

Flexible Work

Summary This Policy Directive sets out the requirements and various options which may be considered when implementing flexible work arrangements for NSW Health employees.

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Flexible Work

Policy Statement

NSW Health is committed to flexible working that caters to the needs of our employees and the individuals we support. This approach aligns with the requirements of the NSW Premier's Department Circular C2024-03 [NSW Government Sector workplace presence](#), applicable legislative requirements, award provisions and related policies and procedures.

This commitment allows NSW Health agencies and their employees to collaborate and, where appropriate, adopt flexible work arrangements that suit their work styles, while maintaining and improving service delivery and health outcomes.

This Policy Directive sets out the requirements and various options which may be considered when implementing flexible work arrangements for NSW Health employees.

Summary of Policy Requirements

Employees should build their awareness of what flexible working could look like for their role to propose arrangements that could work for them, their team and the NSW Health agency.

Managers should discuss flexible work in team meetings, confirming their commitment to creating a work environment that allows employees to meet their personal and professional goals. They must also ensure the needs of the team and broader NSW Health are met.

Some flexible work arrangements, particularly hybrid work arrangements, won't suit every role or employee, but all NSW Health employees can discuss with their manager flexible work options that may be available to them.

Flexible work arrangements are:

- temporary
- subject to individual assessment, review and approval, and
- where approved:
 - reviewed after an initial trial period of 1-3 months, and
 - every 12 months from the end of the trial period.

Within NSW Health the default arrangement for workplace presence is to work principally in an approved NSW Health workplace.

Approved flexible working arrangements can vary from this default but must ensure efficient use of workspaces in NSW Health workplaces across the working week.

All NSW Health employees seeking a flexible work arrangement are to apply and receive approval via the Flexible Work Arrangement Request form available in Search and Request Anything (SARA).

Revision History

Version	Approved By	Amendment Notes
PD2025_005 February-2025	Secretary	New Policy Directive, replacing previous NSW Health Guideline <i>Flexible Work (More than one way to work)</i> [GL2023_020].
GL2023_020 August-2023	Deputy Secretary People, Culture and Governance	New Guideline.

Contents

Contents	1
1. Background	2
1.1. About this document	2
1.2. Flexible work principles	2
1.2.1. Flexibility arising from award, legislative and/or other policy provisions.....	3
1.3. Key definitions.....	3
1.4. NSW Government Sector Workplace Presence Requirements.....	4
2. Flexible Work Options – when, how and where	5
2.1. Benefits of flexible working.....	7
2.2. Meeting the challenges of flexible working	7
2.3. Making the flexible work arrangement work	9
3. Flexible Work Arrangements – Application, Approval and Review	11
3.1. General considerations	11
3.1.1. Applying for flexible work arrangements.....	11
3.1.2. Approving flexible work arrangements.....	11
3.1.3. Review of declined flexible work applications	12
3.1.4. Trial periods for flexible work arrangements	12
3.1.5. Ongoing assessment of flexible work arrangements	13
3.2. Responsibilities	13
4. Appendices.....	14
4.1. Frequently asked questions	15

1. Background

NSW Health is committed to an approach to flexible working that is responsive to the needs of our employees and those supported by NSW Health. This approach aligns with the requirements of the NSW Premier's Department Circular C2024-03 [NSW Government Sector workplace presence](#) (NSW Premier's Department Circular), applicable legislative requirements, award provisions and associated policies and procedures.

This commitment enables NSW Health agencies and their employees to collaborate and, where appropriate, implement flexible work arrangements that align with the way they work, while maintaining and improving service delivery and health outcomes.

Some flexible work arrangements, particularly hybrid work arrangements, won't work for every role or every employee, but all NSW Health employees can initiate a conversation with their manager about the type of flexible work options that may be available to them.

1.1. About this document

This Policy Directive sets out the requirements and various options which may be considered when implementing flexible work arrangements for NSW Health employees.

1.2. Flexible work principles

Flexible work arrangements are:

- temporary
- subject to individual assessment, review and approval, and
- where approved:
 - reviewed after an initial trial period of 1-3 months, and
 - every 12 months from the end of the trial period.

Flexible work arrangements must consider the following:

- Legislative requirements, award provisions and applicable policies and procedures including the NSW Premier's Department Circular.
- Safety, wellbeing and work-life balance requirements of the employee, including suitability of the proposed work from home or other environment, ergonomics, physical and psychological safety and connectivity.
- Fair and equitable access including consideration of the unique needs of the employee, their role and their surrounding team.
- Type of work being undertaken and the best place to undertake the work including whether the role requires a physical presence in the workplace (particularly for frontline positions).
- Productivity and service requirements including the impact on consumers/end users of the service/function provided by the team.

- Ad hoc variations to arrangements may be required by the employee or the employer.
- Impacts on development, team culture and knowledge sharing.
- Support of new employees during orientation, onboarding and ongoing.
- Availability of accommodation, workspaces and ensuring work is principally undertaken in an approved NSW Health workplace.

1.2.1. Flexibility arising from award, legislative and/or other policy provisions

While anyone can request flexibility, there are circumstances where an employee has a specific right to flexibility due to their individual circumstances. This may arise from the employee’s applicable award conditions, relevant legislation and/or other policies or procedures. Examples include:

- parental leave, including return on reduced hours
- domestic and family violence leave
- flex time arrangements
- workplace adjustments relating to disability, injury or illness
- family, domestic or community responsibility related leave
- flexibility provisions.

These requirements and provisions exist separately to this Policy Directive and are not covered or overridden by it. Therefore, there is no requirement for application or approval of a flexible working arrangement to access these provisions. However, other approval processes may be required.

1.3. Key definitions

Approved NSW Health Workplace	An employee’s approved official NSW Health office or facility-based location where they predominately perform their work.
Employee	A person employed directly by NSW Health.
Flexible working hours	Working different hours as part of a flexible working arrangement.
Hybrid working	A combination of working remotely in a location other than an approved NSW Health workplace, such as an employee’s home or other location, and working onsite in an approved NSW Health workplace.
Job-share	Where a single full-time role is undertaken by more than one employee. Each are paid on a part-time basis for the hours they work.

<p>Part-time work</p>	<p>A work pattern where an employee works fewer than full-time hours. In the context of flexible work arrangements, this would normally mean a temporary part-time or reduced hours arrangement.</p> <p>A request for part-time work arrangement which arises from an award or other policy provision, for example, returning to work from parental leave, is managed in accordance with such provisions and does not require a flexible work arrangement.</p> <p>This does not prevent the employee requesting other flexible work arrangements in accordance with this Policy Directive.</p>
<p>Manager</p>	<p>The person that a NSW Health employee directly reports to.</p>
<p>Remote working</p>	<p>Where an employee is working from home or another location that is not an approved NSW Health Workplace.</p>
<p>Workplace Presence</p>	<p>Being physically present in an approved NSW Health workplace, that being an employee’s official NSW Health facility, office or facility-based location.</p>

1.4. NSW Government Sector Workplace Presence Requirements

The NSW Premier’s Department Circular provides guidance and establishes requirements for NSW Government agencies and their employees relating to presence in NSW Government workplaces including:

- The need to develop agency specific flexible work policies that meet the reasonable requests of employees.
- The requirement of principally working in an approved office, workplace or related work site.
- Acknowledgement that many NSW Government sector employees work on the front-line and attend their workplace as part of their front-line duties.

Within NSW Health the default arrangement for workplace presence is to work principally in an approved NSW Health workplace.

Approved flexible working arrangements can vary from this default but must not compromise the effective utilisation of workspaces in NSW Health workplaces across the full working week.

2. Flexible Work Options – when, how and where

Managers and employees discussing flexible working arrangements are to start from the position of how this can work for all parties - the individual, the team and the NSW Health agency. The discussion is to also include:

- Being creative and solutions-focused: flexibility can take many forms.
- No one size fits all: everybody and every situation is different.
- Being open to options and focused on outcomes.
- Cultivating an open and trusting environment.

Poor performance is not a reason to deny a flexible work application but may guide appropriate options for such working arrangements.

Flexible working must be mutually beneficial to the employee and NSW Health. This means that flexibility is to create the best outcome for all parties and will not negatively impact on service delivery.

<p>WHEN work is done</p>	<p>Flexible working hours and scheduling: An alternative to the traditional 9am to 5pm, 35/38/40-hour work week, allowing variance to start/finish times.</p> <p>Flexible rostering: Employees submit requests for the shifts they would prefer to work and the days they prefer to be rostered off. The roster is then built taking these requests into consideration, trying to accommodate requests where possible and practical.</p>
<p>HOW work is done</p>	<p>Part-time: Fewer than full-time hours are worked. Note the days/hours worked can be varied by mutual agreement. In the context of flexible work, these are usually temporary part-time or reduced hours arrangements.</p> <p>Job-share: A full-time role is undertaken by more than one employee who is paid on a part-time basis for the hours they work. See the Public Service Commission Job-share resource.</p> <p>Shift swapping: Allow shift workers to trade shifts with each other, enabling flexibility to meet both work and personal needs (subject to notification and approval).</p> <p>Flexibility in task within a team or collaboration across teams: assigning work based on strengths or share people across teams as needed.</p>

WHERE work is done

Locations where work is performed: Within NSW Health the default arrangement for workplace presence is to work principally in an approved NSW Health workplace.

Flexible work arrangements may include consideration of working from a different NSW Health workplace. For example, a NSW Health facility that is closer to the employee's home or to the services that they or their team provide compared to their main or 'home' NSW Health workplace.

Interstate and overseas locations: Flexible work arrangements involving working from interstate are generally not approved. However, an exception applies for employees who work for NSW Health agencies bordering other States and Territories, where the home or other proposed work location is within a practical travelling distance to their approved NSW Health workplace. This ensures they can still attend their workplace when required.

Working from interstate other than in the circumstances above is generally not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Working from overseas is generally not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Such arrangements have separate request and approval processes, with NSW Health Agency Chief Executive and Secretary approval required. Where such arrangements are supported, the Flexible Work Arrangement Request form available in Search and Request Anything (SARA) is to be completed after Chief Executive and Secretary approval.

Risks including any network and/or system security issues, and the ability to be recalled into the office, may make such arrangements impractical.

Conversely, working interstate arrangements may make sense in NSW Health agencies with proximity to borders and where employees live across the border from their work facility. Arrangements may also be considered for employees living regionally, away from their NSW Health agency head office.

Working from interstate or overseas may have implications for workers' compensation insurance coverage. When considering such arrangements, reference is to be made to the State Insurance Regulatory Authority's [Cross-border arrangements for workers compensation](#). Any costs associated with workers compensation for overseas or interstate employees are generally not met by the Treasury Managed Fund scheme.

The Department of Customer Service Circular DCS-2022-03 [Accessing NSW Government digital systems while overseas](#) also stipulates requirements including:

*“Any request to work **overseas** must be approved by the relevant Deputy Secretary or higher, with consultation with the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) or equivalent on a by exception basis. Agencies must ensure they are appropriately managing risks to their employees, information and assets.”*

Note: The requirement for Chief Executive and Secretary approval does not apply to NSW Health employees who are required to cross into other States and Territories as part of their work with NSW Health. It only applies where

NOTE	<p>such a situation is proposed under a flexible work application.</p> <p>The above are provided as examples of flexible arrangements. Not all of these will be applicable to an individual NSW Health employee's circumstances based on their role, award provisions and so forth.</p> <p>For irregular arrangements (for example, to work from a different location not subject to an existing approval), it's reasonable for individuals to provide as much notice as possible.</p>
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2.1. Benefits of flexible working

Enhanced ability to attract great employees

Flexibility is desirable for prospective employees and may help NSW Health to attract top talented people to its job roles.

Improved work-life balance

Flexibility may help employees manage a range of personal commitments alongside their professional responsibilities, reducing stress and enhancing their overall wellbeing.

Increased job satisfaction

Employees who have opportunities to work flexibly may have greater job satisfaction as part of a supportive culture which increases productivity and engagement.

Improved teamwork and inclusion

Teamwork often improves as knowledge and enthusiasm is shared among a more motivated flexible working team. Flexible teams can also be more inclusive.

Improved output

For jobs requiring concentration, working remotely or working during hours when the office/workplace is quieter may improve the quality and efficiency of work. Conversely, being present in the office/workplace with others can lead to effective collaboration.

Employee retention

Retaining existing corporate knowledge and skills is important as it ensures the maximum return on investment in recruitment and training. Offering flexibility may improve employee retention and reduce the likelihood of employees leaving.

Reduced pressure on office spaces

Office spaces can be occupied by different employees at different times or days of the week, increasing capacity for employees within NSW Health workplaces across the full working week.

2.2. Meeting the challenges of flexible working

Challenges for managers in implementing flexible work arrangements may include:

Challenge	Strategies to address
<p>Ensuring employee safety and wellbeing in remote locations</p>	<p>Consult with employees about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate design of working environment • ergonomics and equipment (including adequate internet) • planning for emergencies • contact agreements with manager and the team • consideration of other risks, such as domestic and family violence • incident and injury reporting • hours of work including when to disconnect to ensure separation between work and non-work periods.
<p>Productivity and service delivery</p>	<p>Identify performance outcomes and how they are measured.</p> <p>Discuss potential impacts of flexible arrangements and how the team will manage them.</p> <p>Trial flexible work options and measure, review and engage the team to measure, review and revise.</p>
<p>Employees might expect flexibility without understanding impact on the team</p>	<p>Regularly discuss shared responsibilities.</p> <p>Ensure working flexibly works for the whole team and the team work together to resolve any issues.</p> <p>Foster a team and cooperative approach to flexibility.</p>
<p>Perceptions that employees wanting to work flexibly are not as committed to performing the work and/or engaging with the team</p>	<p>Ensure the team understand that working flexibly does not mean less commitment.</p> <p>Trial flexible arrangements and actively discuss and measure performance outcomes.</p> <p>Ensure career development discussions and initiatives are not compromised by flexible working.</p>

<p>Lack of visibility over whether employees are performing their work</p>	<p>Set and agree on clear, outcomes-focused goals.</p> <p>Have regular team and 1:1 check ins.</p> <p>Raise issues of concern early and resolve them quickly.</p>
<p>Team communication and connection may be compromised</p>	<p>Agree to communication protocols and channels. Use available technology.</p> <p>Ensure that wellbeing remains a priority when working flexibly.</p> <p>Establish protocols to deal with potential wellbeing impacts such as isolation and inclusion.</p>
<p>Ensuring equitable access to flexibility</p>	<p>Discuss flexible work options as a team.</p> <p>Have confidential conversations with individuals about flexibility requests.</p> <p>Understand that ensuring the same access to flexible work does not mean the same type of flexible arrangement for each employee.</p> <p>Consider individual and team circumstances when deciding on flexible work arrangements.</p>
<p>Scheduling work and meetings can be difficult</p>	<p>Discuss required coverage, meeting attendance and expectations and resolve scheduling conflicts as a team.</p> <p>Reinforce expectations that the team is flexible in their approach to meet work commitments and support the team.</p>
<p>Maintaining a sense of belonging</p>	<p>Take proactive steps to ensure team connection and communication is maintained. Employees feeling that they ‘belong’ in a workplace is an important measure of feeling valued.</p>
<p>Maintaining confidentiality</p>	<p>Establish work practices to ensure confidentiality of sensitive information is not compromised in a hybrid working arrangement.</p>

2.3. Making the flexible work arrangement work

Communication is key

Managers and their teams need to be open about what they want to achieve. They are to offer solutions about how the flexible arrangement(s) within the team will work together and address any emerging issues as they arise.

Irrespective of the type of arrangements in place, regular communication about how things are going and any adjustments that may be required is critical to ongoing success.

Setting up team protocols

Team protocols are effective ways of supporting flexible work arrangements. For example, agreeing on processes to communicate if a team member is working part-time, has changed their hours of work or is working from a different location.

Team protocols may address:

- Processes for team meetings and sharing information.
- How the team use email, collaborative technology including Microsoft Teams, phone/video conferencing, and when site-based meetings will be required.
- Structure of site-based or virtual meetings to get the most out of time when the team is connecting.
- Protocols required to ensure confidentiality while working away from the office.
- Any regular meetings/events that everyone in the team is expected to attend in person, regardless of flexible work arrangements (such as significant meetings, planning days and so forth).
- How the team ensures they can be responsive to urgent and unexpected requests.

Presence, productivity and planning

It is a reasonable expectation that team members coordinate their flexible working arrangements to ensure adequate work coverage across the week to support the work that needs to be done. Achieving this may require additional planning, team-based discussions, use of work schedules and calendars.

Front-line roles present different challenges, although the same considerations and requirements around flexible work still apply. The need to maintain service delivery needs to be discussed and followed by a team-based conversation about how the service can be successfully delivered in a flexible work environment.

Give and take

Flexible working doesn't mean an employee's flexible work application will always be approved or is not subject to change. Not all types of flexibility are suitable for every role, or every employee, all the time. Flexibility requires give and take between the employee, manager and team. It also places mutual obligations on the employee, manager and team to make flexible working a success for all stakeholders.

When assessing a request that is initially considered unsuitable, the manager is to discuss with the employee and suggest alternative flexible working arrangements that may still meet the employee's needs.

Maintain physical and mental wellbeing

In a hybrid working model, it can be more difficult to notice if a team member is not feeling well. Managers need to be active in reaching out and checking on their team members.

Employees can reach out to their manager, team member or via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for support and assistance if they are feeling unsafe, unwell or experiencing other issues that affect their wellbeing.

Employees are to take regular breaks away from their desk to minimise physical discomfort. In the workplace this can mean a short walk around the office or undertaking gentle stretching exercises. The same principle applies when working remotely.

Ensuring the home-based working environment is physically safe, including appropriate workstation ergonomics, is equally important as it is when working from an approved NSW Health workplace.

Although some tasks can be successfully done remotely, they are often more effectively performed in person. These activities include coaching, counselling, providing advice and feedback, welcoming new employees and collaborative work.

3. Flexible Work Arrangements – Application, Approval and Review

3.1. General considerations

Employees should build their awareness of what flexible working could look like for their role in order to propose arrangements that could work for them, their team and the NSW Health agency.

In addition to the flexible work options outlined in this Policy Directive, employees may also consider how existing leave entitlements could support them in balancing work with study, family, community or other personal matters or commitments. This could include taking long service leave at half pay or regular short periods of leave by agreement with their manager.

Managers should also have conversations about flexible work in team meetings, confirming their commitment to creating a work environment that allows employees to meet their personal and professional goals. In addition, they are to ensure the needs of the team and broader NSW Health are met.

3.1.1. Applying for flexible work arrangements

The first step is for a meaningful confidential conversation to take place between the employee and their manager to discuss possible flexible working options.

The next step is to submit a flexible work application via the Flexible Work Arrangement Request form available in Search and Request Anything (SARA).

3.1.2. Approving flexible work arrangements

When a manager receives a request for a flexible work arrangement, they are to consider the following:

- Is the proposed arrangement in line with:

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- the requirements of the NSW Premier's Department Circular C2024-03 [NSW Government Sector workplace presence](#)
 - the applicable award
 - relevant legislation including work health and safety requirements, and
 - applicable NSW Health policies?
- The employee's key duties, job role and responsibilities and do these duties need to be done at set times or locations?
 - The needs of the employee, team and the NSW Health agency?
 - Who and how does the employee interact with others in the normal course of their work, and will the proposed arrangement affect these interactions?
 - How to ensure equity and fairness?

Managers are to:

- Consider all flexible work applications on a case-by-case basis whilst taking a consistent approach to review and approval.
- Assess the merits and potential challenges.
- Provide advice on the outcome or, at minimum, an update to the applying employee on their flexible work application within 3 weeks from the date of receiving the application.

Any approved arrangements that affect payroll are to be processed via the applicable system. Existing processes and forms must be used where applicable, for example, temporary part-time work arrangements.

3.1.3. Review of declined flexible work applications

Where a flexible working arrangement cannot be accommodated, and an alternate agreement cannot be reached, the employee may request a review of the manager's decision. Refer to the relevant NSW Health agency people and culture team for advice on the review of flexible work applications.

3.1.4. Trial periods for flexible work arrangements

All new flexible working arrangements are to be trialed for an initial period, to test the arrangement and guide any adjustment that may be required. The length of the trial will depend on the new arrangement being considered but will be within the range of 1-3 months.

The manager and employee are to monitor for any challenges that arise during the trial period and discuss any associated adjustments that may be required.

Where the trial period is successful and any necessary adjustments have been made, the arrangement can then be approved for a further period of up to 12 months. It is recommended that the 12-month review aligns with the employee's annual performance development review.

3.1.5. Ongoing assessment of flexible work arrangements

Flexible work arrangements are temporary agreements and are subject to ongoing review and assessment at least annually to identify and review any issues raised by the employee or manager. The review may result in:

- no change
- revision of the existing agreement
- a new agreement, or
- withdrawal of flexible arrangements.

Overly frequent reviews are to be avoided unless concerns and issues have not been addressed satisfactorily.

Where a new agreement is to be implemented following the assessment, it can be approved for a further period of up to 12 months.

Where an employee changes roles, a new application for a flexible work arrangement is to be submitted.

3.2. Responsibilities

Senior Leaders

- Promote, encourage and champion flexible working in NSW Health within the parameters of the NSW Premier's Department Circular.
- Encourage managers to discuss flexible working opportunities.
- Lead by example and role model behaviour that supports flexible working.
- Discuss how to enable flexible working or alternative arrangements.
- Where required, review declined flexible work applications and support managers and employees to reach agreement and/or alternative strategies.
- Share benefits and positive learnings arising from approved flexible work practices within their teams.
- Systems are in place for recording and reporting on flexible work arrangements.

Managers

- Lead by example and model behaviours that support flexible working.
- Engage in discussions with the team on what flexible options may be available.
- Include a discussion about flexible work arrangements as part of new starter onboarding.
- Consider flexible work applications with an open mind and approach discussions in a constructive, problem-solving manner.
- Ensure that arrangements are documented appropriately, reviewed on a regular basis and adjusted if needed.

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- Manage team workload and performance including flexible working arrangements.
 - Refer declined flexible work applications to their senior leader for further discussion and consideration where the application remains disputed.
 - Discuss and support development requirements within the team.
 - Ensure communication, including regular check-ins, to manage issues and emergencies.
 - Make sure the team has access to relevant technology and appropriate training.
 - Ensure compliance with award conditions, agreements and relevant legislation.
 - Share benefits and positive learnings arising from approved flexible work practices within their teams.
 - Ensuring flexible work arrangements are documented and regularly reviewed, at least annually, in line with NSW Health agency systems and processes.

Employees

- Participate constructively in team discussions about flexible working arrangements.
- Develop proposals to address business needs and any possible impacts.
- Deliver agreed work outcomes within the predetermined timeframes.
- Ensure any flexible work arrangement meets work health and safety requirements, maintains security and safe custody of equipment, information systems and data.
- Ensure performance and conduct meets expectations during the arrangement.
- If working flexibly, ensure they have a documented and approved flexible work arrangement.

Teams

- Support colleagues who work flexibly.
- Share successes and lessons learnt.
- Develop proposals to address team needs and any possible impacts.
- Participate in training as required and use technology effectively as an enabler to flexible work.
- Work collaboratively to raise and address any issues that may arise from changed arrangements.

4. Appendices

1. Frequently asked questions

4.1. Frequently asked questions

Do I need a flexible work arrangement?

If you are seeking to work flexibly or have been working flexibly without a formal arrangement, you will need to apply for a flexible work arrangement.

This excludes arrangements which are covered under award conditions or where an employee has a specific right to flexibility due to their individual circumstances. In such circumstances a flexible work arrangement is not required (see [section 1.2.1](#). Flexibility arising from award, legislative and/or other policy provisions for more information).

Can I apply for a flexible work arrangement?

Any employee can submit a proposal for a flexible work arrangement. However, not all roles are suitable for each type of flexible arrangement. It is in the employee's interest to discuss proposed flexible work arrangements with their manager prior to applying. Consideration is to be given to all flexible work applications to establish whether they can meet the needs of the individual, the team and the service or function.

How do I establish a flexible work arrangement?

Consider the potential impacts an arrangement might have on you, your colleagues and the work you do. Once you have an idea of what's possible, talk to your manager about what you are proposing and how this can be achieved without negatively impacting your work and your team. After your discussion, the next step is to submit a flexible work application.

How long can I have a flexible work arrangement in place?

New arrangements are subject to a trial period of 1-3 months. This allows you and your manager some time to see what is working well and what may need adjustment.

Adjustments (if necessary) can then be made before putting a longer-term arrangement in place for a further period of up to 12 months.

No role can work remotely on a permanent basis. Flexible arrangements are temporary and must be re-assessed at least annually to make sure they are working well.

Can a flexible work application be denied?

NSW Health strives to support flexible work arrangements where practicable. However, from time to time, not all applications are able to be accommodated. A manager's decision to accept or deny a flexible work application will consider the requirements of this Policy Directive and a range of other factors including:

- legal obligations
- impacts on the team and/or services provided by the team
- availability of required technology

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- any associated costs.

A flexible work application may be denied if it is unable to meet work health and safety requirements, and security and safe custody requirements for NSW Health equipment, information systems and data.

You can request feedback on the decision on your flexible work application. Your manager may discuss whether any alternatives to the original application might work and can discuss suitable alternative flexible arrangements that will balance your needs with the needs of the role, team/service.

You will be provided with reasons as to why a proposed arrangement has been denied, and you can request a review of this decision by following your local dispute resolution processes.

Can my flexible working arrangement be terminated at any time?

Generally, flexible working arrangements will stop when there's a mutual agreement to do so. In some instances, arrangements can be terminated by the employer or the employee by giving reasonable notice, based on the nature of the flexible arrangement. Reasonable notice will depend on individual circumstances, but as a guide may be one roster period or 4 weeks.

In exceptional circumstances, arrangements can stop immediately, such as in cases of misconduct, health and wellbeing issues warrant such action, or where there are urgent or emerging operational requirements. In such cases, careful consideration is to be taken to address any consequences, for example, impact on childcare where the flexible arrangement needs to cease or change.

Termination of flexible arrangements must comply with the relevant award and any other applicable legislative requirements.

Once a flexible work arrangement has been approved, how can it be introduced smoothly into the team?

It is important to ensure that the team is consulted when new working arrangements are introduced that have a broad impact. For example, it would be useful for the team to agree to procedures for:

- Methods of briefing employees on new tasks, progress or ongoing tasks.
- Methods of dealing with forwarding communication (such as calls from the office or urgent correspondence).
- How and when performance is assessed.
- How and when meetings will be scheduled and conducted.

How is work monitored when flexible work arrangements are in place?

All employees are expected to meet the same standards and employee performance must not be adversely affected by a flexible work arrangement.

Where part-time or remote working arrangements are in place, managers are to establish a structured approach for agreeing on work to be completed, including deliverables, evaluation and management.

Communication is especially important for those working in a hybrid environment. Employees working remotely are still required to attend meetings or other events either in person or online. This is to form part of the flexible work arrangement.

Remote working practices are not to deviate from standards and expectations of employees working in the office/facility. For example, private appointments during the day are to be recorded and appropriate leave taken or reflected in time worked. Hours worked, along with start, finish and break times must comply with applicable award requirements.

Confidentiality while working remotely and adhering to record keeping requirements, proper use of official information and equipment is required under the [NSW Health Code of Conduct](#).

Can I change my bandwidth or core time hours?

This is only applicable to employees engaged under awards which include bandwidth and core time hours requirements.

It is possible to change your bandwidth/core time but only if the industrial instrument that regulates your hours of work allows for this to occur. Such arrangements must also meet operational needs, not incur significant additional costs and comply with any other relevant criteria.

Can I compress my working hours/days?

This will be dependent on a range of factors including award conditions, service provision requirements and work health and safety considerations.

Can I change my primary office location to another NSW Health workplace which is closer to my home?

This can be considered as part of an application for a flexible work arrangement. However, its practicality will depend on individual circumstances.

Is remote working an option available to everyone?

No, remote working will not be possible for many roles within NSW Health due to the nature of the role requirements, such as frontline/patient-facing roles and where the work is required to be performed onsite.

Whether a particular flexible work arrangement is feasible for an individual employee depends on a variety of factors, including the nature of the work, impact on the team and the employee. Some examples include:

- Work that requires a physical presence onsite to complete and cannot be done remotely.

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- An employee who needs additional support (such as during their probationary period) may be required to be at work when the manager/supervisor is present.
 - An employee who needs to have constant, easy access to materials or equipment may need to be present when they are accessible.
 - No employee is permitted to vary their work arrangement to one that will put them in a potentially dangerous situation, including but not limited to, personal safety, lacking or inadequate equipment/technology or security concerns.

Note: The NSW Health Policy and Procedure Manual [Protecting People and Property](#) contains specific requirements at section 26.4 *Managing the risk of violence when working from a remote location (i.e. working from home)*.

Can I work from home if my child, another dependent or I am sick?

You cannot use remote working to meet ongoing caring responsibilities. Working from home may still be possible if you can work with minimal disruption. For example, caring for your parent or an older child who does not require constant supervision or care.

If the person that is sick requires constant care that would prevent you from being able to fulfil the inherent requirements of your role, then you must make alternative arrangements for the day, such as taking other forms of leave. It is important to not work from home if you are unwell, in the same way that you would not attend work if unwell.

You must always follow your NSW Health agency's flexible work processes and discuss such situations with your manager.

How do I know if my hybrid work location is suitably setup for hybrid work?

It is important that your hybrid work location is safe and able to support you in the work that you do. This will include consideration of a range of factors including the ergonomic suitability of your workstation, availability of any specific peripheral devices which may be required and the availability of a stable and reliable internet connection.

What happens if I'm injured while working from home or another approved place?

If you're working from home or another approved location under a flexible work arrangement, then this place becomes your workplace. The same work health and safety, and injury management requirements and responsibilities apply as they would in your usual NSW Health workplace (see NSW Health Policy Directive *Rehabilitation, Recovery and Return to Work* [[PD2023_016](#)]).

If you are injured while on duty at home or another approved place, you must report the incident to your immediate supervisor/manager and seek medical advice/treatment if required.

Section 44(1) of the *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998* (NSW) states:

“An injured worker must notify the employer that the worker has received a workplace injury as soon as possible after the injury happens.”

The individual Return to Work Program of each NSW Health agency will reference the requirement to report an injury and the need to make an entry in IMS+

You are required to comply with all your obligations and duties under work health and safety and workers compensation legislation.

What impact does flexible work have on my other employment conditions?

Flexible work arrangements do not affect your grade or classification, or your access to training, and other career development opportunities. Your current award provisions remain in place while in a flexible work arrangement.

Some flexible work arrangements may affect your pay, superannuation and/or leave accrual, for example, entering into a temporary part-time arrangement or taking leave without pay.

You should seek independent financial and/or superannuation advice before you make the change.

What about flexibility in domestic and family violence situations?

Flexible work arrangements may be put in place to support you if you have experienced domestic and family violence.

Flexible work options may also be available if you are providing care and support for family members who have experienced domestic violence.

Further information about other available support mechanisms is available in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Premier's Memorandum M2022-13 [Support for Employees Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence](#) and NSW Health Policy Directive *Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service* ([PD2024_046](#)).