

Workplace flexibility policy

Summary	This policy outlines the principles and considerations relating to workplace flexibility arrangements (including remote working).
Application	All employees of HealthShare NSW.
Sponsor	Director, People and Culture
Approver	Chief Executive
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Understanding this document:

Policy	A mandatory direction which must be followed.
Crucial component	<p>Although all the information within this document is important, crucial components are highlighted in this colour.</p> <p>A crucial component refers to an integral and essential part or element of a system, process, or structure that is vital for its proper functioning, success, or effectiveness. It is something that cannot be easily substituted or omitted without significantly impacting on the overall outcome or functionality. Crucial components are typically fundamental and indispensable to the overall purpose or goal of the system, process, or structure they belong.</p>
Document Currency	Policy, procedure, and guideline documents are current on the date they are accessed from the Policy Store but may be updated or replaced at any time after that date. Always check the Policy Store for up-to-date versions.
Communication	Managers must ensure that any member of staff without access to the Intranet have access to up-to-date versions of relevant documents.

Document information

Version history

Version	Description	Author	Published
1.0	Split out of policy and procedure. Change to approval chain, removing the Director Workforce.	Paul Gavel Director, Workforce Liz Charles A/Governance Manager	October 2016
2.0	Update Policy to reflect PSC Workplace Flexibility Principles	Robert Jarvis IR Manager	April 2020
3.0	Minor changes to inform some forms on SARA and to update links to current version of documents.	Tegan Wotton Manager Human Resources	February 2021
4.0	Update policy, formatting, link to new policies, and organisational governance.	Tegan Smith Senior Human Resources Business Partner	21 May 2024
5.0	Minor amendment to extend review date	Tegan Smith, Manager People Relations, People and Culture	2 Mar 2026

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1 Introduction

This policy outlines the principles and considerations in relation to flexible working arrangements available within HealthShare NSW to attract and retain staff; to provide flexibility in meeting business needs and/or to assist staff to manage their work and personal responsibilities.

This policy applies to all HealthShare NSW permanent and temporary exempt staff. This policy does not apply to casual staff.

This policy implements the [Make Flexibility Count Strategic Framework for the NSW Government Sector](#) (Public Service Commission).

1.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Workplace flexibility	<p>There is no specific definition of workplace flexibility. It generally means any flexibilities on how work is planned and arranged - when it takes place, where it takes place and how we arrange it. Some examples include changes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hours of work (for example changes to start and finish times; or hours worked over a period) • patterns of work (for example split shifts or job sharing) • locations of work (for example working from home or remotely). <p>Note: agile work in government context generally means activity-based working (or hot-desking) and refers to the physical workplace environment. While some concepts may overlap, agile work, for example, is not the same as flexible working.</p>
Remote working	<p>Remote working is where work is done at another location than the employees designated work location. It is commonly associated with working from home.</p>

1.2 Related documents

Type	Title
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 No 20 (NSW)
NSW Government Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible Working website (Public Service Commission)
NSW Health Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL2023_020 Flexible Work (more than one way to work) • NSW Health information sheet: Considering flexible work requests
HealthShare NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR2024_013 Workplace flexibility procedure • Workplace flexibility and remote working: Managers Guide (21 May 2024)

Type	Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace flexibility Agreement form • Remote working request (SARA Form)

2 Roles and responsibilities

Tier 2 Executive Directors/Directors

- Build flexible working into their own lives and across their organisation.
- Ensure that managers are providing appropriate workplace flexibility options in their directorate.
- Ensure a safe working environment is provided for staff.

Tier 3 Associate Directors

- Coach and guide managers and supervisors on the workplace flexibility options and how to fairly explore and accommodate requests.
- Review and approve workplace flexibility applications in a fair and equitable manner, ensuring they are in the best interest of the organisation and the customer.
- Ensure the Workplace Flexibility Policy and Workplace Flexibility Procedure is followed.
- Ensure a safe working environment is provided for workers.

Tier 4/5 Managers

- Consider any request for workplace flexibility arrangements, to ensure they are in the best interest of the organisation and the customer.
- Review workplace flexibility applications in a fair and equitable manner.
- Ensure the Workplace Flexibility Policy and Workplace Flexibility Procedure is followed.
- Ensure a safe working environment is provided for staff.
- Ensure staff member with personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEP) that were developed while working in the office are reviewed for staff working from home.
- Ensure incidents and injuries of their staff that occur at home are managed in the same way as incidents in the workplace.
- Ensure performance management and communication/supervision processes continue where staff are working flexibly.
- Review the workplace flexibility arrangement at least every 3 months or where circumstances change.
- Keep records of the Workplace Flexibility application, agreement and self-assessment checklist on the worker's personnel file.

Staff

- Discuss their proposed workplace flexibility arrangements with their manager.
- Complete the relevant form and submit to their manager for review in line with the Workplace Flexibility Procedure, and where approved follow the requirements as set out in their agreement.

- Keep their managers informed of any changes (such as location and/or home office setup), including if they are not able to work (e.g. sick or have other care responsibilities or are having technical issues), or if there are any workplace incidents or injuries or health and safety concerns.
- The production of quality work and maintaining best practice processes in their functional area.

3 Policy

3.1 Key principles

- For everyone – Any staff member is able to request the types of flexibility that make sense within their roles. Whether it is possible and what it looks like, will vary depending on the role. This approach does not mean that flexibility has to be provided at any cost, genuine reasons may exist that explain why flexibility cannot be implemented. But it does mean that managers and their teams consider what is possible on the basis of ‘why not’.
- Mutually beneficial – For flexible working to be successful, it must create the best outcomes for employees, employers, and our customers. Flexible working must be realised in way that maintains or improves service delivery for the people of NSW and does not result in increased labour costs. It should also not result in work intensification for employees, with appropriate boundaries and checks put in place.
- About the team – Flexible working should be considered within the context of the team. The agreed arrangements should consider the impact on team performance and structure, because the success of any arrangement will be dependent on the support and understanding of the team as a whole.
- Give and take – Flexible working does not mean you always get what you want as an individual. Not all types of flexibility will be available for every role, or every individual, 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. Flexible arrangements should be reviewed regularly to check they are working well and address any issues that may arise.
- Context matters – Given the diversity and size of the HealthShare NSW directorates, one size can’t fit all. Different types of flexibility will suit different roles.

3.2 Assessing requests for workplace flexibility

The following section is extracted from the [NSW Health information sheet: Considering flexible work requests](#).

Managers should demonstrate genuine consideration of requests from staff to change their current working arrangements.

Requests for changes to working arrangements should not be unreasonably denied.

Maintaining appropriate levels of service delivery together with the following considerations (in consultation with the staff member) should form the basis of the assessment of an application for changes to working arrangements:

- Any relevant Award provisions.
- The proposal outlined by the staff member for the request. Where the staff member has carer responsibilities as defined in the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010, the principles of the Carers Charter must be considered.

- The nature of the staff member's role, including face to face and supervisory elements.
- Whether, in the context of the requested variation, the tasks to be undertaken by the staff member can be done outside the usual hours or in another location.
- Whether there is a genuine requirement for the person to be present in the workplace at all times or whether other arrangements are viable.
- The level of supervision necessary for the staff member.
- Any impact on other staff members and whether such impact can be minimised.
- Opportunities for potential improvements to service delivery.
- Any work health and safety risks, and how they can be eliminated or controlled.

The purpose of the assessment is to identify and attempt to eliminate any potential barriers to supporting the requested working arrangement.

The outcome of the assessment should be communicated to the staff member, and an opportunity provided to add any further relevant information before a final decision is made.

All flexible work arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are working well for the staff member, their team and the organisation.