

Guideline for Flexible working arrangements

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Human Rights Act 2019 Applies

Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work
Code of Practice 2022
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1 Purpose

This Guideline for flexible working arrangements (Guideline) should be read in conjunction with the Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5.

Flexible working arrangements are supported by provisions in the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (section 27).

This Guideline has been developed as a practical reference tool for employees and managers in relation to flexible working arrangements, and the information contained within the guideline is intended as a general information source for all employees.

2 What is flexible work?

Flexible work is about where, when and how we work.

Access to flexible working arrangements varies for different categories of employees and needs to be considered within the context of relevant legislation, awards, certified agreements, HR policies and available resources.

Not all types of flexible work will be suitable for all roles or work environments. However, every role is able to be reviewed for even small changes to where, when and how work is performed.

Flexible work is not restricted to specific purposes, categories or levels of employees. All employees have the right to request flexible working arrangements including casual, part-time or contract employees e.g. Health Executive Service employees.

2.1 Examples of flexible work

Flexibility can take many forms and be for many reasons. No one size fits all and every situation is different. Some employees prefer structure and routine, and others work best when they have options to balance competing work and life responsibilities.

Managers are encouraged to think proactively about how work can be designed to support flexible work patterns. Employees are encouraged to discuss requests with management to find the best fit.

There are a range of flexible work possibilities including those in relation to the hours worked, places worked and other arrangements. These options may be adapted and combined, but must be considered in conjunction with relevant industrial provisions.

Flexible work options can include, but are not limited to the following:

| Type | Option | Description |
|-------------|-------------------|--|
| How we work | Leave at half pay | Accessing long service and recreation leave at half pay can assist in balancing work and life commitments. It is often used to cover school holidays, or to offer greater flexibility for career breaks, carer responsibilities, and travel or study goals. Leave at half pay is subject to delegate approval. |
| How we work | Phased retirement | Where employees ease out of employment by reducing the number of hours worked, or by changing their responsibilities or employment arrangements. It provides an incentive for employees to delay retirement and |

| Type | Option | Description |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|
| | | <p>continue to contribute to the workforce, and can be either a short or long-term arrangement.</p> <p>The key difference between a formal phased retirement situation and the adoption of flexible working arrangements is phased retirement is often for a pre-determined period prior to formal retirement.</p> <p>It is recommended that employees seek advice to determine potential financial impacts of reducing their number of hours worked per fortnight.</p> |
| How we work | Special leave without pay | <p>Subject to approval, leave without pay can be used throughout a career for both short and long-term absences or career breaks while providing the security to return to a position at the same level. It is most often used to supplement other leave, such as parental leave, recreation or long service leave.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended leave arrangements – can be used to take longer periods of leave. For example, six months of leave to study. • Purchased leave – extra leave funded by fortnightly deductions from the net salary that occur over a nominated period of time. For example, in a 50/52 arrangement, a person works 46 weeks a year, takes four weeks of normal annual leave, and two weeks of purchased leave. Pay is averaged over the full year so the person receives more leave than usual but a lower annual pay. The minimum period of purchased leave is one calendar week, and the maximum period of purchased leave is six calendar weeks. |
| How we work | Transition to retirement | <p>Transition to retirement is a way of managing superannuation contributions once a person has reached preservation age. For more information, contact your superannuation provider or financial advisor.</p> |
| When we work | Compressed working hours | <p>A formal arrangement where normal, full-time hours are worked (e.g. 36 hours 15 minutes or 38 hours per week) over fewer than normal days.</p> <p>This arrangement is often used to work a nine-day fortnight. Fatigue should be considered when implementing this arrangement.</p> |
| When we work | Career breaks | <p>Employees may be able to take significant periods of leave if operational requirements allow.</p> <p>In some cases, leave may be granted without pay or arrangements put in place to allow employees to receive proportionate salary for a period of time, with the remaining salary paid during the period of leave.</p> |
| When we work | Flexible shifts | <p>An arrangement where a person contributes to the design of shift work schedules and may have some choice over which shifts they work including working on set shifts or set days.</p> <p>It can also include opting to work more or less shifts during a cycle.</p> <p>For example, a person may work four shifts one week and six shifts in the next, provided at the end of a stated work cycle the total required ordinary hours are worked.</p> <p>Variable shift lengths may also be an option, however shift lengths are to be not less than four hours and no more than 10 hours (unless specified by a particular industrial instrument).</p> |

| Type | Option | Description |
|---------------|--|--|
| When we work | Job sharing | Sharing the duties of one job between two or more employees can be an ongoing or short-term arrangement. There are many ways to divide the job but generally, there are two types of job share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twin model – jobs are split vertically where two employees share one position and all tasks, but work on different days. • Islands model – jobs are split horizontally where employees share one position, but take on different aspects of the job. This can be a good arrangement if the two job share partners have different skills. |
| When we work | Part-time work | Part-time employees have predictable hours of work each week/month/year, but fewer than full-time. They have the same entitlements as full-time workers (e.g. recreation and sick leave) but on a pro-rata basis. |
| When we work | Term-time working | An arrangement where an employee works during school terms and takes either paid or unpaid time off during school holidays. |
| Where we work | Flexible work centres (distributed work centres) | A designated space established in the existing government office portfolio in a location that is remote from the primary office location and from which employees who live in that area can work as opposed to commuting into the usual or designated work centre. |
| Where we work | Hot desks | Temporarily using another workplace or workstation. This can be either in the usual workplace or in another building, and often multiple employees share the desk on different days. In a 'hot desk' environment, employees do not have their own personal desk. |
| Where we work | Telecommuting | Telecommuting means working away from the usual or designated work centre, often at home. It can be for short periods or part of a long-term arrangement, and can occur on set days or arranged as the work demands. All the equipment and resources needed to do the job safely should be accessible. Telecommuting may not be practical if the job requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face-to-face contact with customers, clients or team members • use of specialist, non-portable equipment • direct supervision. A formal workplace health and safety assessment is required. |
| Where we work | Virtual teams and neighbourhoods | Advances in information technology have made it increasingly possible to work across time, space and organisational boundaries. Team members are usually dispersed geographically and come together to work on common projects or activities, through the use of technology, e.g. 'Teams' in Office 365. |

3 Why flexible work?

Studies in Australia and overseas reveal that flexible work options can result in real cost benefits and improvements in the performance of an organisation and individual as happy and balanced employees are more likely to perform better at work and at home, and exercise more discretionary effort.

Flexible work can benefit both the individual and the organisation:

| Individual employees | Organisation |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater ability to meet family commitments. • Increased life satisfaction from work-life balance. • Enhanced social support and connectedness. • Maintenance of skills and opportunity to expand skills. • Employment for those for whom full-time work would be difficult. • Retention of the benefits of ongoing employment. • Improved health and wellbeing. • Increased longevity of employment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse and inclusive workforce. • Attraction of new recruits. • Greater flexibility to respond to emerging priorities. • Increased discretionary effort of employees. • Improved retention of skilled and valued employees. • Reduced turnover, absenteeism, worker stress, recruitment and training costs. • Improved productivity, outcomes, morale and job satisfaction. |

There are also benefits, depending on the type of flexible work:

| When we work | Where we work | How we work |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates exit or re-entry into the workforce. • Supports employees in meeting demands of family, personal or community responsibilities. • Maintains career continuity. • Expands the recruitment net. • Provides opportunities for partnerships. • Encourages knowledge transfer. • Reduces carbon footprint through less commuting. • Facilitates seasonal workflow peaks and troughs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces carbon footprint through less commuting. • Promotes collaboration and cooperation across diverse workgroups. • Cost efficiencies through greater use of resources. • Reduces the need for office space. • Attracts a diverse talent pool. • Offers an environment with fewer distractions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees can take better control of their work-life integration. • Continuity of regular salary and income stream. • Greater certainty and a better ability to forward plan. • Good options for career breaks. • Retention of knowledge. • Focus on outcomes. • Encourages diversity. • Supports gradual transition into retirement. • Opportunities for cross-training. |

4 Creating flexible workplaces

To develop a sustainable flexible workforce, opportunities for flexibility should be considered across all roles.

4.1 Create a flexible work culture

Where an employee's privacy and confidentiality is not impacted, it may be beneficial to take a team-based approach to flexible working arrangements.

There are a number of considerations for managers when building a culture of flexibility.

| | |
|---|---|
| Create a climate for flexibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be informed about flexible work options. • Read the flexible working arrangements policy and this guideline. • Discuss options for a team based approach with the local HR/People and Culture unit. • Inform employees of flexible working arrangements. |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure employees are advised of the types of flexible working arrangements, including part-time work, job-sharing and variable working hours. |
| Apply flexible management skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible work scheduling requires managers to focus on outputs and to think of positions in terms of outcome and performance, rather than the amount of time spent in the workplace. |
| Identify and apply flexible management principles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a strategic approach. Understand individual employees' needs and responsibilities, personal characteristics, and approaches to work. |
| Balance workplace and individual needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the benefits to the work unit - benefits must link to work unit goals, budget and workforce plans. Meet workforce planning requirements. It is important to check the needs and expectations of employees in relation to work, life and family balance. |
| Build support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers need to show their support and openly acknowledge that flexibility in the workplace is critical to creating an innovative workforce. |

The following is an example activity that a team could undertake to prepare for flexible work as it helps to create a workplace culture that can respond to a variety of flexible work requests in a team.

- Take a baseline of the team flex culture by reviewing the team's current Working for Queensland engagement survey results. Use the survey's questions on flexible work, wellbeing, performance, fairness and equity.
- As a team, explore the possible ways the team can change how, when and where work is performed.

Consider all the goals, tasks, responsibilities, connections, practices, technology and systems currently used by the team and each position, and devise small tweaks or larger, disruptive design changes that would enable greater flexibility. Investigate the costs involved if any (e.g. accommodating staff at alternate work offices), as well as the cost of not embracing flex options (e.g. staff turnover, unplanned absences, overtime costs).

Investigate any assumptions or myths about flexible working arrangements and what new mindsets or team agreements would be required to move forward.
- As a team, review the ideas for practicality and reduce the list to a manageable size. Retain the ideas with the most promising impact and document a team agreement and commitment to the changes.

Where individual flexible work requests overlap or compete (and only where they compromise business requirements), take a view to 'how can we make it work?', such as implementing a staged approach across the first year to share access to flex over time – including planning for increasing it where possible.
- Develop a protocol to evaluate the success of the ideas (i.e. compare the employee's baseline with their next Working for Queensland results).
- Repeat this team activity annually to shape the ideas over time and grow the influence on the flexible work culture of other teams that the employee's work with.

4.2 Perceived barriers to flexible work

Perceived barriers to implementing and achieving flexibility in the workforce exist but there are always solutions. Listed below are some of the potential barriers and their solutions:

| Perceived barrier | Solution |
|--|---|
| Individual role and/or team work design does not support flexibility | There is more than one type of flexible work style. For individual roles consider individual tasks, duties, responsibilities, connections, location and timing and how this could be changed to make it more flexible. Where work design seems to prevent flexibility, look at role descriptions to identify barriers and opportunities for flexibility. A review could be undertaken using a workshop approach, involving the entire team to encourage inclusion and diversity of thought. |
| Leadership does not encourage flexible working arrangements | Queensland Health is committed to flexible work. As leaders, role modelling new approaches to how we work is important. Flexible work is still misunderstood, so educating others and promoting positive experiences is key. Queensland Health supports flexible work practices and acknowledges this is critical to remain responsive to changing consumer and employee needs. |
| Negative attitudes towards flexible working arrangements | There are many myths about flexible work that contribute towards negative attitudes. Managers and employees are encouraged to dispel myths through conversation and action e.g. managers working flexibly, openly support and encourage flexible work patterns. |
| Lack of trust between management and employees | For flexible work to be successful, there must be a strong foundation of trust between management and employees. Trust can be developed through regular, ongoing conversations, discussing learning and development, expectations, outputs and performance. |
| Not accessing the right technology | Employees must be able to undertake the full scope of their role when working flexibly. There is a range of technology available to support flexible work e.g. bring your own device and follow me desktop. |
| Lack of awareness about existing flexible working arrangements | There are so many different flexible work options available, (refer section 2 for some examples). Flexible work is not static, it must be adaptable to changing requirements for the individual and the organisation. A combination of options may be considered to meet requirements. |
| Poor communication | When undertaking flexible work patterns, most issues arise due to poor communication between the manager, the employee and the broader team. Regular and ongoing conversations where expectations are set/clarified, learning and development is explored and performance is measured on outputs/outcomes is critical. Refer section 7 for further information on managing flexible work by outputs/outcomes. Employees must continue to undertake the full scope of their |

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| | <p>role.</p> <p>Think about how the team communicates and how employees working flexibly can be effectively included in team communication i.e. phone into meetings, documenting meetings, team emails, weekly updates etc.</p> |
|--|---|

4.3 Advertising vacancies - Smart Jobs and Careers website

The Queensland Government's dedicated jobs website Smart Jobs and Careers allows hiring managers to promote flexible work options within the "position type field", when advertising a job. This will enable job applicants to identify the flexible work options when searching for jobs on the Smart Jobs and Careers website.

The following table lists the position types that are available for use on the Smart Jobs and Careers website:

| Position type | Position type description |
|--------------------|--|
| Flexible | Multiple flexible work options are up for discussion (i.e. this role can be completed on a full-time or part-time basis). |
| Flexible full-time | Role needs to be completed on a full-time basis, however flexible work options are up for discussion. |
| Flexible part-time | Role can be completed on a part-time basis and flexible work options are up for discussion. |
| Full-time | This role must be completed on a full-time basis and no flexible work options are available. |
| Part-time | This role is to be completed on a part-time basis, and no other flexible work options are available. |
| Non-standard hours | Work that is paid for on an hourly basis, and is generally less than the ordinary weekly working hours of a full-time employee (i.e. casual employment). |

For further information regarding the "position type" categories to be used when advertising a position on the Smart Jobs and Careers website, contact the local recruitment team.

5 Requests for flexible work

The Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 and the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (section 27) provide the right for an employee to request flexible working arrangements. Additionally, industrial awards and agreements contain provisions for equity and work-life balance that encompass flexible working arrangements.

An employee can request flexible working arrangements, specifically a change in the way the employee works, including:

- (a) the employee's ordinary hours of work; and
- (b) the place where the employee works; and
- (c) a change to the way the employee works, for example, the use of different equipment as a result of a disability, illness or injury.

5.1 Employee's request

It is the position of Queensland Health that employees have access to flexible working arrangements where this is operationally feasible. However, it is an important part of any flexible working arrangement request to work with the manager and team to identify mutually workable solutions.

Adaptability and an understanding of team and business needs will help to achieve solutions that are beneficial for the individual, the team and the organisation.

An employee's request for flexible work must:

- be in writing; and
- state the change in the way the employee works in sufficient detail to allow the employer to make a decision about the request; and
- state the reasons for the change.

When planning to request a flexible working arrangement, an employee should consider:

- How is it going to work for the organisation?
- How is it going to work for clients?
- How is it going to work for the broader team?
- How is it going to work for them?

When a considered approach has been planned, the employee can then discuss their request with their manager, and prepare to negotiate the terms of an arrangement to find the best solution for themselves, the team and the organisation.

Following discussion, the request must be formalised in writing to the manager. It is recommended that the request for flexible work be completed using the [Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form](#). The form assists the employee to set out the details of the request for the manager to consider, and for the manager (or delegate) to provide a decision (refer section 5.4)

If the [Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form](#) is not utilised and the employee makes their written request via another means (e.g. email), the employee should ensure that all details contained in the form are included in their formal written request to the manager following discussion.

It is recommended the employee review the [Flexible work request checklist](#) to understand what the decision maker will be considering when making a decision about their request.

5.2 Important information for employees

- Employees are responsible for seeking independent financial advice to determine potential financial impacts before entering into a flexible working arrangement. For example, there could be impacts to an employee's pay, taxation or superannuation.
- If the employee is intending to work from home (telecommute), the employee should check their personal home and contents insurance (including any personal liability provisions of their policy) to determine insurance coverage and whether working from home affects their policy.
- Approval of a flexible working arrangement will not automatically follow the employee if they move to a different position. A new request will be required.
- Approval of a flexible working arrangement for one employee may not necessarily lead to approval for another employee – each request needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5.3 Process for the decision maker (delegate)

It is the position of Queensland Health that employees have access to flexible working arrangements where this is operationally feasible. As a result, where possible, decision makers (delegates) should be looking for reasons to say 'yes', rather than 'no' without grounds.

When a request is received, decision makers are encouraged to refer to the guiding principles outlined in the Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 and use the [Flexible work request checklist](#) to work through details, impacts and solutions.

It is recommended that managers encourage employees to make the request using the [Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form](#). The form covers aspects of the flexible working arrangement request that will ensure the decision maker has the information they require to make an informed decision.

If a [Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form](#) is not utilised, it is recommended that managers provide a written response to an employee's request for flexible work (e.g. via email), to ensure a record of any decision and agreed arrangement is available.

Important note

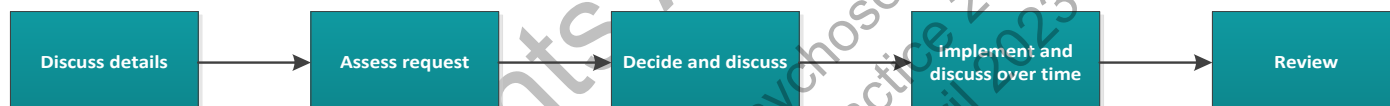
Any decision to grant a request, grant a request in part or subject to conditions, or to refuse a request, is to be made only on reasonable grounds and communicated to the employee in writing.

Written decisions are to be made and provided to the employee **within 21 days** of receipt of the request.

If the employer does not give the written notice within 21 days after receiving this request, the employer is taken to have decided to refuse the request.

The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission has jurisdiction to hear and decide a dispute over the request.

The following decision-making process is recommended for requests for flexible working arrangements:



The table below provides additional information about the decision-making process and should be considered along with the [Flexible work request checklist](#).

Workplaces may have their own established systems and processes in place for requesting and deciding on requests for flexible working arrangements. These can be used provided they comply with the requirements of the Industrial Relations Act.

The required response process for responding to flexible work requests may differ slightly depending on the reason or circumstance, such as when responding to an employee returning to the workplace after parental leave or accessing flexibility as a primary carer (in this instance, refer to Parental leave HR Policy C26).

| Process | Information about this stage of the process |
|-----------------|--|
| Discuss details | Discuss the request with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the employee making the request to understand the request fully the team at a team level for team based decision making (which has been shown to increase the success of flexible working arrangements) the employee's manager (if they are not the delegate). |

| | |
|--|--|
| Assess request | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each request should be given due consideration on a case-by-case basis, with a starting position of 'how can we make this work?'. • Take a strategic approach to flexible working arrangements by identifying the benefits to the work unit (e.g. achievement of work unit goals, budget and workforce plans). • The focus of the decision should be on potential outputs, outcomes and performance, rather than the amount of time spent in the workplace. • Refer to the Flexible work request checklist for matters to be considered. |
| Decide and discuss | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision maker has 21 calendar days from the receipt of a request to respond in writing. • There is no requirement for a decision maker to agree to a request for flexible working arrangements. However, any refusal, partial refusal or imposition of conditions must be made on reasonable grounds. • The decision maker may refuse the request in full and alternatively offer the opportunity for a review of the circumstances at a later time, if appropriate. • Discuss any partial, full refusal or conditions face-to-face with the employee and explain the decision. • The reasons for the decision must be provided to the employee in writing. • If the decision maker refuses, partly refuses or imposes conditions on the requested flexible working arrangement, they must include in their written response the reasons for the decision. • Decision makers may be required to defend their decision-making if an appeal is made to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. • The decision maker's written response must also state that the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission has jurisdiction to hear and decide a dispute over the request. A statement advising employees of this right is included in the 'note to employee' section of the Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form. |
| Implement and discuss over time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision maker must ensure flexible working arrangements operate within the provisions of the employee's industrial instrument. For example, working on weekends or later at night may attract penalty rates if the hours are outside 'core hours' which could lead to an increase in cost that is not sustainable for the work area. |
| Review | Refer to the Flexible work request checklist for review options. |

Example request, assessment and decision

The following provides an example of a request for flexible working arrangements and managerial assessment and decision-making process.

The request

Jenny seeks to alter her hours of work to 7.00am to 3.00pm instead of the usual 8.30am to 4.30pm, five days per week as she wishes to attend personal training sessions in the afternoon in her quest to run a marathon.

Jenny reads the Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 and its guideline before talking to her manager.

Jenny talks her manager, Mei, through what is in the written request and offers to have a chat in detail.

The options

Mei could approve the request:

- in its entirety – for example, agree for Jenny to alter her hours of work to 7.00am to 3.00pm, 5 days per week
- in part – for example, agree for Jenny to alter her hours of work to 7.00am to 3.00pm, for 3 working days per week
- with conditions – for example, agree for Jenny to work from 7.00am to 3.00pm, 5 days per week for a period of six months, when the arrangement will be reviewed.
- refuse the request – for example not agree to any part of Jenny's request.
- Mei could conclude that it is possible to agree to the change for three days per week on Monday, Thursday and Friday but not on Tuesday and Wednesday as existing staffing levels would mean insufficient coverage for their clients during the busy afternoon period on those days.

The decision

Mei, as Jenny's manager and the appropriate delegate to respond to Jenny, consults the [Flexible work request checklist](#) to work through the factors she should consider when assessing Jenny's request.

During a team meeting, Mei and all the team members discuss the request and work through any issues, concerns and impacts that Jenny's request might have. Following this discussion, Mei concludes it is possible to agree to the change for three days per week on Monday, Thursday and Friday but not on Tuesday and Wednesday as existing staffing levels would mean insufficient coverage for their clients during the busy afternoon period on those days.

The response and its implementation

Mei would inform Jenny verbally, and formally in writing, that she can change her hours for Monday, Thursday and Friday for the next six months, with a review at the end of that period about the ongoing nature of the arrangement. Mei would explain her reasoning behind the partial refusal for the first six months i.e. insufficient employees to cover the required work between 3.00pm to 4.30pm.

Mei provides reasoning behind the six month timeframe - that there are some anticipated staffing movements within that period which may impact the continued operational viability of the changed working arrangements.

Alternatively, Mei may include a condition that the arrangements are reviewed because she is expecting employees to return to the unit from secondment at that time and she may be able to grant

Jenny five days per week if the changed arrangement is working well for everyone.

Note: The considerations given in the example above are not intended to be exhaustive, but indicative of considerations that may be relevant to the circumstances of the employee's request at the time they make it.

5.4 Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form

The [Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form](#) has been developed for use when an employee is seeking to access flexible working arrangements, either through the Industrial Relations Act (section 27) or through their industrial award or agreement. While the form is not mandatory, its use is recommended to ensure an appropriate written record of the request and resultant decision is available.

The employee and their manager may be able to formalise flexible work options through discussion and email. Examples of when this may occur include leave at half pay, part-time employment including as part of phased retirement, special leave without pay, and leave without pay for the purposes of a career break.

Note that the implementation of flexible working arrangements may also require the completion of payroll forms, e.g. application for leave form, employee movement form.

Employees who access variable working hours/flex-time as part of their normal working arrangements, available in an industrial instrument, are not required to complete the Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form.

CASE STUDIES:

Part-time

Margaret is a permanent full-time administrative officer. She is currently on parental leave and due to return to work in five weeks. As she is required to advise her manager of her intent to return to work, in writing, at least four weeks prior to the expiration of her parental leave period, Margaret contacts her manager (Lucy) to discuss options available to her.

Margaret advises Lucy that she would like to return to work on a part-time basis i.e. three days per week as Margaret had contacted the local child care centre who had a vacancy for that age group for two days per week.

Lucy is quite supportive of Margaret returning on a part-time basis, and asks her to submit her request in writing. To ensure that Lucy has the information she requires to make her decision, Margaret includes relevant information from the Flexible Working Arrangements Application and Agreement form in her email. Margaret is also required to provide additional information as outlined in the Parental leave HR Policy C26.

To complete the temporary part-time arrangements, Lucy completes an [Employee movement – temporary \(higher duties/acting at level\) form](#) (PARIS form) for Margaret's signature and submission to Payroll Services.

Working from home

John, a data analyst, finds it very taxing to continue travelling to and from work each day as the

journey takes 50 minutes each way. John drives himself to and from work along a busy highway. Recently, John moved house and now lives further away from his usual workplace, and decided that he has had enough of so much travelling.

The next day, John had a discussion with his manager (Tim) advising that the weekly travelling was getting too much. He also believed that he was not contributing as much as he could to his work and believed that it would be best for all concerned if he started looking for another job closer to home.

During the discussion John admitted that he did not really want to leave but felt that it was his only choice. Tim felt that John contributed significantly to the team, and advised John about alternative flexible working arrangements, including telecommuting, that would possibly suit his situation. John had not considered any of these options previously.

John agreed that telecommuting would assist him, and submitted both his Flexible working arrangements Application and Agreement form, as well as a copy of the completed Telecommuting safety checklist, to his manager for consideration.

John now works from home two days per week and has never felt better. He says that working from home has given him a new lease on life and is looking forward to many more years with the organisation.

6 Ensuring the arrangements work well

There are a number of approaches that can ensure a flexible working arrangement works well for the individual employee, their team and the organisation, including:

- informing colleagues and clients of the arrangements (for example, including days/hours and part-time arrangements on email signature blocks)
- maintaining communication through scheduled sessions (i.e. staff meetings, networking and social opportunities)
- providing ongoing access to development opportunities
- ensuring adequate handovers and recording of work
- effectively and proactively managing the employee's outputs and performance
- regularly reviewing the flexible working arrangement for suitability
- raising any issues with the arrangement promptly.

Managers should also consider unconscious bias that occur when they have a flexible workforce, for example:

- employees who are in the office may be asked to respond to urgent requests or reprioritise their work so they can deal with emergent issues – while employees who are not in the office have less interruptions.
- employees who are not in the office may be overlooked for development opportunities like training or conferences.

The following are some further considerations for the different types of flexible work arrangements:

| When we work | Where we work | How we work |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing team meetings or learning events. • Managing expectations. • Ways to optimise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial costs to establish work stations. • Capability of information and communications technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial advice particularly regarding superannuation. • Managing expectations if a number of employees seek |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business continuity. • Ensuring customer service is not compromised. • Effect on other entitlements (e.g. annual leave, superannuation). • Workflow planning. • Fatigue and maintaining a healthy work-life blend. | <p>systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to remain connected and lessen feelings of isolation. • Maintaining communication. • Workplace modifications. • Workplace health and safety. • Opportunities to collaborate. • Availability of wi-fi. • Capability in managing virtual teams. • Clear direction regarding deliverables. | <p>access at the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in backfilling for shorter periods. • Succession planning. • Work availability. • Clear direction regarding deliverables. • Knowledge management. • Forecasting workforce supply and demand. |
|--|--|--|

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7 Managing flexible work by outputs/outcomes

Managing by outputs/outcomes means being accountable for delivery by focusing on results with regular conversations between managers and employees. It is about focusing on a broad range of measures and indicators to best demonstrate the achievement of agreed outcomes e.g. outputs, results of service delivery, nature and quality of the work, and time taken.

Conversations may involve:

Direction setting

- What do we intend to achieve and why?
- Are there broader strategies that drive or influence the work?
- What is the problem?

Planning and design

- What is the best way to achieve this and have we got the required capability and capacity?
- How can we engage and reflect the relevant diverse stakeholder voices?
- What are the best indicators of success?
- How can we ensure flexibility and agility in delivery?
- What are our strengths to leverage and challenges to address?

Implementation and delivery

- Are we implementing and delivering as planned, and managing our capability and risk effectively?
- What progress have we made so far and what adjustments are needed to progress further?
- Are we delivering in a manner that is consistent with public service ethics, values and standards while meeting standards of timeliness, quality and accuracy?

Review

- What impact have we had and what improvements can we make?
- Are there any unintended consequences to consider?

Further information is available in the [Management by outcomes document](#) prepared by the Public Service Commission.

Related Resources

- Purchased Leave HR Policy C21 (QH-POL-203)
- Parental Leave HR Policy C26 (QH-POL-187)
- Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence HR Policy C73 (QH-POL-391)
- [Guide for employers and employees considering a request for flexible working arrangements](#)
- [Flexible Working Arrangements Checklist for requests for flexible working arrangements](#)
- [Transition to Retirement Guide](#)
- [Queensland Government Indemnity Guideline](#)

Version Control

| Version | Date | Comments |
|---------|---------------|--|
| 2.0 | February 2019 | Updated to reflect amendments to <i>Industrial Relations Act 2016</i> relating to employee rights to request flexible work arrangements. Employees of Queensland Ambulance Service are to refer to their local policy/procedure. |
| 1.0 | June 2014 | New document |

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