team members that will either maintain or improve outcomes for the organisation, clients, team and individuals.
- Establish team based flexible working principles that build a culture of flexibility.

The key elements of a team-based approach to flexible working are:

- Implementing a positive culture that encourages flexible working, where operationally possible.

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- Looking for ways to increase flexibility that will both maintain and enhance performance and well-being for individuals, teams, clients and the agency.
- Considering different options for where, when and how work is done and who does the work.

Other fundamental elements in our approach to flexible work are:

Respect: There is respect for each person's flexibility arrangement, with an understanding of what flexibility means to each team member.

Trust and openness: The approach is based on trust, and on the assumption that all staff are motivated and committed to delivering business outcomes.

Consistency: Flexibility for all team members (irrespective of personal characteristics or circumstances), while acknowledging options for flexible work will vary according to job, team and business requirements.

Two-way street: The team is flexible to meet the reasonable diversity of staff needs and staff are flexible to meet reasonable team needs.

Communication and collaboration: We communicate and collaborate about the use of flexibility; work demands and team capacity.

Things to consider before approving flexible work arrangements:

Before approving flexible working arrangements managers should consider:

- operational requirements and business needs, including the impact on the team and service delivery; and
- the employee's individual circumstances.

A reasonable request for a flexible work arrangement should be favourably considered if it can be accommodated without adverse impacts on operational requirements and business needs. Managers may wish to seek guidance from People and Culture if they have any concerns about a request for flexible work arrangement and having considered the "if not, why not?" principle. Where a proposed flexible work arrangement is declined, the manager should provide an explanation as to how it does not meet operational requirements.

It is expected that all flexible working arrangements will be cost neutral to the CSO. When calculating the potential impacts of a flexible work arrangement, managers should also consider the opportunities that will flow from approving the request.

Flexible working arrangements may be varied or terminated at any time based on changes in operational requirements, business needs and/or the employee's individual circumstances.

All employees, including those working flexibly, are expected to be available to regularly attend the office to meet operational requirements, including for team and client meetings, performance discussions, and other matters.

Work, Health & Safety Considerations:

Employees and Managers must work together to identify, avoid and mitigate all work, health safety ("WHS") risks that may arise from a flexible working arrangement.

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Employees who want to work from home need to complete the WHS (Work from Home, Work Health and Safety Checklist) self-assessment of the area where work will be carried out. Subject to the WHS self-assessment being acceptable, each subsequent request for a Work from Home (WFH) arrangement will not require a further WHS self-assessment, provided there has been no relevant change to the home working environment.

If there has been a relevant change to the home working environment or alternative place of work, the employee is required to inform their manager and complete a further WHS self-assessment prior to undertaking any further work.

Injuries while carrying out work

Employees must immediately advise their manager of any injury or WHS incident that occurs while carrying out work under a flexible working arrangement.

The Employee must also complete an [INCIDENT & INJURY REPORT](#) and email it to [MAILTO:CSOWHS@CSO.NSW.GOV.AU](mailto:CSOWHS@CSO.NSW.GOV.AU) and cc: your supervisor and/or Manager. All incident reports must be completed as soon as possible (within 24 hours of occurring).