

Flexible working frequently asked questions

What is the Flexible Working Policy?

On 5 August 20205, The Premiers Department released a Circular C2024-03 NSW Government Sector workplace presence (the Circular) directing that Government Sector employees should work principally in an approved workplace, office or related work site.

Our Flexible Working Policy outlines the principles for implementing flexible working arrangements, ensuring they are equitable, transparent, and aligned with our obligations under Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, Gender Equality principles, and the Workplace Gender Equality Act (WGEA).

What is changing?

Many of our people currently work from home or other locations on an informal basis.

The new Flexible Working Policy means you will now need to submit a request to approve regular flexible working arrangements to ensure you can balance work and personal commitments while still meeting the needs of our department.

By formalising these flexible working arrangements, we can reduce the risks of remote work and keep employees connected and supported.

Can I still work from home?

Yes, but the expectation is that you should work mainly in an approved workplace, noting that we want to achieve an even spread across the working week and make the best use of our office space.).

What approvals do I need to work from home?

- **Ad-hoc Requests:** If you need to work from home occasionally, no formal approval is needed. Just discuss it with your manager.
- **Formal Requests:** For more regular working from home arrangements, your manager will review your request, considering:
 - The impact on your team
 - Your role and responsibilities
 - The department's needs
 - Your personal circumstances
- **Further Approval:**
 - If your request includes working mostly from home, your manager will forward the request to your **Deputy Secretary / Commissioner / CEO** for further approval.
 - If your request includes working outside NSW, your manager will forward the request to the **Secretary** for further approval.

All approved flexible working arrangements will be reviewed regularly, usually as part of your performance review, to ensure they are still working for both you and the department.

How many days will I need to work in the office?

While there is no prescribed pattern of attendance, the expectation is that you work mainly in an approved workplace.

Being in the office is important for employee wellbeing, teamwork, and connection. It helps build a sense of belonging and teamwork that can be hard to achieve when working remotely.

Do we still support flexible working arrangements?

Our new policy doesn't change the availability of flexible working arrangements in the department.

Flexible working means you can adjust **how**, **when**, and **where** you work. A variety of flexible working arrangements are still available, including flexible start and finish times, job-sharing, part-time work, career breaks and more.

We understand that flexible working is important to support people with carer's responsibilities and other commitments, and to meet the needs of people with diverse lived experience.

Since joining, I have had a flexible hybrid work pattern that has been successful. How can I maintain this same flexibility under our new policy?

We aren't removing flexible work arrangements, and working from home will continue to be part of flexible working options.

There are no immediate changes to your current work patterns, but if you're not already, please start talking to your manager about planning to work principally in an approved workplace.

How will we accommodate everyone in the office?

Some of us have recently moved to new accommodation in the McKell building where additional workspaces have been secured to support us all to work flexibly.

This applies to our other worksites such as Cumberland Street (DNSW), and 4 Parramatta Square (H&R).

It's important that our people spread attendance across all days of the working week and make full use of our desk capacity.

Many employees have carer's responsibilities and other commitments. How is this being considered?

We value and support our people who have carer's responsibilities, community responsibilities and who value working on Country to build culture, community and connections.

It's important that when you're working at home, you should be free of primary caring responsibilities so you can focus on your work.

You should continue having ongoing conversations with your manager about flexible working arrangements.

I am currently recruiting for a role in my team and candidates are asking about our flexible working arrangements, what do I tell them?

We continue to offer a range of flexible working arrangements including flexible start and finish times, job-sharing, part-time work, career breaks and more.

In terms of location, our staff are required to work principally from an approved workplace, but requests to work from home on ad-hoc or regular basis are possible giving consideration to the wider needs of the department, the team, the individual and stakeholders.

Has the Union (Public Service Association) been consulted, and will they be consulted?

The union have been consulted on our approach and the draft policy.

Will the Policy or Circular change based on the consultation?

Feedback during consultation will be considered in finalising the department's Flexible Working Policy.

The Circular is not the subject of consultation.

How can I provide feedback on the policy?

You can share your feedback on the draft policy by filling in the feedback form [link to be added]. More information about the Policy and how it will be implemented is available on the Change Hub [link to be added] on the intranet.

What happens after consultation ends?

All feedback will be considered and consolidated in a Policy consultation outcome report.

Any feedback that requires significant changes to the draft Policy will be updated and shared with the Executive Leadership team for endorsement, before progressing to the Secretary for approval.

When will the final policy be released and effective from?

It is proposed that the Flexible Working Policy to take effect from February 2025 to allow our people time to transition to the new arrangements.

Will there be a form to complete for a formal flexible working agreement?

People and Capability will develop an electronic form and share with employees as part of the rollout of the policy.

I'm feeling uneasy about the policy and consultation, who can I speak to?

You can talk to your manager, a P&C Business Partner or reach out to the [Employee Assistance Program](#).

I live in Sydney and attend the office 5 days a week and work from home on an ad hoc basis. Can I continue this arrangement?

Yes, as this an ad hoc request, there's no need to submit a flexible working agreement form. When you would like to work from home. Just speak to your manager and seek their approval as per the current process.

I have a tradesperson coming over to fix something, can I work from home without formal approval?

Yes. You don't need a formal approval by your manager for an ad hoc work from home day. Just seek approval from your manager.

I have a sick child at home whose care will not interfere with my work. Can I work from home without formal approval?

Yes. Just seek approval from your manager.

I need to focus on a particular work task without distraction (e.g. preparation of a complex written document or detailed data analysis). Can I work from home without formal approval?

Yes, this can be considered as an ad-hoc arrangement if you generally work in the office. Just seek approval from your manager.

I am unwell, do I need formal approval to work from home?

If you are unwell you should apply for sick leave. If you feel ok to work but don't want to expose others to your illness, follow current process of checking in with your manager to request to work from home. Refer to the sick leave conditions of employment provided for in the [Crown Employees \(Public Service Conditions of Employment\) Reviewed Award 2009](#) (Conditions Award) for further information on sick leave.

I want to work from home one or two days each week as a 'focus day'. Do I need to submit a formal request to my manager to get this approved?

Yes, you will need to complete a formal flexible working arrangement request and forward it to your manager for approval.

Your manager will consider factors, such as the impact on your team, your role and responsibilities, the department's needs and your personal circumstances.

I have a workplace adjustment due to disability and/or medical condition – do I need to renegotiate it now?

No, these adjustments will continue as agreed. If your circumstances change the adjustment will need to be reviewed.

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