

19 November 2021

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RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

On 9 October 2021, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the following information:

- 1) *A copy of your flexible working policy.*
- 2) *A copy of any policy / processes specifically regarding applications for remote working.*
- 3) *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 received by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc, and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager?*
- 4) *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc, and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager?*
- 5) *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021?*
- 6) *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc, the recorded person for the refusal, and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager?*
- 7) *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021?*
- 8) *The number of people working in your agency as at 8 October 2021, and a breakdown of your employees by gender?*

You will find attached the following documents:

- The Ministry for Pacific Peoples Flexible Work Policy 2020
- The Ministry for Pacific Peoples Flexible Work – Working from Home Guidelines
- The Ministry for Pacific Peoples Flexible Work – Working from Home Checklist
- The Ministry for Pacific Peoples Flexible Working Arrangement Request form

Please note that the last page for the document titled 'Flexible Work Policy 2020' has been redacted as the contents are out of scope for this request.

In response to your request, the Ministry provides all new employees the opportunity for a flexible working arrangement, with each case being assessed on their individual merits.

All requests for a flexible working arrangement received for the period 1 January 2019 to 8 October 2021 were approved. A range of flexibility types were applied for, but many of the requests were for remote working. The applicants were managers and non-managers.

The Ministry does not currently record this information centrally, but we are taking action to implement this process in the foreseeable future.

As of 8 October 2021, there are 125 employees at the Ministry, of which 89 are female and 36 are male.

In support of the principles and purposes of the OIA, the Ministry proactively publishes its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter will be published on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will be removed, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: uia_requests@mpp.govt.nz.

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

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Deputy Secretary
Corporate Services
Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Flexible Working Policy

Corporate Policy

DCE - Business Services, People & Culture

June 2020

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

Document

This document contains policy relating to Flexible Working Arrangements in the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry).

Version history

Version	Date	Author	Key changes
2.0	July 2016	GM Capability Development	
3.0	May 2019	GM Business Services People and Culture	Includes Domestic Violence. Updated form to reflect Domestic Violence legislative requirements.
4.0	February 2020	Director, Services People and Culture	Includes Domestic Violence - Victims Protection Act 2018 updates. Amendments to meet legislative and government guidance requirements.
5.0	June 2020	Principal Advisor, People and Culture	Incorporates SSC guidance on Flexible Work and experience during and post Covid 19 period

Note: Do not make unauthorised electronic copies or new versions (drafts) of this corporate policy. Contact the Director, People and Culture to have new drafts initiated and recorded in the appropriate manner.

Status

Contact	Director, People and Culture
Status	In effect from July 2016
Approved date	June 2020
Policy owner	The Ministry
Business owner	DCE, Business Services, People & Culture
Revision cycle	Every two years or as needed
Next review	June 2022

Signoff

Name & Role	Signature	Date
Laulu Mac Leauanae Chief Executive	 <small>Mac Leauanae (Jul 28, 2020 08:56 GMT+12)</small>	Jul 28, 2020

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Ministry recognises that work life balance is about creating a productive work culture where the potential for tensions between work and other parts of people's lives is minimised. The purpose of this policy is to normalise flexible work for everyone in the Ministry in a way that works for individuals, Managers, teams, and the Ministry.

1.2 Scope

This policy covers all employees, including fixed term employees.

It:

- provides options for how you can manage your work and non-work commitments and how you can balance flexible working with the need to deliver our work
- provides the process for considering requests for flexible working options
- outlines the obligations on all parties when considering and working under Flexible Working Arrangements.

1.3 Relevant legislation

1.3.1 Employment Relations Act 2000 (ERA)

Part 6AA of the ERA provides employees with the 'right to request' Flexible Working Arrangements at any time. Employers may only decline the request if Grounds for Refusal are satisfied.

1.3.2 Domestic Violence – Victims Protection Act 2018

Domestic Violence - Victims Protection Act 2018. Where an employee is asking for Flexible Working Arrangements when they are affected by family violence, the legislative requirements as set out in the Domestic Violence - Victims Protection Act 2018 will apply.

Please refer to the Domestic Violence Policy for relevant and detailed information about the support available and the process for accessing that support.

1.4 Definitions

Term	
Individual Employment Agreement	An Individual Employment Agreement is a written contract between an employee and their employer setting out the agreed terms and conditions of their employment.

Term	
Flexible by Default	<p>Flexible by Default means shifting from asking “why should a role be flexible?” to “why not?”. It means treating all roles as suitable for flexible working and exploring how flexibility could work unless there is a genuine business reason for any role not to be. It provides an opportunity to consider a range of working arrangements that work for the agency, teams, Managers, and individual employees.</p> <p>It does not mean that all types of flexibility will be possible for every role. Different types of flexibility may suit different types of roles. For example, the demands of frontline roles may preclude an employee working from home (one type of flexibility), but other types of flexibility (e.g. varied start and finish times) may be workable.</p>
Flexible Working Arrangements	<p>Flexible Working Arrangements cover a wide range of arrangements outside of traditional working arrangements. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working flexible hours • varying total hours • occasional flexibility • working remotely (usually from home or another Ministry office) • job sharing • taking additional unpaid leave • condensed hours • flexi-role: allowing employees to manage their role more flexibly. E.g. phased return to work from long-term absence or phased retirement by reducing hours gradually as they approach retirement <p>In the case of an employee affected by family violence, additional flexible working arrangements that meet individual circumstances can be considered.</p>
Flexible Hours	<p>Start and finish times are set out in Employment Agreements. At the Ministry these are generally 8am to 5pm, with a one-hour lunch break.</p> <p>“Flexible Hours” is working the total number of hours set out in an Employment Agreement (usually 40 hours) but starting and finishing work either earlier or later than the time provided in the Employment Agreement.</p>
Varying Total Hours	<p>Hours of work are set out in Employment Agreements (usually 40 hours).</p> <p>“Varying Total Hours” is working either fewer or more hours than set out in your Employment Agreement. Varying Total Hours requires formal agreement with your manager and will generally be accompanied by a change in salary to reflect the change in total hours worked.</p>
Long-term Flexibility	<p>Arrangements that are intended to last for a longer period (e.g. working from 7am to 4pm daily or working from home two days a week).</p>
Occasional Flexibility	<p>Usually arises on an ad hoc basis and is sporadic and or for short periods - usually a day or part day (e.g. working from home due to a sick child or starting work late due to a Doctor’s appointment and working late to compensate).</p>

Term	
Grounds for Refusal	<p>Under section 69AAF of the Employment Relations Act, 2000 , employers may refuse a request for Flexible Working Arrangements only if they determine that the request cannot be accommodated on one or more of the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inability to reorganise work among existing staff • inability to recruit additional staff • detrimental impact on quality • detrimental impact on performance • insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work • planned structural changes • burden of additional costs • detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand • if the request is from an employee who is bound by a collective agreement, which applies and is inconsistent with the collective agreement.
Informal Flexible Working	<p>Informal Flexible Working (on a regular or ad hoc basis) usually occurs when managers agree that employees have flexibility over when and where they carry out their work subject to meeting position responsibilities and deliverables. This can mean that the exact arrangements (times or place of work) vary and are agreed between managers and employees as and when needed. It can also involve agreements to more regular arrangements, such as regular changes to start and finish times, or working from home regularly, as long as arrangements don't require changes to pay or employment terms and conditions.</p>
Formal Flexible Working	<p>Formal Flexible Working occurs when a recurring work arrangement impacts on pay or involves changes to employment terms and conditions. It may take place for an agreed period or on an ongoing basis with regular review. Examples could include regular part-time hours, job-sharing, or working remotely on a regular basis.</p>
Leave Without Pay (LWOP)	<p>Leave Without Pay (LWOP) is when an employer allows an employee time off work when they would otherwise be working but doesn't pay them for this time. LWOP doesn't end an employee's employment, and usually the employee returns to their same position and terms and conditions after LWOP (unless the employee and employer agree otherwise). LWOP can affect the employee's annual holidays payment and entitlement in some situations.</p>

1.5 Guiding Principles

The State Services Commission have published the following Guiding Principles for agencies including the Ministry to consider when implementing a Flexible-By-Default working approach.

1.5.1 If not, why not?

All roles are treated as flexible unless there is a genuine business reason for a role not to be. Flexibility is equally available to all employees regardless of gender, ethnicity, or disability, and irrespective of reasons for wanting it. Working flexibly does not undermine career progression or pay.

1.5.2 Works for the role

Every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility but not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons may mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles.

1.5.3 Championed by leaders

Leaders support, champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves.

1.5.4 Mutually beneficial

Flexible working needs to work for employees, teams and MPP. It should not be viewed as something which is just agreed between an employee and manager. This means that the impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams and the agency as a whole.

Key considerations will be given to how flexible work arrangements can maintain or enhance the performance and delivery of the Ministry's work commitments. Another key consideration is that any arrangement should not result in increased workloads for employees working flexibly or for other team members who are not, or for managers leading teams with some staff working flexibly.

1.5.5 Requires give and take

Flexibility requires some give and take between the employee, manager and team. It also places obligations on employees, managers, and teams to be open and adaptable so that it works for everyone. Arrangements that do not work for all parties will not be sustainable in the long term.

1.5.6 Safety and security

All flexible working options must satisfy the Ministry's security and Health and Safety requirements.

1.6 Procedures

1.6.1 Nature of arrangements

Flexible work arrangements can be formal or informal, ad hoc or regular, temporary or permanent.

1.6.2 Making a request

Before making a request for flexible work arrangements employees should familiarise themselves with the principles of flexible-by-default and the options that may work in their type of role.

The employee should discuss flexible options with their manager and be open to finding a solution that works for themselves, the whole team, their manager, and the Ministry. They should take account of the options available, in the context of their role and their team's responsibilities and deliverables and the impact their flexible work arrangement will have on others.

The employee does not have to provide a reason for their request, but they do need to discuss things like:

- the type of flexibility required
- whether or not it is a long-term arrangement
- what might be the impact of the new working arrangement – on team members, Manager, work deliverables
- how they think the new arrangement can be accommodated.

1.6.3 Ad hoc arrangements and unexpected events

Ad hoc flexibility may be planned ahead and simply needs to be agreed with the employee's manager.

Alternatively, ad hoc flexibility may be needed in response to an unexpected event. This may mean it is not possible for an employee to seek agreement from their manager in advance. Where this occurs, the employee should talk to their manager at the earliest opportunity.

1.6.4 Responding to requests

Managers will respond to a flexible work arrangement request as soon as possible. Where a request is made in writing they will respond no later than one month after receiving it. In deciding about a flexible work arrangement, the Manager may seek advice from HR or their DCE.

Where agreement in principle is reached between an employee and their Manager, they will discuss the agreement with the team and as a group they will decide on mutual expectations and norms of behaviour.

If a request is granted, the arrangements agreed and any applicable conditions will be recorded in writing, by email or using the form attached to this policy. Manager sign-off is required for any agreed long-term flexible working arrangement.

If the Manager objects to the proposal they will explain why it is not workable and will work with HR and the employee to find a workable solution and to ensure all options have been considered.

Where a formal request is made in writing, reasons for declining it will be provided in writing within 1 month of receipt of the request, including:

- stating the Grounds for Refusal, referencing this policy
- explaining the reasons for refusing under these grounds
- advising the employee of their right of review.

All documentation will be placed on the employee's personal file.

The Ministry will act in good faith in assessing all flexible working requests.

1.6.5 Health and Safety

Under section 36 the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, MPP must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their workers' while they are at work. That means that when employees ask to work from home, MPP must consider the risks their employees might be exposed to in that work environment, the degree of harm those risks could cause, and how those risks can be mitigated. This includes ensuring that:

- employees do not work excessive hours, and that any hours in excess of standard working hours are agreed and monitored appropriately
- employees understand their health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities when working remotely

When considering working from home employees and their manager should consider and agree that:

- the employee's home workspace will be arranged by the employee so that it is comfortable and ergonomically sound

- the employee will complete on-line training for work-station set-up before working from home <http://www.habitatwork.co.nz> – (complete office 2.0 section) and an MPP Health and Safety self-assessment
- the employee will take regular breaks
- the employee will keep the workspace clear and free from obstacles or tripping hazards and well lit
- the employee and their manager will be in regular communication and that they will be proactive in raising and discussing any problems that arise from working from home
- the employee and their manager will proactively discuss any risks to the employees physical and/or mental health and safety arising from working from home and discuss ways this harm can be eliminated or minimised.

Under section 45 of the Health and Safety Act MPP workers have the following responsibilities:

While at work, an employee must—

- (a) take reasonable care for their own health and safety; and
- (b) take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others; and
- (c) comply, as far as the employee is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Ministry to allow the Ministry to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act or regulations; and
- (d) co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the Ministry relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to employees.

Hazard identification and reporting

Even when employees are working remotely, they are required to identify and report on hazards in their workplace to their manager, HR or Health and Safety representative.

Incident Reporting

If an incident occurs when an employee is working remotely, as with a hazard that occurs at MPP's premises, the employee must notify their manager as soon as they are reasonably able.

1.6.6 Information security and privacy

When employees are working remotely, it is important that the security and privacy of information is maintained.

MPP will ensure the security and privacy of information is maintained when employees work remotely by assessing and addressing any concerns with:

- the work to be done at home
- procedures to minimise the security risk of storage and transmission of confidential information
- the classification of any information to be held at or transmitted from or to the home
- any security clearance requirements of the staff member
- the suitability (including past performance in security matters) of the staff member to work outside the usual environment

- requirements with respect to IT security/servicing and communications security, such as encrypted data, two-step authentication on electronic devices, and up-to-date protection software.

1.6.7 General considerations

In addition to health, safety and wellness considerations, the Ministry will consider a range of matters when considering a Flexible Work Arrangement request. These considerations may be specific to the person, team, and position. They may include, for example:

- how and where the work will be completed, if it is likely to have a detrimental impact on quality or performance
- the employee's willingness to return to the office when the need arises
- the requirements of the employee's role
- operational needs
- the effect of the arrangement on the team and the resourcing of work
- support and supervision (for the employee and other team members)
- any cost to the Ministry
- technology issues, like fast broadband in the home to enable productive work
- any additional matters which may result from the requested arrangements

While a range of matters can be considered when assessing a Flexible Work Arrangement request, the request can only be declined if it cannot be accommodated on one or more Grounds for Refusal.

1.6.8 Review of arrangements

When a flexible working arrangement is approved, the impact of that arrangement, within a team or in relation to a work outcome can often not be fully determined at the outset. Therefore, a review of the flexible work arrangement will occur between the employee and their manager after an agreed time (usually one to three months) and then ongoing at least every 12 months.

Changes to roles will also require a review of whether certain arrangements are still workable.

From time to time, employees may be required to alter their flexible work arrangement. This may be ad hoc, or on a more regular or even permanent basis, to meet the needs of the Ministry. In such situations the manager will talk this over with the employee as early as possible and seek to find agreement on a flexible working arrangement that meets the needs of the employee, their Manager, the team and the Ministry.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Employees

When working remotely, employees are responsible for:

- self-managing their work and continuing to meet delivery expectations
- communicating proactively with their manager and their team about the work they are doing remotely

- working with their manager and the team to ensure their flexible arrangements are working for everyone
- being as flexible as possible when temporary changes to flexible work arrangements are needed
- clearly indicating their working arrangement in their office calendar
- setting up an out of office email message to operate outside agreed working hours which clearly states when they are in the office
- remaining contactable during agreed work hours
- observing all Ministry policies, including, for example, the Ministry's Code of Conduct, ICT and State Services Standards of Integrity and Conduct and Health and Safety policies.

2.2 Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- considering in good faith any request for flexible working, approving these when they can, and declining only when (following consultation with HR) they have determined that one or more Grounds for Refusal exist
- ensuring that, prior to the first instance of an occasional arrangement to work from home, the staff member receives advice on health, safety, and security
- ensuring the Ministry's business requirements are met
- overseeing the team's workload, and monitoring any changes that result from a Formal Flexible Working arrangement
- providing reasonable notice to any employee with a flexible working arrangement of developments that may cause it to be revisited.

3. Breaches of this policy

The provisions under the Employment Relations Act, to deal with unresolved Formal Flexible Working request breaches are contained in Part 69 AAG, 69AAH, 69AAI of the Act.

3.1.1 Employee in breach

If an employee is in breach of this policy their manager will raise the issue and try to resolve the problem with the employee.

If necessary, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the Ministry's disciplinary policy. (Advice from HR should be sought in all cases where potential disciplinary action could be taken).

3.1.2 The Ministry in breach

If an employee believes the Ministry is in breach of this policy, they should follow the process for the resolution of employment relationship problems set out in their Individual Employment Agreement, including:

- first trying to resolve the issue by discussing it with their manager
- if necessary, taking the problem to the DCE, Business Services, People & Culture or HR for assistance

- if the issue remains unresolved, referring the matter to a third party such as a Labour Inspector or Mediation, from the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment at www.mbie.govt.nz
- if still dissatisfied, an employee can apply to the Employment Relations Authority at www.era.govt.nz

4. Further information

4.1.1 Legislation

- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Domestic Violence - Victims Protection Act 2018
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

4.1.2 Related policies

- Domestic Violence Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunities Policy
- Parental Leave Policy
- The Ministry Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- State Services - Standards of Integrity and Conduct
- Leave Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Information Policy
- Privacy Policy

Appendix A: Flexible Work Arrangement Request

Employee to complete

(Details can be provided by email, but should include key details below)

Name:	Role:	Date:
Manager Name:		
<i>I would like to request a variation to my working arrangements which are currently :</i>		
Place(s) of work: Include address if not MPP premises		
Days and hours of work:		
My proposed flexible working arrangement is: <i>(Tick appropriate box)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working from home	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flexi time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Job share:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Condensed working week:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative arrangement: detail below this may be a combination of two arrangements or a different version		
Technology requirements, if applicable:		
Place(s) of work If more than one location state all addresses		
Days and hours of work <i>Specify hours worked across all locations</i>		
<i>I would like the new working arrangement to be <u>permanent</u> and start from:</i> <i>(Please allow at least 2 weeks notice of start date)</i>		
<i>I would like the new working arrangement to be <u>temporary</u></i> <i>(Please allow at least 2 weeks notice of start date)</i>		
Starting :		
Finishing :		
The reason for my request is to:		
I have read and understood the Ministry's Flexible Working Policy and make this request in the knowledge and acceptance of the requirements that I must meet, should it be granted. If this includes working from home, my responsibility to observe all Ministry policies, including, the Ministry's Code of Conduct, ICT and State Services Standards of Integrity and Conduct and Health and Safety policies. I accept that the Ministry does not pay for home connectivity or any costs incurred when working from home and that having a suitable workstation is my responsibility.		
Employee's Signature:		Date: / / 20

Appendix B: Manager Response Form

(Details can be provided by email, but should include key details below)

Approved Not Approved

To:	Date:
I, _____ <i>Manager Name</i> , have considered your request for a flexible work arrangement	

EITHER

I can confirm that I have <u>approved</u> your request for
<i>Detail arrangements including place(s), days and times of work.</i>

OR

I <u>am unable</u> to accommodate your original request. <u>However</u> , I am able to offer the following alternative arrangement, which we have discussed and you agreed would be suitable to you
<i>Detail arrangements including place(s), days and times of work.</i>

OR

I <u>am declining</u> your request at this time for the following reasons, and as discussed with you.
<i>Detail the reasons</i>

Your new working arrangement will commence from:	
Start Date:	Finish Date: <i>(If Temporary)</i>
If <u>permanent</u> we will review this arrangement in approximately _____ months, to ensure it is working for you, the team, the Ministry, and myself. If it is not working, we will need to discuss and agree an adjustment to this arrangement that works for us all. We will review this arrangement not less than 12 monthly thereafter.	

Name:	Signature:
Note to employee:	
If you have any questions on the information provided on this form, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss.	
You have stated in your Flexible Work Request that you have read and understood the Ministry's flexible working policy and make this request in the knowledge and acceptance of the requirements established in that policy.	
If working from home is part of this arrangement, your responsibilities to observe all Ministry policies, including, the Ministry's Code of Conduct, ICT and State Services Standards of Integrity and Conduct and Health and Safety policies	
In taking up this flexible work arrangement you accept that the Ministry does not pay for home connectivity or any costs incurred when working from home and that having a suitable workstation is your responsibility.	

Work from home Guidelines

To be read in conjunction with the Flexible Work policy and Work from Home Checklist

The most common form of flexible work is working from home. These guidelines provide advice to Ministry employees in regard to: equipment, health and safety, reimbursement of costs while working from home, security of information and equipment and worker responsibilities.

Making the arrangements

Before working from home, the employee and manager should have already documented the arrangement through the completion of the flexible working form which will specify:

- The arrangement that will apply (how often the employee will work remotely, the duration of the arrangement, hours of work etc.)

Employees are also required to complete a 'work from home checklist' which supports employees to establish a suitable working environment to work from home. Depending on the responses in this checklist employees and their manager may need to carefully consider the type of work that is completed at home and the frequency or duration of that work.

Equipment

To support an approved request for working from home from an individual employee, if they do not already have appropriate equipment at home, the Ministry may consider providing the following items of equipment to staff members:

- Laptop
- Keyboard
- Mouse
- Monitor
- Docking station

Providing additional equipment will depend on what is 'reasonably practicable' (please see the Worksafe website for this information). Requests will be considered on a case by case basis only and must be approved by the DCE, Business Services, People & Culture. Please note wifi connections are the responsibility of the employee.

To assist employees with setting up their work station at home, please refer to the Work from home checklist.

Where there is no public health requirement to work from home, if an employee does not have an ergonomic set-up at home or is experiencing pain and discomfort at home and it is not practicable to provide ergonomic equipment at home, it may be more reasonable to expect them to return to the office. However, the Ministry may consider reasonable adjustments to their general approach, to support people with disabilities.

Health and Safety

No matter when or where an employee works, ensuring their health and safety is a shared responsibility between the employer and the employee. When working from home, the employee is responsible for organising a work area that is appropriately set up to ensure that they can work

safely. On an annual basis, Ministry staff working from home, will be expected to complete or provide the following documentation:

- Home checklist
- A photo of their work station at home

Once completed the checklist and photo needs to be forwarded to tautagata@mpp.govt.nz

Please note completion of the home checklist and providing a photo is mandatory before work from home can commence.

Hazards

A hazard is a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person or property. Staff are required to report any hazards on the Hazard Register, and to work with their Manager to eliminate or mitigate that hazard.

Examples of workplace hazards when working from home (must be reported):

- Ergonomic setup of workstation
- Feelings of isolation
- Failing to take regular breaks and monitor working hours

Examples of hazards unrelated to the workplace when working from home (no requirement to report):

- Trip hazard in your home that is outside of the room being used as primary place or work, and which is not in exit or entry pathways to the primary place work

Injury

Staff are required to report any injuries (big or small) that happen to them or anyone else in their workplace through to their Manager.

Example of workplace injuries when working from home (must be reported):

- Neck pain from using an insufficiently sized or poorly located screen for a long period of time.

Example of injuries unrelated to the workplace when working from home (no requirement to report):

- Minor cut to your hand whilst making your lunch in your home kitchen

Incident

An incident is an unplanned event that doesn't result in an injury. Staff are required to report any incidents (big or small) through to their Manager.

Example of workplace incident when working from home (must be reported):

- When lifting Surface Pro, keyboard becomes detached and falls almost hitting your feet.

Example of incident unrelated to workplace when working from home (no requirement to report):

- While reaching to get item (unrelated to work) from your wardrobe during your lunch time a box falls from a high shelf.

Reimbursement of expenses relating to working from home

There is no expectation on the Ministry that they will offer additional compensation or allowance for expenses arising from a request to work from home, as part of flexible working.

Security of information and equipment

All policies that apply to employees who are working in the office, also apply when employees are working remotely. It is the employee's responsibility to keep all work information and any other sensitive information secure. It is also important that reasonable care is taken of Ministry information and equipment.

Employee's responsibilities

When working from home, the employee should ensure that they:

- Comply with the guidelines contained in this document as well as all other organisational policies and procedures
- Only work from a location that is safe and suitable for working remotely
- Comply with all health and safety requirements
- Do not work during annual leave or sick leave specified on a medical certificate
- Do not hold meetings at their home in person
- Do not undertake any other major commitments during the working day such as (but not limited to):
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Full or part time child or family care
 - Full or part time management of other activities at your home, like renovations or club leadership
- Take reasonable steps to keep the Ministry's technology, equipment and information safe and in working order.



Work from Home checklist

Background

When working from home you are responsible for keeping yourself and your working area safe.

Please go to this link for further information - <https://worksafe.govt.nz/managing-health-and-safety/novel-coronavirus-covid/working-from-home-under-alert-level-3#lf-doc-61895>

No matter when or where an employee works, ensuring their health and safety is a shared responsibility between the employer and the employee. When working from home, you are responsible for organising a work area that is appropriately set up to ensure you can work safely. The following checklist is designed to assist you to keep yourself safe when working from home. You are expected to complete and provide the following documentation annually:

- This Work from Home checklist
- A photo of your home work station and surrounds

Once completed the checklist and photo need to be forwarded to tautagata@mpp.govt.nz

Please note completion of the home checklist and providing a photo is mandatory before work from home can commence or can continue annually

The Work from Home Checklist

Security of information

1. Do you have a workspace that is private and secure? (Please select one)

Yes No

If you selected **no** and your workspace is easily accessible to others, please:

- lock your screen and put work papers away whenever you leave your desk through the day and
- pack up your laptop and put your working documents away each night in a secure, safe place.

2. Are you required to access confidential or highly sensitive information in your role?

No Yes

If yes, please describe how you will keep this sensitive information secure.

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RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

3. Have you read, and do you fully understand our IT Acceptable Use Policy?

No

Yes

If not, please review the policy before commencing working from home.

Protecting work equipment

IT Support

4. Have your IT equipment, software and service requirements been confirmed with IT Services and can they be supported?

Yes

No

If not, please contact IT support to discuss your home office electronic equipment to ensure that it is compatible with your MPP IT equipment. If this is not the case you may have to consider alternative arrangements.

Surge protection

5. Do you have surge protected plugs or multi boards, in order to protect your IT equipment from power outages and surges? (Please select one)

Yes

No

If not, please consider purchasing one of these plugs or multi-boards before working from home.

Work environment

Tripping hazards

6. Is the floor space around your desk free of tripping hazards (cables etc.)?

Yes

No

If not, please tidy around your workspace before commencing working from home

Lighting

7. Is the lighting at your workstation adequate for the tasks you are performing?

Yes

No

If not, please correct the lighting before commencing to work from home

Ventilation/Temperature

Most employees will be accustomed to the air conditioning in the MPP offices which controls ventilation and temperature. At home you are responsible for ensuring that your workspace is adequately ventilated and heated/cooled.

Emergency Plan, First Aid Kit, Smoke Alarms

Please consider how you will exit your workspace, in case of an emergency. Think about alternative exits, should your usual exit be blocked for some reason.

We recommend you have access to a first aid kit when working from home. Please consider purchasing one, if you don't have one at home already.

Every workspace should have a smoke alarm installed. If you don't have one installed near your work area, we recommend you get one before commencing regular work from home activity.

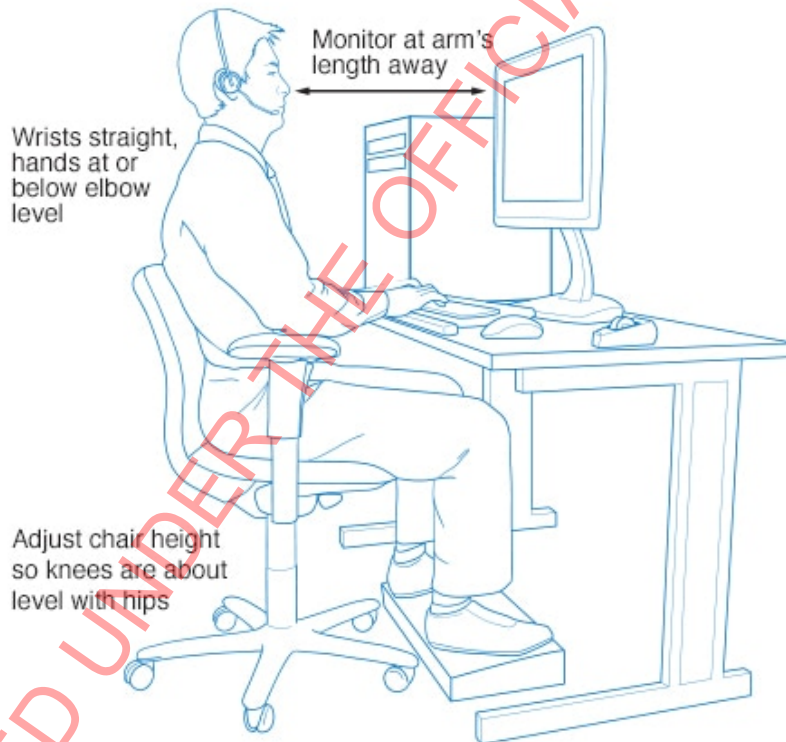
Office ergonomics when working from home

8. Have you set up your computer, desk and chair ergonomically?

Please adjust to the following recommendations:

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| <input type="radio"/> The top edge of your computer monitor is at your eye level | Yes | No |
| <input type="radio"/> The computer monitor is free from glare and reflections from lights | Yes | No |
| <input type="radio"/> The keyboard is at a comfortable tilt angle or flattened for touch typing | Yes | No |

This diagram provides you with an example of the preferred workstation set up.



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Chair

Choose a chair that supports your spinal curves. Make sure your hips are never lower than your knees. If you cannot adjust your chair and your feet cannot firmly touch the ground, use a book or ream of paper to raise your feet to the correct height. If your chair has adjustable armrests, check that your arms gently rest on them with your shoulders relaxed. If your chair is too low, consider using cushions on it. Avoid the "C" curve shape in your back while working. Try to keep an "S" curve in your spine; a support chair should help you with this.

9. Do you have an adjustable office chair with adequate lumbar support that supports your posture?

Yes No

If not, please ensure you have a suitable work chair before commencing to work from home. You may need to speak to your Manager about this.

Desk

Under the desk, make sure there's clearance for your knees, thighs and feet. If the desk is too low and can't be adjusted, place sturdy boards or blocks under the desk legs. If the desk is too high and can't be adjusted, raise your chair. Use a footrest to support your feet as needed. If your desk has a hard edge, pad the edge or use a wrist rest. Don't store items under your desk.

10. Does your desk enable you to meet the standards described above?

Yes No

If not, please arrange this before commencing work from home. You may need to speak to your Manager about this.

Laptop

If you do not have a monitor, or if you use your laptop as a second screen, please consider putting some books underneath your laptop to elevate it so that it is at the same height as your eyes.

Avoid using your laptop on your couch or your bed.

11. Do you use a laptop computer? (Please select one)

No Yes

If yes, please ensure that your laptop screen is set up as recommended above.

Keyboard and mouse

Place your mouse within easy reach and on the same surface as your keyboard. While typing or using your mouse, keep your wrists straight, your upper arms close to your body, and your hands at or slightly below the level of your elbows. Use keyboard shortcuts to reduce extended mouse use. If possible, adjust the sensitivity of the mouse so you can use a light touch to operate it. If you can, try alternating the hand you use to operate the mouse by moving the mouse to the other side of your keyboard.

12. Do you have a separate keyboard and mouse? (Please select one)

Yes No

If not, please speak to your manager. MPP will provide these for you.

Telephone

If you frequently talk on the phone and type or write at the same time, place your phone on speaker or use a headset rather than cradling the phone between your head and neck.

Key objects

Keep key objects — such as your telephone, or printed materials — close to your body to minimize reaching. Stand up to reach anything that can't be comfortably reached while sitting.

Reporting accidents and incidents

In the event that a workplace accident you must advise your manager as soon as possible and an incident form must be completed.

Wellbeing

Please ensure you take care of your wellbeing when working from home. We have a number of guides available on VakaPuna to support you with this.

If you would like further support, you can contact your manager, the People & Culture Team, or your Health and Safety Representative.

Breaks

Stretch and move frequently. The best way to prevent injury is to have micro pauses and ensure your body isn't in one stiff position for too long. If you have phone calls to make, get up and walk around your house or even outside while talking!

Please take regular breaks; you need to get away from your desk for short breaks through the day.

Any other relevant information (Please provide)

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My Manager and I have discussed this checklist and self-assessment form. I understand my health and safety responsibilities when working from home and have ensured that my workspace is as safe as is practicable and appropriate for working from home.

Employee signature

Date

Manager signature

Date

