

Flexible and Hybrid Work Policy

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1. POLICY OBJECTIVE (OR PURPOSE)

This policy will help Greater Dandenong City Council (Council) ensure a consistent and transparent approach to flexible working arrangements including hybrid working.

2. SCOPE

This Policy covers employees under Council's Enterprise Agreement who are to be paid through Council's payroll system, including permanent, maximum term and temporary employees but excluding casual employees.

The Policy may be applied as a guideline regarding casuals who have been employed long term on a regular/systematic basis and temporary agency workers.

3. POLICY

Flexible working is linked to staff engagement and productivity. Council will provide a level of autonomy and flexibility within roles to accommodate people's various priorities at work, home and in the community.

Access to flexible working has clear links to:

- Improved organisational productivity and workplace culture
- An enhanced ability to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Improved employee well-being
- An increased proportion of women in leadership
- Future-proofing the workplace
- Balancing employees' needs with ongoing service delivery / operational requirements

3.1 We start from a position of flexibility

Flexible work is available to you by default, regardless of:

- the reason you want it
- when you start your employment
- your role
- the stage of your employment or career

If there is a reason, due to the inherent requirements of a role, that cannot have the type of flexibility sought managers and employees are to look for a type of flexibility that will work for both parties.

3.2 Guiding Principles

- Every role, can have some form of flexibility - but not all types of flexibility will work for every role
- Business units need to embed flexible work into the design and structure of their team
- Managers must work with their employees and team to come up with solutions that work for everyone
- An employee will have a meaningful level of control over when, where, and how they work but it shouldn't:
 - lead to reduced service delivery to the community
 - negatively impact the achievements of the team and organisation's objectives
 - materially change the work being done or the inherent requirements of the role

- Access to flexible work is universal regardless of any personal attributes (in accordance with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*).
- Flexible work must not undermine career progression, pay or development opportunities.

3.3 Guidance

It is up to employees and managers to discuss and agree to individual working arrangements, based on the principle that we start from a position of flexibility.

In relation to remote working arrangements, Council's starting position is that a hybrid model will be implemented. This means three days a week are to be worked in the workplace (for full-time office-based employees) and proportionate days at the workplace for part-time employees:

These arrangements may be varied on a case-by-case basis. For example, reasonable adjustments due to a temporary disability or other exemptions.

Permanent Days	Minimum days required in the workplace
5 days per week	3 days
4 days per week	3 days
3 days per week	2 days
2 days per week	1 day

The following should be considered:

- Employee health and safety, including existing reasonable workplace adjustments
- Operational and inherent requirements of the role and working arrangements for the team
- Employee rights to request flexible work
- Employee preference
- When coming together in person would provide greater benefit for a team than a virtual interaction

3.4 Types of flexible work

Employers and employees can agree to change standard working arrangements to help balance work with other aspects of their lives. Flexibility comes in many forms and different arrangements will suit different workplaces, roles, and you. Flexibility can be ad-hoc, formal, informal, short-term, or long-term.

Examples

Where you work	When you work
• primary workplace • from your home • other safe work environments (for example a suburban hub)	• compressed hours (working more hours over fewer days) • flexible start and finish times • flexible daily schedules • flexible rostering including giving employees the ability to input into their own rosters

How you work	Other examples (Enterprise Agreement permitting)
• job sharing • part-time • negotiated days of work • casual work	• using leave to work flexibly, including unpaid leave or study leave • purchasing extra paid leave (e.g. 48/52 arrangement) • rostered days off including taking rostered days off as 2 half days • time off in lieu of overtime (allowing employees to 'bank' extra hours which are then exchanged for time off (maximum accrual limits apply) • make-up time to attend appointments • gradual increase or decrease in work hours (e.g. after parental leave or as an employee transitions to retirement) • combining and sharing roles, e.g. four days in an operational role and one day in a role that allows for remote working • autonomy – such as when, where, and how work is done, e.g., overtime and having autonomy to decide when to take breaks during the working day

Refer to [Council's EA](#) for more information about flexible arrangements available to employees.

3.5 Employee legal rights

Where an employee has a legal right to request flexible work, Council must comply with the law. These include when an employee:

- is a parent of, or has responsibility for the care of, a child who is school age or younger
- is a carer within the meaning of the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*
- has a disability
- is aged 55 or older
- is a person experiencing family violence from a member of the employee's family or is providing care or support to a family member, or someone they live with, who is experiencing family violence.

By law, the employee must make a written request to Council including details of the change sought and the reasons for the change. Council must provide a formal written response to a request within 21 days, stating whether Council grants or refuses the request and the reasons for any refusal. A request can only be refused on '*reasonable business grounds*'.

For more about these legal rights see:

- [Section 65 of the Fair Work Act 2009](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)
- [Council's Enterprise Agreement](#)

3.6 Individual Flexibility Arrangements (IFAs)

Most flexible working arrangements will be able to be worked out locally without formal approval. However, arrangements which vary the terms of employment across the following matters may require an IFA in accordance with [clause 15 of Council's Enterprise Agreement](#):

- arrangements about when work is performed
- overtime rates
- penalty rates
- allowances
- leave loading

There are specific requirements for documenting each IFA. A member of the OD Team can advise about the process.

Examples – Local arrangement or IFA

Local arrangement	Formal IFA
Changing hours within a fixed roster	Request to work outside the Enterprise Agreement spread of hours as part of ordinary hours. <i>For example – For most staff, the ordinary hours are worked between a spread of 7am to 7pm or 6am to 6pm. An employee may make an IFA to work their ordinary hours between 8am to 8pm.</i>
Days working remotely within contracted hours	Part-time employee working more than 8 hours per day
Change of rostered days of work within contracted hours	Split shifts in some settings
Change in frequency of RDO or duration of RDO, i.e., half day per week instead of full day per fortnight.	
Starting or ending the day earlier or later within the relevant Enterprise Agreement spread of hours	

3.7 Recording, documenting, and reviewing other flexible working arrangements

Most other local flexible working arrangements can be implemented without an IFA, but a written record must still be kept. This is an important step to ensure payroll accuracy, reduce any future misunderstandings and to ensure both parties agree to the arrangement.

Changes that have an impact on a person's pay or leave arrangements must also be sent to Payroll.

Examples include:

- 48/52 model of work
- Ongoing RDO arrangement change

All flexible working arrangements, whether formal or informal, must be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate.

If a manager and employee are unable to agree on a requested working arrangement the matter may be referred in accordance with the Grievance Policy for determination.

4. RESPONSE TO THE OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020

This Policy responds to the relevant overarching governance principals of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as it is intended to ensure that flexible work arrangements are:

- made in accordance with all relevant laws (referred to in 'References and Related Documents' below); and equitable and transparent

5. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise specified within this policy, the following words and phrases are defined to mean the following in terms of this policy.

Flexible work arrangement	Any change to the standard working arrangements to work more flexibly. Flexible working arrangements usually encompass changes to the hours, pattern, or location of work.
Individual Flexibility Arrangement (IFA)	An IFA is an agreement made between an employer and an individual employee that suits the needs of the employer and employee by varying certain the terms of the applicable award or enterprise agreement. The employee must be better off overall under the IFA than without it. This includes both financial and non-financial benefits for the employee and their personal circumstances. Further information is contained the Enterprise Agreement

6. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 – COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* has been considered in preparing and reviewing this Policy. The Policy is compatible with relevant rights enshrined in the Charter in that it is designed to:

- provide equal and effective protection against discrimination in the work arrangements of Council employees
- protect each person's right to privacy and to not have their reputation unlawfully attacked.

7. RESPONSE TO THE GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

Council's surveys of its staff highlighted that people, regardless of gender identity, highly valued the opportunity to access a range of flexibility at work.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* has been considered in the preparation of this Policy. This Policy has been amended because of Council's first gender audit, with the following intentions:

- Extend equal opportunities for advancement to women in employment
- to promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women; and
- to support the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, and delivery of services in workplaces and communities; and
- to recognise that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on their attributes.
- to redress disadvantage, address stigma, stereotyping, prejudice, and violence, and accommodate persons of different genders by way of structural change.

8. CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

This Policy has no impact on Council's Declaration on a Climate and Ecological Emergency, Council's Climate Change Emergency Strategy 2020-2030, or the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 in relation to the overarching governance principle on climate change and sustainability, because the protective and administrative measures contained in this Policy do not touch on the natural environment and do not seek to change any built environment.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Directors, Managers, Supervisors are responsible for implementing this Policy. Organisational Development will provide relevant advice and assistance to ensure the objectives of this Policy are met.

Managers are responsible for

- considering each employee application in conjunction with this policy and relevant legislation
- ensuring flexible working arrangements are in line with this policy
- managing differences in work styles and practices, e.g. managing employees working across a range of flexible work arrangements
- Ensuring the career progression of employees who are on flexible working arrangements have equal access to all training and other benefits and to ensure they suffer no disadvantage in opportunities for promotion or career development
- providing the necessary resources and equipment to facilitate flexible working arrangements within the context of this policy
- evaluating the outcomes of flexible working arrangements and looking for improvements
- reporting on flexible working arrangements within their business unit as required from time-to-time
- documenting and storing details of all flexible working arrangements as required within this policy
- developing work programs with each team member
- initiating periodic reviews of all staff working arrangements to ensure the business unit and operational needs are being met and that flexible working arrangements are equitable

Employees are responsible for

- identifying personal needs and possible solutions and being realistic about what is possible
- ensuring the physical security of Council information and assets at all times when outside of Council premises
- taking responsibility for delivering their own workload as agreed with their supervisor
- reporting any workplace incidents, injuries or illnesses that occur whilst undertaking flexible working arrangements
- reporting any potential hazards that may exist in the remote or home workplace as they may change from time to time
- ensuring any remote or home working arrangements comply with all Council policies and procedures including Code of Conduct, Privacy and Social Media policies
- Reviewing and modifying arrangements as their personal circumstances or operational requirements change from time to time

Council's "[Working towards a flexible future](#)" page is available on The Source (intranet) which will assist everyone to meet their obligations.

10. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed as follows:

- During the life of this version of the Policy, Council will consider how it can collect statistics relevant to inclusion and diversity,
- After each gender audit conducted by Council, Council will review this Policy.

11. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

11.1 Legislation

Victorian Legislation, Principles, and other reference sources (as amended or replaced from time to time)	• <i>The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> • <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> • <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> • <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> • <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> • <i>Public Records Act 1973</i> • <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act</i>
Commonwealth Legislation, schemes, and guidelines (as amended or replaced from time to time)	• <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004</i> • <i>Carer Recognition Act 2010</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> • <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> • <i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986</i> • <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</i> • <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i>

11.2 Related Council and Other Policies, Procedures, Strategies, Protocols, Guidelines

- Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement
- Working towards a flexible future
- Disability Action Policy and Plan
- Diversity, Access, and Equity Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Position Descriptions
- Positive Aging Strategy

11.3 GUIDELINES FOR WORKING REMOTELY

Absences from work	- Absences are subject to the normal leave conditions and requirements with no change to usual reporting and approval procedures. - You must inform your supervisor if and when you're unable to work as planned, and send leave to Payroll for processing.
Availability	You are required to remain contactable and/or accessible during work hours.
Computer/Home Office Purchase Scheme	- The schemes allows eligible staff to purchase computers and home office equipment and repay the cost via payroll instalments including: - hardware and software - external components - home office items Refer The Source for full details (<i>under Employee Benefits & Deductions</i>)
Code of Conduct, Policies and Codes of Practice	Council's Code of Conduct and all policies, procedures and codes of practice apply when you are working from home.
Employee Communication	- As far as possible, regular communication will be maintained. - Your line manager will continue to keep in touch in person and by remote, using tools like MS Teams. Expect to have regular in person and hybrid meetings and catch-ups using online tools and technology.
Family/Personal Responsibilities	If you have personal or other responsibilities such as childcare or elder care, you will need to manage these responsibilities in a way that allows you to successfully meet your job obligations.
Health and Safety	As far as practicable all Council's OH&S Policies and Codes of Practice continue to apply. See the attached Safety Guidelines for more information.
Homework space	Although it may not be possible it is recommended that you delineate an area in your home to use as your workspace.
Hours of work	Council's expectation is that you will work your usual total weekly hours of work and if you do not, you will apply for an appropriate period of leave or any accrued time in lieu of overtime.
Security and Confidentiality of business information	- Corporate records must be saved into Objective. - You must ensure the security of Council's intellectual property and business information in both hard copy and electronic data form in accordance with the relevant legislation and Council policies. - If you think Council's materials or physical or digital environment or your individual privacy has been compromised, please immediately report this to your supervisor.
Work Program	A work program should be developed and reviewed regularly
Worker's Compensation	- Workers' compensation (WorkCover) liability is limited to a work-related accident, injury, disease, or incident which occurs while you are carrying out Council related duties at home. - Any work-related injuries are to be reported to your supervisor and an incident report made as per usual practices.

11.4 WORK FROM HOME SAFETY GUIDELINES

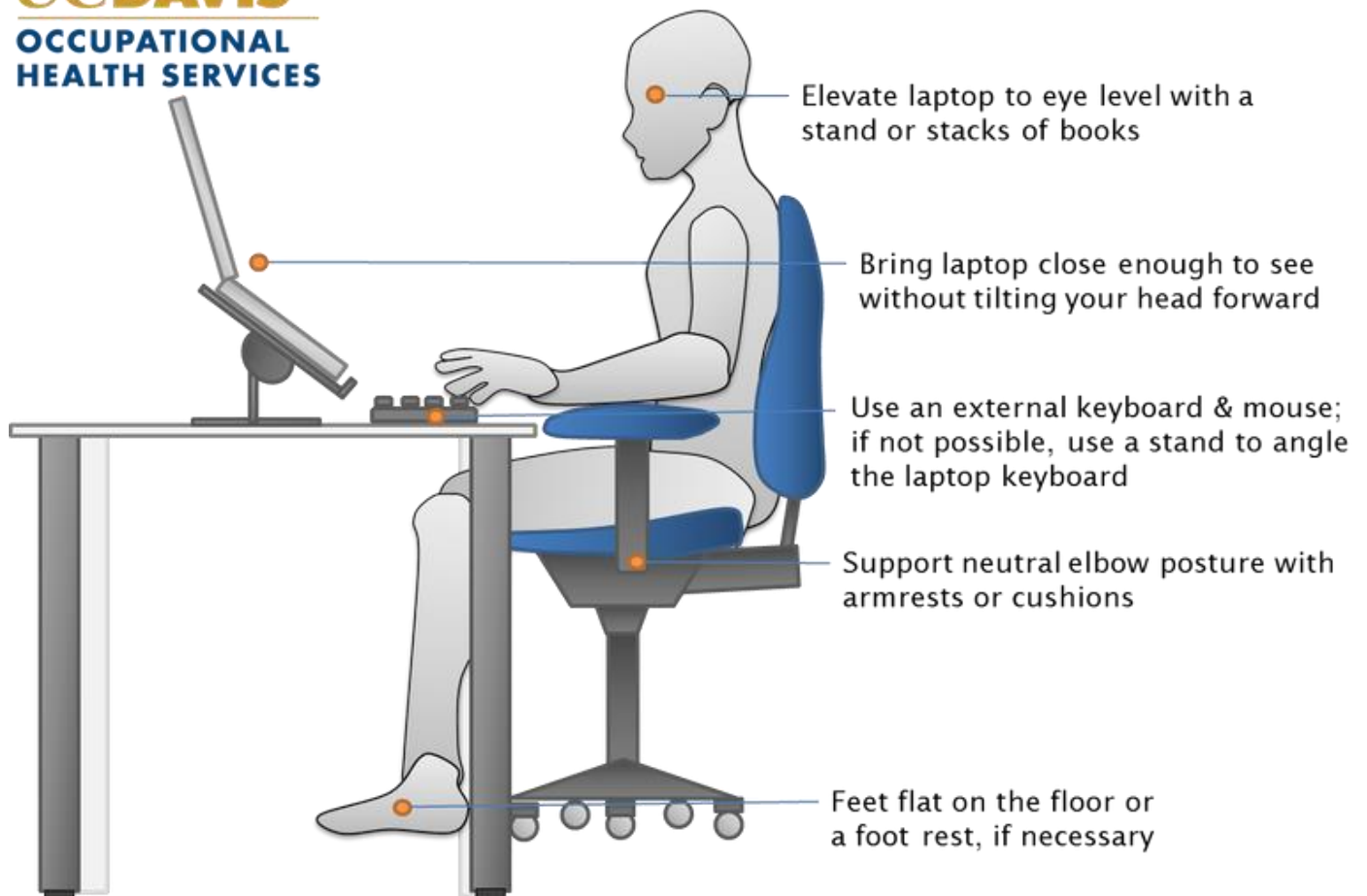
The following provides some guidance around keeping safe and healthy while working at home. It is recommended that **as best you can**, you work as follows:

Recommended guidelines		Y	N	N/A	Action required / comments
Work environment					
1	Ensure that lighting levels are appropriate and suited to the work you are doing				
2	Have adequate ventilation and appropriate heating and cooling				
3	Try to keep your workspace uncluttered and that there are no trailing electrical cords and cables or other trip hazards.				
4	Where possible, use an earth leakage circuit breaker (i.e. residual current device)				
5	Check that your electrical equipment is safe for use				
6	As best you can, try to set up your workstation in an area away from others				
Workstation					
7	Adequate office equipment available (e.g., office chair, monitor, keyboard, mouse)				
8	As best you can, set up your workstation as shown below				
9	Keyboard-to-user distance allows user to relax shoulders with elbows hanging close to body				
10	Monitor height is adjusted so top of screen is at or slightly lower than eye level. Viewing distance approximately arm's distance away				
Other					
11	Telephone or other suitable devices are readily available to allow effective communication				
12	You have a working smoke alarm installed				
13	Report all Incidents promptly to your supervisor				
14	Take a short break after every 30 mins of sitting (e.g. quick stand up and stretch)				
15	Emergency contact numbers and details are known, i.e. 000, specific numbers for work contacts				
16	Have a first aid kit available				

[Watch this short YouTube clip](#) about setting up your home workstation

ERGONOMIC GUIDANCE WHEN USING A LAPTOP

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HEALTH SERVICES



ERGONOMIC GUIDANCE WHEN USING A DESKTOP COMPUTER

