



25 June 2025

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2024/25-0943

Dear [REDACTED]

**Official Information Act request relating to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet work from home policy**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 30 May 2025. You requested:

- A copy of the agency's current work from home policy, including the date it was last updated and any accompanying documentation outlining the rationale for the most recent changes.
- Copies of any previous versions of the work from home policy within the specified timeframe, including the dates each version was in effect (to and from) and any documentation explaining the reasons for changes made.
- Copies of all documents (including but not limited to briefings, memos, internal advice, and reports) provided to or from the Chief Executive or Executive Leadership Team relating to proposed or actual changes to the work from home policy.

You have requested information relating to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is a departmental agency hosted by DPMC therefore, this response includes NEMA.

**Information being released**

DPMC and NEMA have a Flexible Work Policy that was approved on 8 December 2020 and updated on 27 March 2025. The updated policy covers all types of flexible working, including working from home (WFH). Our review of the previous policy came about in response to new Government expectations on WFH arrangements and updated guidance released by the Public Service Commission. The aim of our policy review has been to meet those expectations effectively, and to simplify and clarify flexible working to enable a positive high-performance culture at DPMC and NEMA.

Please find attached the documentation relevant to your request:

Item	Date	Document title	Decision
1	27 March 2025	Flexible Work Policy	Release
2	25 March 2025	Executive Leadership Team Board Memorandum: Flexible working policy review Appendices A, B, C, D	Release with some information withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i)
3	25 March 2025	Executive Leadership Team Board Meeting Minutes	Release
4	30 October 2024	Executive Leadership Team Board Memorandum: Flexible working by-default	Release

Item	Date	Document title	Decision
		policy options	
5	30 October 2024	Executive Leadership Team Board Meeting Minutes	Release
6	30 November 2020	Flexible Working By-Default Policy	Release

Some information has been withheld from the documents listed in the table above under section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to outweigh the reasons for withholding that information.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Clare Ward  
**Executive Director**  
**Strategy, Governance and Engagement**



# Flexible Work Policy

i-Manage reference	4315742	Date originally approved	8/12/2020
i-Manage version	7	Contact	Corporate Policy Owner
Approved by	Chief Executive, DPMC	Name	Ben King
		Signature	
Date amended version approved	27/03/2025	Date for review	31/03/2026

## Objective

1. This policy sets out the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) approach to flexible working so that it is used as a tool to enable our people to perform at their best and contribute to organisational success and a high-performance culture.

## Principles

2. The following principles underpin DPMC and NEMA's approach to meeting the policy objective:
  - a) **Meets and reflects government expectations for working from home** and Public Service Commission guidance.
  - b) **Culture, connection, and collaboration.** To support a positive workplace culture (team and organisation), importance should be placed on how employees working flexibly will develop and maintain good connections, relationships, and collaboration opportunities with team members, new starters, wider stakeholders and within their relevant agency (DPMC or NEMA).
  - c) **Transparency.** There is communication and transparency across DPMC and NEMA about flexible working. Teams, individuals and leaders have ongoing, open and honest conversations and anyone can provide feedback or raise concerns. Personal information shared by an employee while making an application for flexible working will be protected.
  - d) **Shared responsibility.** All employees have a shared understanding, knowledge and ability to request flexible working arrangements. Arrangements will be considered and

managed to ensure adequate productivity, outputs, work coverage, and presence in the office as required by the work of the team and the needs of their organisation.

- e) **Flexibility goes both ways.** Employees, teams and people leaders need to be flexible to accommodate colleagues, schedule changes, and unexpected issues that arise. To be successful, flexible arrangements require collective obligations on everyone to be open and adaptable. Minimising impacts on others requires a 'no surprises' approach as well as open communication and engagement within and across teams and stakeholders as appropriate, whilst also taking account of the needs of the organisation.

## Policy Statement

3. DPMC and NEMA's policy is that
- a) Flexible working is available to all employees, implemented in a way that balances the needs of DPMC and NEMA, teams and individuals.
  - b) The implementation of flexible working practices must not compromise the quality, efficiency, reliability, integrity or the security of our services.
  - c) While every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility, not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons will mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles.
  - d) Where flexible working arrangements are in place, business needs and government expectations will on occasion require changes and accommodations (e.g. being required to work from the office on a working from home day).

## Applies to

- 4. This policy applies to everyone in DPMC and NEMA, including permanent, fixed-term, secondees, casual and agency temporary staff (together referred to in this policy as 'employees'), regardless of position, tenure, seniority or reason for wanting flexible working.
- 5. The policy does not apply to self-employed or independent contractors.

## Definitions

6. The following terms contained in this policy are defined as:

Term	Definition
<b>Arrangements</b>	<p><b>Formal:</b> an arrangement that affects terms and conditions of employment and is outlined in the Individual Employment Agreement (IEA), for example, part time hours.</p> <p><b>Informal:</b> an arrangement that is intended to be regular and ongoing but does not affect terms and conditions of employment or the IEA, for example working from home.</p> <p><b>Ad hoc:</b> irregular, as needed, often one-off, and not part of an ongoing arrangement. For example, varying location or time of work to accommodate</p>

	personal appointments or to be able to work from home for a specific piece of work. May include short-term arrangements (up to 2 months) for emergency or personal circumstances.
<b>Hours</b>	<p><b>Hours of work:</b> As defined in each employee's IEA.</p> <p><b>Reduced hours:</b> A formal arrangement recorded in an employee's IEA where the Hours of Work are required to be fewer than 8 hours per day or fewer hours worked within specified fewer days of the week or fortnightly pay cycle.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p><b>Designated workplace:</b> Physical location at which an employee is required to be based. The city in which the DPMC or NEMA office is located is specified in an employee's IEA.</p> <p><b>Remote Working:</b> Where an employee's designated workplace is a location other than a DPMC or NEMA office. This is specified in an employee's IEA.</p>
<b>Types of flexibility</b>	<p><b>Leave:</b> Flexible leave arrangements.</p> <p><b>Place:</b> Working from home or an alternative location, including DPMC and NEMA premises that are not an employee's usual location.</p> <p><b>Role:</b> How a role is performed or divided.</p> <p><b>Schedule:</b> Working flexible hours.</p>

## Policy detail

### Making a flexible working request

7. **Formal flexible working:** all requests that affect the terms and conditions of employment should be made in writing by the employee to their people leader. Following consideration, the people leader has a duty to respond in writing, as soon as possible but no later than one month after the request was received. They will discuss the request with Human Resources (HR) and refer to the Level B leader for a decision.
8. **Informal flexible working:** all requests that do not affect terms and conditions of employment can be made by the employee to their people leader, in conversation is fine. If the people leader supports the request, subsequent conversations should be had with the team and other key stakeholders to ensure the arrangement enables everyone to connect, collaborate and deliver to support a high-performance culture. The people leader is responsible for recording all informal approvals.
9. **Ad hoc flexible working:** requests can be made by the employee to their people leader, in conversation is fine.
10. If an employee is affected by emergency or personal circumstance and they would like a short-term (up to 2 months) flexible working arrangement they should speak with their people leader, who can verbally approve a short-term arrangement (up to 2 months).
11. Requests made by employees affected by **family violence under Part 6AB** of the Employment Relations Act 2000 may be made and granted verbally in the first instance with the necessary written request and decision made after the initial verbal application has been accepted, no later than 10 days after the request is received.

12. A flexible working arrangement can only be refused for the reasons permitted under the Employment Relations Act 2000<sup>1</sup>.

### Considerations

13. When reviewing a flexible working request, leaders will:
- a) consider protective security, and health and safety requirements, financial implications, and workload implications
  - b) engage with teams and stakeholders to understand possible impacts on the person, team, stakeholders and organisational culture, individual and team development, collaboration opportunities, connections and productivity
  - c) agree and implement strategies and actions to mitigate against any possible negative consequences and
  - d) if an ad hoc or informal flexible working arrangement, consider whether there are performance issues or concerns regarding an individual. Where individual performance concerns exist, flexible working options may be limited or not available. In these situations, people leaders do not have to agree to a request and can end flexible working arrangements.
14. Teams may establish protocols or trial ways of working to enable productivity, learning and development, support new starters and employee performance, and manage for outcomes.

### Funding

15. DPMC and NEMA allow laptops to be used remotely in New Zealand, and provide a charger, additional headset, travel docking station, keyboard and mouse for employees working outside of a DPMC or NEMA office.
16. Employees may use their Wellbeing Allowance to purchase additional equipment for use away from their designated workplace. Claims should be made through the usual process.
17. Funding will not be provided for employee travel, heating, power, internet, telephone, catering or other miscellaneous costs associated with flexible working.

### Decision delegations

18. People leaders can approve ad hoc flexible work requests.
19. People leaders can approve informal flexible work requests (i.e. those that do not change the terms and conditions of employment) including those that involve a maximum of one day per week from home or an alternative location.
20. Informal flexible work requests that include more than one day per week from home or an alternative location should be considered by the people leader and a recommendation provided to their Level B leader.

<sup>1</sup> Refer Parts 69AAF and 69ABF which include, amongst other reasons, (a) inability to reorganise work among existing staff; (b) inability to recruit additional staff; (c) detrimental impact on quality; (d) detrimental impact on performance; (e) insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; (f) planned structural changes; (g) burden of additional costs; (h) detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand.



21. Level B leaders may approve informal flexible work requests that involve more than one day from home or an alternative location.
22. People leaders are required to discuss with HR all proposed formal flexible work requests (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment), e.g. compressed or reduced hours, changed leave provisions or changes to the designated workplace.
23. A Level B leader can approve, or decline, formal flexible working requests (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment) except for compressed hours. For example, reduced hours, certain changes to leave entitlements, and changes to the designated workplace.
24. Any proposed arrangement that includes compressed hours<sup>2</sup> (trial or permanent) requires approval from the DPMC or NEMA Chief Executive.
25. The decision delegations table below shows who holds approval authority for each type of request, and when HR must be consulted. Level B human resources delegation holders have additional delegations beyond those held by people leaders.

Type of Arrangement	All people leaders <sup>3</sup>	Level B leader <sup>4</sup>	HR consultation needed	DPMC or NEMA Chief Executive
<b>Ad hoc</b> arrangements	✓			
<b>Informal</b> arrangements including up to a maximum of one day per week working from home or an alternative location	✓			
<b>Informal</b> arrangements that include more than one day per week working from home or an alternative location		✓		
<b>Formal</b> arrangements with a change to pay, leave or the IEA		✓	✓	
<b>Formal</b> arrangements with compressed hours (permanent and temporary)			✓	✓

### **Trial arrangements**

#### **All arrangements**

26. Any proposed flexible work arrangements may be trialled to ascertain impacts and assess the best arrangement to support collaboration and connection amongst the team and stakeholders.

#### **Formal trial arrangements**

27. People leaders must discuss with HR all proposals for formal flexible working trial arrangements (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment). HR will

<sup>2</sup> Compressed hours are formal arrangements recorded in an employee's IEA where the hours of work are agreed to be more than 8 hours per day worked within a specified timeframe.

<sup>3</sup> People leaders are those holding human resources delegation under the Delegations Policy.

<sup>4</sup> Leaders holding Level B human resources delegations.

assess whether the proposed arrangements require a temporary variation of the IEA to enable adjustment to payroll or leave calculations, and to ensure appropriate records are maintained for any approved trial.

28. Requests for temporary variations to an IEA, such as trialling a variation in working hours, must follow the consultation and delegations stated above and:
  - a) be agreed in writing
  - b) not exceed three months
  - c) not be extended, and
  - d) have a written review conducted at the mid-point of the trial period.

### **Recording and reporting arrangements**

29. People leaders are responsible for recording all approved informal flexible working arrangements for their team, in the format advised by DPMC and NEMA. This may be reported to the Public Service Commission from time to time, along with formal flexible working arrangements recorded by HR.

### **Review of arrangements**

30. Informal flexible working arrangements are subject to review and feedback at any time, to ensure they are still fit for purpose and aligned with the flexible working principles.
31. Employees and people leaders will also review informal flexible working arrangements on a six-monthly basis, at performance review time, to ensure that they
  - a) continue to work for the individual, team, and DPMC or NEMA
  - b) remain beneficial for everyone
  - c) support the agreed norms of behaviour in the team (i.e. accountability, communication and availability requirements), and
  - d) support a collaborative, empowering and high performing culture that delivers on its accountabilities.

### **Employee request for review of refusal**

32. If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome of their request for flexible working arrangements, they should raise it with their people leader in the first instance. They may also raise it with the people leader's manager. Employees may also request advice and assistance from the HR team.

### **Working from home or an alternative location**

33. Working from home, or an alternative location, is not an entitlement.
34. Working from home arrangements are agreed to on the basis that employees are delivering their work from home or the alternative location instead of the office. It is not expected, or acceptable, to plan work-from-home arrangements in order to care for dependants. Employees and people leaders will need to use their reasonable and sensible judgement to agree when this may be appropriate to the circumstances.
35. Any arrangements between an employee and DPMC and NEMA to work from home or an alternative location are entered into in good faith and on the understanding that from



time to time some compromises and accommodations will be necessary to meet business and individual requirements. People leaders can require team members to work in the office as necessary.

36. An arrangement to work from home or an alternative work location must meet all health, safety and protective security requirements.
37. An arrangement to work from home or an alternative location should be beneficial to the performance of the individual, the team, and DPMC or NEMA and should not negatively impact team culture, cross team collaboration, development, or output and productivity.
38. Informal arrangements to work from home or an alternative location will be reviewed as needed, but at a minimum on a six-monthly basis, at performance review time.

## Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Approve the Flexible Working Policy following appropriate consultation.
<b>Level B leader</b>	<p>Work with people leaders within their business group to support their understanding of, and adherence to, the Flexible Work Policy.</p> <p>Ensure people leaders discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the Flexible Work Policy.</p> <p>Work with people leaders within their business group on formal flexible work requests and provide final decision in accordance with the Delegations Policy.</p> <p>Communicate with other ELT members to ensure consistency of approach to flexible working across DPMC and NEMA.</p> <p>Consult with HR as necessary to clarify any areas of uncertainty.</p>
<b>People leaders</b>	<p>Ensure they understand DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy and processes and implement these appropriately in line with employment terms and conditions for individuals.</p> <p>Handle individual queries relating to DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy and processes for their own employees, consulting with HR to discuss and clarify any areas of uncertainty.</p> <p>Consider and engage with teams on all ad hoc (where practicable) and informal working arrangements, record approvals in the notified format.</p> <p>Consider formal flexible work requests, engage with those affected, consult with HR and seek approval according to the decision delegations table above and respond with a decision in writing (letter or email) as soon as possible, and no later than one month after receipt of the initial request.</p> <p>Provide verbal approval to any flexible working request made by employees affected by emergency or personal circumstances (short term up to 2 months). Where this involves family violence and an application is made under 6AB of the Employment Relations Act 2000 a written application should be completed at a suitable time and a written response with a decision provided no later than ten days after receipt of the initial request.</p>

	<p>Consistently apply DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy procedures and processes.</p> <p>Refer staff to this policy when appropriate.</p> <p>Consider, approve or decline flexible working requests within their delegation.</p> <p>Develop and nurture a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly.</p> <p>Carry out effective reviews and obtain feedback on flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>Manage the health and safety of workers, and protective security requirements.</p>
<b>Employees</b>	<p>Seek flexible working in accordance with the principles stated in this policy.</p> <p>Take responsibility for the health and safety of self and others.</p> <p>Maintain protective security requirements at all times.</p> <p>Develop and nurture a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly.</p> <p>Participate in effective reviews and provide feedback on flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>Comply with the DPMC and NEMA Flexible Working Policy.</p>
<b>Human Resources (HR)</b>	<p>Support people leaders in achieving the aims of DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy.</p> <p>Provide support and advice to people leaders.</p> <p>Process formal flexible working requests and notify people leaders of the required reporting format.</p>

## Related policies, guidance and information

39. Other documents that should be read in conjunction with this policy include:

- [DPMC and NEMA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) Plans](#)
- [DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Guidelines](#)
- [Delegations Policy](#)
- [Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
- [Family Violence Support Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- Individual Employment Agreement
- [Leave Policy](#)
- [Leave for Alternative Duties and Special Leave Policy](#)
- [DPMC and NEMA's On-Call and Call-Back Policies](#)
- [Performance, Development and Growth Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Protective Security Policy](#)
- [Remuneration Policy](#)
- [Time Off In Lieu \(TOIL\) Policy](#)
- [Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Working Away from the Office Guidelines 2020](#)



# Memorandum

## FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY REVIEW

To: Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Board

<b>Date</b>	25/3/2025	<b>From</b>	Clare Ward, Executive Director Strategy, Governance and Engagement
		<b>Prepared by</b>	Catherine Hammond, Principal Adviser Organisation Direction and Development

### Purpose

1. This paper is a cover note to present the final documents relating to the updated Flexible Working Policy to the ELT Board for review and discussion.

### Recommendations

2. We recommend you:
  1. **note** the changes made to the Flexible Working Policy as a result of consultation
  2. **agree** to recommend the DPMC Chief Executive approves the Flexible Working Policy and associated changes to the Delegations Policy **YES / NO**
  3. **note** that the accompanying guidelines will be approved by the Executive Director, Strategy, Governance and Engagement
  4. **agree** to move forward with the planned communications to employees, and **YES / NO**
  5. **note** that ELT members are requested to discuss their approach to aligning with the policy at their forthcoming leadership team meetings.

### Policy Update Process

3. The updated Flexible Working Policy was reviewed by ELT Board on 4 February 2025. With some amendments, ELT agreed on a version to go out to employee consultation.
4. Consultation was open for two weeks between 10 February and 21 February to all employees of DPMC and NEMA, including meeting with the Culture and Engagement Network. Feedback was collated and reviewed by the Organisation Direction and Development team.
5. A summary of the feedback, our response and action taken as a result is provided in **Appendix A**.

6. Where appropriate, edits were made to the Policy and additional context and information added to the Guidelines. The edits to the Policy are mostly wording additions or changes to provide greater clarity on certain points.
7. Two more substantive policy clarifications were made:
  - a. the stipulation that an ongoing arrangement to work from home is made on the basis that the employee is not caring for any high-needs dependents, and
  - b. that requests for compressed hours arrangements be approved by the relevant Chief Executive of DPMC or NEMA. Given the ELT Board is not a decision-making body and it is logistically difficult to meet the statutory timelines within the Board cycle, it is reasonable for requests to go to the respective Chief Executive.
8. The final Flexible Working Policy is in **Appendix B**.
9. The Flexible Working Guidelines are expected to be read in conjunction with the Policy. These will also inform updates to the content on the relevant Kāinga pages. The Guidelines are attached as **Appendix C**.
10. The consultation feedback, Policy and Guidelines documents have been reviewed by NEMA Talent and Organisation Development as well as Human Resources and suggested amendments incorporated.

### **What are other Government agencies doing around flexible working?**

s9(2)(g)(i)

### **Recommended Next Steps**

15. The Policy is scheduled for review by the DPMC Chief Executive on Wednesday 26 March.
16. Once it is approved, communication to people leaders can begin. Following that the final Policy and Guidelines will be communicated to all employees.
17. All existing flexible working arrangements will need to comply with the updated Policy when it goes live.
18. The ELT Board are requested to put flexible working on the agenda for their Leadership Team meetings starting Monday 31 March in order for them to outline how they expect a review of current arrangements to be carried out within their group.
19. This will be the most top-of-mind question for employees and people leaders will need guidance from their ELT member as to the expectations for the Group/team.

## Supporting Your People Leaders

20. Review the current data for Working From Home and Remote Working arrangements. The data from November 2024 will be sent to you from Human Resources.
21. Determine any patterns, gaps or issues to discuss with your leadership team and set any expectations around those.
22. Schedule a meeting with your leadership team to convey:
  - a. the policy update is primarily a simplification and clarification of the existing policy
  - b. people leaders should be cognisant that some staff may be feeling concerned about how any current flexible working arrangements they have may be affected
  - c. your expectations for your group regarding reviewing current and approving future flexible working arrangements
  - d. a recommendation to your people leaders to review the flexible working data available for their teams and identify any patterns that may aid decision making, and
  - e. that when people leaders are having conversations with their teams, they understand what the reasoning is for someone having a particular day working from home.
23. Key messages going to people leaders are attached in **Appendix D**. These will form the basis of general communications messages to all employees.

## Next Steps: Communications and Engagement Plan

Date	Action/Channel	Purpose/messaging
Tuesday 25 March	ELT Board	Discuss Consultation feedback, and final policy and guidelines
Wednesday 26 March	CE final sign-off <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FW Policy</li> <li>Delegations Policy (associated changes)</li> </ul> ED, SGE sign-off FW Guidelines	
Thursday 27 March	DPMC and NEMA Leaders advised ahead of all staff	Key messages Attach pdf docs Implementation info
Friday 28 March	Kainga article, Pānui (DPMC and NEMA)	Consultation response Flexible Working Policy Flexible Working Guidelines Updated Delegations Policy
Friday 28 March	Notify PSA	Send final Policy and Guidelines
Monday 31 March	ELT to put Flexible Working on their own Leadership Team agendas for this week  Invite ODD team member as needed	Discussion points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does a reset look like for my Group?</li> <li>Outline ELT expectations for process of reviewing and approving existing arrangements.</li> </ul>
Ongoing	Implementation support	Support people leaders on an ongoing basis

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE  
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**  
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA



**National Emergency  
Management Agency**  
Te Rākau Whakamarumaru

## Flexible Working Policy (FWP) response to consultation feedback

What was shared	Our response	Changes made
1. Concerns about impacts on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) goals and/ or Gender or Ethnic Pay Gap implications	It is important that the FWP be read in conjunction with the relevant <a href="#">DPMC</a> or <a href="#">NEMA DEI Plan</a> . These set out the programme and goals of each organisation to reflect and deliver for the communities we serve, close gender and ethnic pay gaps, create fairer workplaces and foster an environment in which our people feel empowered, valued and engaged. If there are reasonable accommodations needed to enable an individual's performance, these should be discussed with people leaders.	Policy change: Added reference to DPMC and NEMA's DEI Plans with hyperlinks
2. Positive aspects of Working From Home (WFH) are not reflected in the policy	There are benefits to all types of flexibility including WFH, and these are generally well-understood. However, a policy is not the mechanism to detail the positive aspects of each type. The FWP intent is to enable our people to perform at their best and contribute to organisational success and a high-performance culture.	No change to policy
3. Further explicit guidance on how to take performance into consideration is needed	Managing individual performance and having regular performance conversations is a core part of each people leader's role. When someone is not performing to expectations and is requesting flexibility, each people leader should reflect on whether the person's flexible working request will support their performance. There is information on managing performance on <a href="#">Kāinga</a> including links to our <a href="#">Performance, Development and Growth Policy</a> .	Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Considerations; and Process flow charts
4. Strengthen the policy to give a more employee-focussed and balanced lens in terms of supporting positive workplace culture	Culture, connection, and collaboration is set out as a policy principle ( <i>Clause 2 b</i> ). This underpins DPMC and NEMA's approach to meeting the policy objective and is an important consideration regarding individuals working flexibly in ways that meet their needs, those of their teams, DPMC and its stakeholders.	No change to policy  Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – how to support a good team culture
5. Guidance is needed on when an arrangement requires changes to an Individual Employment Agreement (IEA)	It's important that our process is clear for all our people. Process maps to aid people leaders in their decision-making have been added to the Flexible Working Guidelines. There is further information in the Guidelines. Any request for formal flexible working arrangements must be discussed with HR who can provide assistance to navigate the process.	Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Process flow charts
6. Clarify whose responsibility it is to meet health, safety, and protective security	<i>Clause 9</i> stipulates that all arrangements need to meet all health, safety, and protective security requirements. Employees should also refer to information on <a href="#">Kāinga</a> including our <a href="#">Working Away from the Office Guidelines</a> .	No change to policy  Additional information in the

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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
requirements relating to this policy		Flexible Working Guidelines – FAQ
7. The delegation authority to decline a flexible working request should sit at a level higher than your people leader because of possible significant impact to individuals	<p>People leaders are the appropriate level to approve or decline requests for most forms of flexible working. A decision-maker needs to have the same authority to determine whether to approve or decline a request. Formal requests that form part of an IEA require HR support and advice and a Level B human resources delegation for decision-making.</p> <p>It is important that teams build a culture of trust and responsibility, and good conversations are a feature of that. If someone has a concern with their people leader, we encourage them to discuss this with them directly, or if this isn't possible, refer to our Speaking Up Safely process. Further information is on our <a href="#">Resolving issues</a> page on Kāinga.</p>	<p>No change to policy</p> <p>Additional information in the guidance – how to support a good team culture</p>
8. Provide more detail about the supply and funding of IT equipment to enable flexible working	Only approved IT equipment (laptop charger, headset, keyboard, mouse, docking station) can be used with work laptops. We are working with CASS IT and business units to resolve any supply and funding issues. To check if personal IT equipment you have at home is compatible with your work laptop visit the <a href="#">Working from home or alternative location Kāinga page</a> .	<p>No change to policy</p> <p>Additional information in the guidance – FAQ</p>
9. Provide further clarity and definition regarding working from an alternate location and how the policy applies	DPMC and NEMA employees must work from their designated location unless agreed. Working from an alternative location, including other DPMC or NEMA premises that are not the employee's usual location, still need to be agreed.	Policy change: Added clarity to table in <i>Clause 6</i>
10. Increase people leaders' delegation authority to approve informal flexible working arrangements up to two days	This has been considered by the Executive Leadership Team Board (ELT) and it is their preference to standardise the implementation of this policy by requiring Level B leaders to approve informal flexible working requests that include more than one day working from home or an alternative location.	No change to policy
11. More clarity is needed about delegations (who has approval authority and for what), including clarifying if the delegations table is an 'and/ or' table or not	<p>The delegations table in the FWP has been updated to provide more clarity.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Delegations Policy</a> (referred to in the FWP) provides detail about delegated authority within DPMC and NEMA and this has been updated.</p>	Policy change: clarity added to <i>Clauses 18-25</i> , and added reference to Delegations Policy
12. More information needed about who holds responsibility to record flexible working arrangements	It is incumbent on people leaders to record all informal flexible working approvals in addition to the HR-managed list of remote working arrangements. This can enable teams to review these together.	<p>Policy change: clarity added to <i>Clause 8</i></p> <p>Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines –</p>

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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
	People leaders may choose to keep records of ad hoc approvals and if so, may find it helpful to do so on the relevant iManage personnel files.	Recording flexible working arrangements
13. More clarity is needed to understand references to 'leader' and/ or 'people leaders'	The use of 'leader' refers to 'people leaders' who have delegated authority in the Delegations Policy. The FWP has been updated to clarify this.	Policy change: clarified 'people leader' and 'level B leader' throughout
14. How does this policy apply to NEMA and / or during a NEMA activation	This is a business as usual (BAU) policy and applies to NEMA and DPMC in the same way that all <a href="#">corporate policies</a> do. NEMA has separate policies and processes regarding on-call and emergency activations outside BAU arrangements.	No change to policy
15. There are insufficient desk spaces at some DPMC and NEMA premises to enable all staff at those locations to work in the office	There is an expectation that DPMC and NEMA have sufficient space for employees.  Where insufficient desks at certain locations have been identified, this will be remedied. In the interim this will be a factor when considering flexible working requests.	No change to policy
16. Clarity is needed about monitoring, recording, and reporting flexible working arrangements, including considerations about maintaining employee privacy	All flexible working arrangements will be recorded however, this does not include reasons for wanting a flexible working arrangement, or any personal information. Personal privacy is paramount and there is no expectation for people to disclose information they are not comfortable with. The fact people have a flexible working arrangement in place is not personal information.  People leaders are responsible for recording flexible working arrangements for their team in a format advised by DPMC and NEMA so that anonymised reporting may be provided to the Public Service Commission (PSC).	Policy change: added to <i>Clause 29</i> reporting may be provided to PSC from time to time  Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Sensitive conversations
17. What are the reasons for refusal	Arrangements may only be refused for reasons permitted under the Employment Relations Act 2000; covered under <i>Clause 12</i> .	No change to policy
18. Health and safety is important and H&S representatives should have been consulted	Health and safety is a critical consideration and worker engagement is essential. All employees of DPMC and NEMA were invited to participate in policy consultation. DPMC's Health and Safety Committee noted the policy during its February meeting and that individuals would provide feedback.	No change to policy
19. Clarity of what arrangements can be reviewed or ended	Informal arrangements should be reviewed as part of ongoing team discussions, and with employees as part of their regular performance conversations. They may be adjusted or ended in response to changes in circumstances (personal or departmental).  Formal arrangements that form part of an IEA can be discussed but cannot be unilaterally changed or ended. All	Policy change: <i>Clause 30 and 31</i> removed word 'All', replaced with 'Informal' regarding review

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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
	changes require the agreement of both the employee and the employer.	of flexible working arrangements.
20. Clarity about the roles and responsibilities of other teams i.e. DPMC ODD and NEMA Talent and OD	For formal flexible working requests, the Human Resources (HR) team must be involved. The NEMA Talent and OD, and DPMC ODD teams' do not have a formal role within this policy however, their usual roles of supporting people leaders and teams to develop a positive working culture remain unchanged.	No change to policy
21. Trial arrangements process, including extensions	Trialling proposed arrangements is a good way to test them out to understand the full impacts of the arrangements and work out if amendments can or need to be made. Trials will work in some, but not all, circumstances.  Trials cannot be extended beyond three months.	Policy update: detail regarding trials for flexible working arrangements added to <i>Clauses 26-28</i>
22. What is the minimum required information for a flexible working request to meet obligations and requirements within the Employment Relations Act (ERA) 2000	Information is contained within the forms employees can use to request a flexible working arrangement. This is also referenced in the related policies, guidance and information section of the policy.	No change to policy
23. Further specify what a Level B leader is	Refer to the <a href="#">Delegations Policy</a> . In most cases a Level B leader is an ELT member.	No change to policy
24. The policy goes further than the Public Service Commission (PSC) guidance which states the Government's expectations don't mean public servants cannot WFH, or that they must work from the office a set number of days, or that they change existing arrangements already agreed because the policy now states all existing arrangements must be reviewed and decisions for anything more than one day must go to a Level B leader	The policy gives effect to the PSC guidance through setting out DPMC and NEMA's approach to flexible working, including WFH, which is that working from home is not an entitlement.  At DPMC and NEMA flexible working is available noting that there are considerations for individuals, leaders and teams. It also includes reviewing informal flexible working arrangements on a six-monthly basis to ensure these continue to work and remain beneficial for everyone and support team and organisational culture. In regard to the number of days leaders can approve or decline, this has been considered by the Executive Leadership Team Board (ELT) and it is their preference to standardise the implementation of this policy by requiring Level B leaders to determine informal flexible working requests that include more than one day working from home or an alternative location.  All flexible working arrangements that form part of an IEA remain unchanged.	No change to policy
25. Health and safety concerns regarding quality of office work	Anyone with health and safety concerns regarding their office work set up should speak with their health and safety representative. Options are available to provide suitable	No change to policy

What was shared	Our response	Changes made
set up compared to at home	equipment and workspaces, or ergonomic assessments as required. An arrangement to WFH or alternative location must meet all health and safety and protective security requirements. If these cannot be met a flexible working request will not be approved.	Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Considerations for each request
26. Concerns about people leaders micromanaging their teams, or vetoing and disengaging from discussions about flexible working because the policy states “People leaders can require team members to work in the office as necessary” which implies an inflexible approach	<p>The policy is about how DPMC and NEMA will use flexible working as part of a suite of tools to enable our people to perform at their best and contribute to organisational success and a high-performance culture. The policy is clear that any arrangements must meet the needs of DPMC or NEMA, the team, and the individual. It is important that teams build a culture of trust and responsibility, and good conversations are a feature of that.</p> <p>The policy is clear that on occasion, business needs will require changes and accommodations. This is because ad hoc and informal flexible working arrangements must work for all concerned, and be regularly reviewed and discussed.</p> <p>If someone has a concern with their people leader, we encourage them to discuss this with them directly, or if this isn't possible, refer to our Speaking Up Safely process. Further information is on our <a href="#">Resolving issues</a> page on Kāinga.</p>	No change to policy
27. Concerns regarding unfair or inconsistent implementation	<p>We expect there will be some variation in flexible working practices across DPMC and NEMA. This is because there will be differences in individual or team circumstances and the fact that not all types of flexibility will work for all roles.</p> <p>Requests for flexible working arrangements will be respected and considered following the policy and guidance.</p> <p>Sensitive personal circumstances are not always able to be disclosed. As a result, some decisions may not appear consistent or equitable. A culture of trust and responsibility is necessary to ensure that while not all reasons for all decisions can be shared, there is respect for those involved.</p> <p>It is important that teams build a culture of trust and responsibility, and good conversations are a feature of that. If someone has a concern with their people leader, we encourage them to discuss this with them directly, or if this isn't possible, refer to our Speaking Up Safely process. Further information is on our <a href="#">Resolving issues</a> page on Kāinga.</p>	<p>No change to policy</p> <p>Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Sensitive conversations</p>
28. Recommendation to remove the term ‘working from home’ because it is politically loaded and ambiguous (what/where is home) and suggest replacing	‘Working from home’ is used because it forms part of the PSC guidance and government expectations. It is a term used by most people who request an informal flexible working arrangement that involves working from another location that is not a person’s designated workplace. The term ‘alternative location’ is also used alongside ‘working	Policy change: Subheading <i>Work from home or an alternative location</i> moved to end of <i>Policy detail</i> section to remove confusion

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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
it with 'work from alternative location'.	from home' in reference to flexibility of place to recognise differences in people's circumstances.	that the policy is only about WFH or another location and not all types of flexibility
29. Concerns about office etiquette and being able to focus at work	People need to be considerate of others in the workplace and most of our worksites enable people to choose a suitable workspace for the type of work they need to do.  If additional reasonable accommodations are required these should be discussed with people leaders.	No change to policy
30. Concerns about a management disconnect between 'line' and 'function' managers in a NEMA response setting due to function managers not necessarily being a person's line (BAU) manager, and line managers not having oversight.	It's important line and functional managers communicate and are aligned in the management of their teams. This includes discussing employee wellbeing, expectations and performance. We appreciate it can be challenging working in arrangements where line managers don't have daily oversight, including in a NEMA response setting however, this is a business-as-usual policy. Please refer to NEMA's response specific policies and procedures for guidance during an activation.	No change to policy
31. Add more detail about ad hoc versus emergency or personal circumstances	Ad hoc arrangements may include short-term arrangements for emergency or personal circumstances.	Policy change: <i>Clauses 6 and 10</i> more detail added  Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – various subheadings specifically related to ad hoc arrangements
32. Concerns about a potential decrease in support for employees returning from parental leave, who will rely on flexible working options.	DPMC and NEMA support people returning from parental leave (and other reasons for longer term leave).  It is important for people leaders to keep in touch with employees while on parental leave and this offers the opportunity to talk about return-to-work circumstances and timing. We anticipate that all teams are supportive of people in this situation and can have a conversation about how to provide a supportive environment.	No change to policy
33. Concerns that the policy implies Level B leaders won't approve more than one day of flexible working	The intention of the policy is that Level B leaders have the authority to approve or decline a request. People leaders are expected to give all flexible working requests full consideration according to the FWP. They are expected to outline their support and / or concerns to the Level B leader who will then give the request due consideration prior to making a decision.	No change to policy

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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
34. Suggest adding a separate section for ad hoc arrangements for clarity	<p>Ad hoc arrangements are irregular and crop up as needed. They may be in addition to formal and / or informal arrangements.</p> <p>Short-term arrangements for emergency or personal circumstances are generally considered ad hoc, at least initially.</p>	<p>Policy change: <i>Clauses 6 and 10</i> more detail added</p> <p>Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – various subheadings specifically related to ad hoc arrangements</p>
35. Para 27 reads as though Level B leader must agree to a request and cannot decline	This was not our intention. A decision-maker has the same authority to determine whether to approve or decline a request.	<p>Policy change: Removed 'are required to', replaced with 'may'. Renumbered as clause 21.</p>
36. Change policy name to 'Flexible Working (Working From Home Policy)' as used on the PSC website	Because flexibility comes in many different forms, the title Flexible Working Policy is more reflective of this. People can, and do, work flexibly without WFH. WFH or an alternative location does have its own section within the policy. This has been moved to the end of the policy to avoid any misunderstanding.	Policy changed to move <i>clauses 7-13</i> to become <i>clauses 33-37</i> .
37. Concerns the policy will impact individuals, including materially disadvantaging staff with existing arrangements	Core to the policy is that flexible working arrangements need to work for the person, the team, and organisation. It is expected that individual circumstances can be discussed with the team or with the people leader.	<p>Policy change: Updated <i>Clause 13.b</i> to include consideration of the possible impacts on the person</p> <p>Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Sensitive conversations</p>
38. Impacts on ability to care for dependants	The Flexible Working Guidelines provide more information that is it not expected, or acceptable, to plan work-from-home arrangements to care for dependants. Employees and people leaders need to use their reasonable and sensible judgment relevant to the circumstances, and the other leave options available.	<p>Policy change: <i>new clause 34</i></p> <p>Additional information in the Flexible Working Guidelines – Flexible working arrangements: What about working from home or an alternative</p>



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What was shared	Our response	Changes made
		location to care for others
39. More information regarding policy implementation, supporting guidance, and any transition period	It is expected that people and teams will have conversations to check arrangements are working within the updated policy and guidelines. The policy and guidance apply to both DPMC and NEMA.	No change to policy
40. Concerns relating to Public Service Association (PSA) proceedings	This policy is consistent with our duty to implement government expectations and PSC guidance. DPMC will review its policy if it is required to do so as a result of the outcome of the proceedings between the PSA and the PSC.	No change to policy
41. Concerns regarding the consultation process, including feeling it was rushed, not having associated operational guidance	<p>The core substance and requirements of the policy have not changed significantly. To align with changes in Government expectations and PSC guidance the standard corporate consultation process was undertaken.</p> <p>All staff have had the opportunity to engage in the review of the policy and provide feedback through multiple channels over a two-week period.</p> <p>The Flexible Working Guidelines that has been developed is consistent with current guidance and updated to reflect feedback received during the consultation process and changes in the updated policy.</p>	No change to policy
42. Various typos	Thanks!	Minor changes noted

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## Flexible Work Policy

<b>i-Manage reference</b>	4315742	<b>Date originally approved</b>	8/12/2020
<b>i-Manage version</b>	7	<b>Contact</b>	Corporate Policy Owner
<b>Approved by</b>	Chief Executive, DPMC	<b>Name</b>	Ben King
		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date amended version approved</b>	26/03/2025	<b>Date for review</b>	31/03/2026

### Objective

1. This policy sets out the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) approach to flexible working so that it is used as a tool to enable our people to perform at their best and contribute to organisational success and a high-performance culture.

### Principles

2. The following principles underpin DPMC and NEMA's approach to meeting the policy objective:
  - a) **Meets and reflects government expectations for working from home** and Public Service Commission guidance.
  - b) **Culture, connection, and collaboration.** To support a positive workplace culture (team and organisation), importance should be placed on how employees working flexibly will develop and maintain good connections, relationships, and collaboration opportunities with team members, new starters and wider stakeholders.
  - c) **Transparency.** There is communication and transparency across DPMC and NEMA about flexible working. Teams, individuals and leaders have ongoing, open and honest conversations and anyone can provide feedback or raise concerns. Personal information shared by an employee while making an application for flexible working will be protected.
  - d) **Shared responsibility.** All employees have a shared understanding, knowledge and ability to request flexible working arrangements. Arrangements will be considered and managed to ensure adequate productivity, outputs, work coverage, and presence in the office as required by the work of the team.

- e) **Flexibility goes both ways.** Employees, teams and people leaders need to be flexible to accommodate colleagues, schedule changes, and unexpected issues that arise. To be successful, flexible arrangements require collective obligations on everyone to be open and adaptable. Minimising impacts on others requires a 'no surprises' approach as well as open communication and engagement within and across teams and stakeholders as appropriate.

## Policy Statement

3. DPMC and NEMA's policy is that
  - a) Flexible working is available to all employees, implemented in a way that balances the needs of DPMC and NEMA, teams and individuals.
  - b) The implementation of flexible working practices must not compromise the quality, efficiency, or reliability of our services.
  - c) While every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility, not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons will mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles.
  - d) Where flexible working arrangements are in place, business needs will on occasion require changes and accommodations (e.g. being required to work from the office on a working from home day).

## Applies to

4. This policy applies to everyone in DPMC and NEMA, including permanent, fixed-term, seconded, casual and agency temporary staff (together referred to in this policy as 'employees'), regardless of position, tenure, seniority or reason for wanting flexible working.
5. The policy does not apply to self-employed or independent contractors.

## Definitions

6. The following terms contained in this policy are defined as:

Term	Definition
<b>Arrangements</b>	<p><b>Formal:</b> an arrangement that affects terms and conditions of employment and is outlined in the Individual Employment Agreement (IEA), for example, part time hours.</p> <p><b>Informal:</b> an arrangement that is intended to be regular and ongoing but does not affect terms and conditions of employment or the IEA, for example working from home.</p> <p><b>Ad hoc:</b> irregular, as needed, often one-off, and not part of an ongoing arrangement. For example, varying location or time of work to accommodate personal appointments or to be able to work from home for a specific piece of work. May include short-term arrangements (up to 2 months) for emergency or personal circumstances.</p>

<b>Hours</b>	<p><b>Hours of work:</b> As defined in each employee's IEA.</p> <p><b>Reduced hours:</b> A formal arrangement recorded in an employee's IEA where the Hours of Work are required to be fewer than 8 hours per day or fewer hours worked within specified fewer days of the week or fortnightly pay cycle.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p><b>Designated workplace:</b> Physical location at which an employee is required to be based. The city in which the DPMC or NEMA office is located is specified in an employee's IEA.</p> <p><b>Remote Working:</b> Where an employee's designated workplace is a location other than a DPMC or NEMA office. This is specified in an employee's IEA.</p>
<b>Types of flexibility</b>	<p><b>Leave:</b> Flexible leave arrangements.</p> <p><b>Place:</b> Working from home or an alternative location, including DPMC and NEMA premises that are not an employee's usual location.</p> <p><b>Role:</b> How a role is performed or divided.</p> <p><b>Schedule:</b> Working flexible hours.</p>

## Policy detail

### Making a flexible working request

7. **Formal flexible working:** all requests that affect the terms and conditions of employment should be made in writing by the employee to their people leader. Following consideration, the people leader has a duty to respond in writing, as soon as possible but no later than one month after the request was received. They will discuss the request with Human Resources (HR) and refer to the Level B leader for a decision.
8. **Informal flexible working:** all requests that do not affect terms and conditions of employment can be made by the employee to their people leader, in conversation is fine. If the people leader supports the request, subsequent conversations should be had with the team and other key stakeholders to ensure the arrangement enables everyone to connect, collaborate and deliver to support a high-performance culture. The people leader is responsible for recording all informal approvals.
9. **Ad hoc flexible working:** requests can be made by the employee to their people leader, in conversation is fine.
10. If an employee is affected by emergency or personal circumstance and they would like a short-term (up to 2 months) flexible working arrangement they should speak with their people leader, who can verbally approve a short-term arrangement (up to 2 months).
11. Requests made by employees affected by **family violence under Part 6AB** of the Employment Relations Act 2000 may be made and granted verbally in the first instance with the necessary written request and decision made after the initial verbal application has been accepted, no later than 10 days after the request is received.
12. A flexible working arrangement can only be refused for the reasons permitted under the Employment Relations Act 2000<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Refer Parts 69AAF and 69ABF which include, amongst other reasons, (a) inability to reorganise work among existing staff; (b) inability to recruit additional staff; (c) detrimental impact on quality; (d) detrimental impact on performance; (e) insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; (f) planned structural changes; (g) burden of additional costs; (h) detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand.

## Considerations

13. When reviewing a flexible working request, leaders will:
  - a) consider protective security, and health and safety requirements, financial implications, and workload implications
  - b) engage with teams and stakeholders to understand possible impacts on the person, team, stakeholders and organisational culture, individual and team development, collaboration opportunities, connections and productivity
  - c) agree and implement strategies and actions to mitigate against any possible negative consequences and
  - d) if an ad hoc or informal flexible working arrangement, consider whether there are performance issues or concerns regarding an individual. Where individual performance concerns exist, flexible working options may be limited or not available. In these situations, people leaders do not have to agree to a request and can end flexible working arrangements.
14. Teams may establish protocols or trial ways of working to enable productivity, learning and development, support new starters and employee performance, and manage for outcomes.

## Funding

15. DPMC and NEMA allow laptops to be used remotely, and provide a charger, additional headset, travel docking station, keyboard and mouse for employees working outside of a DPMC or NEMA office.
16. Employees may use their Wellbeing Allowance to purchase additional equipment for use away from their designated workplace. Claims should be made through the usual process.
17. Funding will not be provided for employee travel, heating, power, internet, telephone, catering or other miscellaneous costs associated with flexible working.

## Decision delegations

18. People leaders can approve ad hoc flexible work requests.
19. People leaders can approve informal flexible work requests (i.e. those that do not change the terms and conditions of employment) including those that involve a maximum of one day per week from home or an alternative location.
20. Informal flexible work requests that include more than one day per week from home or an alternative location should be considered by the people leader and a recommendation provided to their Level B leader.
21. Level B leaders may approve informal flexible work requests that involve more than one day from home or an alternative location.
22. People leaders are required to discuss with HR all proposed formal flexible work requests (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment), e.g. compressed or reduced hours, changed leave provisions or changes to the designated workplace.

23. A Level B leader can approve, or decline, formal flexible working requests (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment) except for compressed hours. For example, reduced hours, certain changes to leave entitlements, and changes to the designated workplace.
24. Any proposed arrangement that includes compressed hours<sup>2</sup> (trial or permanent) requires approval from the DPMC or NEMA Chief Executive.
25. The decision delegations table below shows who holds approval authority for each type of request, and when HR must be consulted. Level B human resources delegation holders have additional delegations beyond those held by people leaders.

Type of Arrangement	All people leaders <sup>3</sup>	Level B leader <sup>4</sup>	HR consultation needed	DPMC or NEMA Chief Executive
<b>Ad hoc</b> arrangements	✓			
<b>Informal</b> arrangements including up to a maximum of one day per week working from home or an alternative location	✓			
<b>Informal</b> arrangements that include more than one day per week working from home or an alternative location		✓		
<b>Formal</b> arrangements with a change to pay, leave or the IEA		✓	✓	
<b>Formal</b> arrangements with compressed hours (permanent and temporary)			✓	✓

### **Trial arrangements**

#### **All arrangements**

26. Any proposed flexible work arrangements may be trialled to ascertain impacts and assess the best arrangement to support collaboration and connection amongst the team and stakeholders.

#### **Formal trial arrangements**

27. People leaders must discuss with HR all proposals for formal flexible working trial arrangements (i.e. those that change the terms and conditions of employment). HR will assess whether the proposed arrangements require a temporary variation of the IEA to enable adjustment to payroll or leave calculations, and to ensure appropriate records are maintained for any approved trial.
28. Requests for temporary variations to an IEA, such as trialling a variation in working hours, must follow the consultation and delegations stated above and:

<sup>2</sup> Compressed hours are formal arrangements recorded in an employee's IEA where the hours of work are agreed to be more than 8 hours per day worked within a specified timeframe.

<sup>3</sup> People leaders are those holding human resources delegation under the Delegations Policy.

<sup>4</sup> Leaders holding Level B human resources delegations.



- a) be agreed in writing
- b) not exceed three months
- c) not be extended, and
- d) have a written review conducted at the mid-point of the trial period.

### **Recording and reporting arrangements**

29. People leaders are responsible for recording all approved informal flexible working arrangements for their team, in the format advised by DPMC and NEMA. This may be reported to the Public Service Commission from time to time, along with formal flexible working arrangements recorded by HR.

### **Review of arrangements**

30. Informal flexible working arrangements are subject to review and feedback to ensure they are still fit for purpose and aligned with the flexible working principles.
31. Employees and people leaders will review informal flexible working arrangements on a six-monthly basis, at performance review time, to ensure that they
- a) continue to work for the individual, team, and DPMC or NEMA
  - b) remain beneficial for everyone
  - c) support the agreed norms of behaviour in the team (i.e. accountability, communication and availability requirements), and
  - d) support a collaborative, empowering and high performing culture that delivers on its accountabilities.

### **Employee request for review or refusal**

32. If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome of their request for flexible working arrangements, they should raise it with their people leader in the first instance. They may also raise it with the people leader's manager. Employees may also request advice and assistance from the HR team.

### **Working from home or an alternative location**

33. Working from home, or an alternative location, is not an entitlement.
34. Working from home arrangements are agreed to on the basis that employees are delivering their work from home or the alternative location instead of the office. It is not expected, or acceptable, to plan work-from-home arrangements in order to care for dependants. Employees and people leaders will need to use their reasonable and sensible judgement to agree when this may be appropriate to the circumstances.
35. Any arrangements between an employee and DPMC and NEMA to work from home or an alternative location are entered into in good faith and on the understanding that from time to time some compromises and accommodations will be necessary to meet business and individual requirements. People leaders can require team members to work in the office as necessary.
36. An arrangement to work from home or an alternative work location must meet all health, safety and protective security requirements.

37. An arrangement to work from home or an alternative location should be beneficial to the performance of the individual, the team, and DPMC or NEMA and should not negatively impact team culture, cross team collaboration, development, or output and productivity.
38. Informal arrangements to work from home or an alternative location will be reviewed on a six-monthly basis, at performance review time.

## Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Approve the Flexible Working Policy following appropriate consultation.
<b>Level B leader</b>	<p>Work with people leaders within their business group to support their understanding of, and adherence to, the Flexible Work Policy.</p> <p>Ensure people leaders discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the Flexible Work Policy.</p> <p>Work with people leaders within their business group on formal flexible work requests and provide final decision in accordance with the Delegations Policy.</p> <p>Communicate with other ELT members to ensure consistency of approach to flexible working across DPMC and NEMA.</p> <p>Consult with HR as necessary to clarify any areas of uncertainty.</p>
<b>People leaders</b>	<p>Ensure they understand DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy and processes and implement these appropriately in line with employment terms and conditions for individuals.</p> <p>Handle individual queries relating to DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy and processes for their own employees, consulting with HR to discuss and clarify any areas of uncertainty.</p> <p>Consider and engage with teams on all ad hoc (where practicable) and informal working arrangements, record approvals in the notified format.</p> <p>Consider formal flexible work requests, engage with those affected, consult with HR and seek approval according to the decision delegations table above and respond with a decision in writing (letter or email) as soon as possible, and no later than one month after receipt of the initial request.</p> <p>Provide verbal approval to any flexible working request made by employees affected by emergency or personal circumstances (short term up to 2 months). Where this involves family violence and an application is made under 6AB of the Employment Relations Act 2000 a written application should be completed at a suitable time and a written response with a decision provided no later than ten days after receipt of the initial request.</p> <p>Consistently apply DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy procedures and processes.</p> <p>Refer staff to this policy when appropriate.</p> <p>Consider, approve or decline flexible working requests within their delegation.</p>

	<p>Develop and nurture a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly.</p> <p>Carry out effective reviews and obtain feedback on flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>Manage the health and safety of workers, and protective security requirements.</p>
<b>Employees</b>	<p>Seek flexible working in accordance with the principles stated in this policy.</p> <p>Take responsibility for the health and safety of self and others.</p> <p>Maintain protective security requirements at all times.</p> <p>Develop and nurture a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly.</p> <p>Participate in effective reviews and provide feedback on flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>Comply with the DPMC and NEMA Flexible Working Policy.</p>
<b>Human Resources (HR)</b>	<p>Support people leaders in achieving the aims of DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Policy.</p> <p>Provide support and advice to people leaders.</p> <p>Process formal flexible working requests and notify people leaders of the required reporting format.</p>

## Related policies, guidance and information

39. Other documents that should be read in conjunction with this policy include:

- [DPMC](#) and [NEMA's](#) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plans
- [DPMC and NEMA's Flexible Working Guidelines](#)
- [Delegations Policy](#)
- [Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
- [Family Violence Support Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- Individual Employment Agreement
- [Leave Policy](#)
- [Leave for Alternative Duties and Special Leave Policy](#)
- [DPMC](#) and [NEMA's](#) On-Call and Call-Back Policies
- [Performance, Development and Growth Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Protective Security Policy](#)
- [Remuneration Policy](#)
- [Time Off In Lieu \(TOIL\) Policy](#)
- [Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Working Away from the Office Guidelines 2020](#)

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## Flexible Working Guidelines for People Leaders and Teams – DPMC and NEMA

<b>i-Manage reference</b>	4315743	<b>i-Manage version</b>	6
<b>Contact</b>	Organisation Direction and Development (ODD)		
<b>Amended version approved by</b>	Executive Director, Strategy, Governance and Engagement Group	<b>Name</b>	Clare Ward
		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date approved</b>	26/03/2025	<b>Date for review</b>	31/03/2026

### Contents

Introduction .....	2
What is flexible working? .....	2
Principles of flexible working .....	3
Flexible working arrangements .....	4
Making a request .....	6
Considerations for each request .....	7
Approval authority .....	8
Recording flexible working arrangements .....	9
Continuity .....	9
Trial arrangements .....	10
How to support a good team culture .....	10
Conversation topics for people leaders .....	11
Sensitive conversations .....	11
Process flow charts .....	12
APPENDIX 1: Frequently Asked Questions .....	16
APPENDIX 2: Forms (Request and People Leader Decision Forms) .....	18
Formal Flexible Working Request Form .....	18
People Leader's Decision Form – Formal Flexible Working Request .....	21
Flexible Working Request Form – Employees Affected by Emergency or Personal Circumstances Short-term (up to 2 months) .....	23
People Leader's Decision Form – Employees Affected by Emergency or Personal Circumstances Short-term (up to 2 months) .....	25
Where to get help and support for family violence .....	27

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## Introduction

This document provides guidance about how to request and manage flexible working arrangements. It should be read in conjunction with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Flexible Working Policy.

## What is flexible working?

DPMC and NEMA provide general flexibility for most roles. Flexible working may involve flexibility in:

- **Work schedule** – working flexible hours
- **Leave** – supporting flexible leave arrangements
- **Place** – working from home or an alternative location
- **Role** – how a role is performed or divided

Some examples of these types of flexibility are outlined below:

<b>Work schedule</b> Options that allow employees to vary their work hours or days either on a regular basis or from time to time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible start and finish times i.e. variable start and/or finish times are worked on a regular or as-needs basis</li> <li>- Swapping workdays or hours with non-work hours or days</li> <li>- Part-time hours</li> <li>- Flexible shifts - full time or part-time</li> <li>- Combination of fixed shifts and flexible shifts -full time or part time</li> </ul>
<b>Leave</b> Options that allow employees to vary their leave patterns to create more flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leave without pay</li> <li>- Trading leave for salary</li> <li>- Term-time working i.e. taking leave during school holidays</li> <li>- Other types of leave e.g. study leave, special leave</li> </ul>
<b>Place</b> Options that allow employees to work from locations other than their designated workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working from home or an alternative location, including DPMC and NEMA premises that are not an employee's usual location</li> <li>- Remote working – a permanent arrangement agreed as part of an Individual Employment Agreement (IEA) and not considered to be working from home.</li> </ul>
<b>Role</b> Options that allow employees to manage their roles and careers more flexibly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phased return to work i.e. employees gradually increase their hours on returning from long-term leave</li> <li>- Phased retirement i.e. employees gradually reduce hours approaching retirement</li> <li>- Job sharing i.e. splitting a role with another employee</li> <li>- Taking career breaks</li> </ul>

## Principles of flexible working

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Flexible working comes in a variety of forms and DPMC and NEMA will continue to support a positive workplace culture that recognises this. The [Flexible Working Policy](#) outlines the principles that must be met when considering flexible working arrangements. Further information on these are outlined below and elsewhere throughout this guidance.

### a) Meets and reflects government expectations for working from home

The Government issues expectations from time to time. As public service agencies, both DPMC and NEMA are required to abide by them. To assist agencies to understand these, the Public Service Commission (PSC) issues guidance. Together, these inform our policy and guidelines developed to suit our operations. The PSC withdrew its previous guidance on Flexible-by-Default and Hybrid Working, which covered a broad range of flexible working arrangements. It has issued [guidance on working from home](#) under section 95(a) of the Public Service Act 2020, to be read in conjunction with Government expectations:

1. Working from home arrangements in the Public Service are not an entitlement and should be by explicit agreement between an employee and their employer.
2. Working from home arrangements should only be agreed where they will not compromise the performance of employees, their teams or their agencies.
3. Agencies should actively monitor the prevalence and impact of working from home arrangements and be able to regularly report to the Public Service Commission about the number and nature of the agreements they have in place, including having a clear understanding of the impact these agreements will have on particular days of the week.

Within the PSC guidance are the following requirements:

- **Set clear performance expectations and manage to them**  
Read more on page 7 of this guidance - Considerations for each request.
- **Be deliberate about ways of working**  
Read more on page 11 of this guidance – Conversation topics for people leaders.
- **Manage health and safety, and protective security risks**  
We have certain health and safety, and protective security requirements and obligations to all workers, regardless of their employment status or location. People leaders are tasked with applying the principles of flexible working in a way that adheres to these obligations. This includes providing a positive and safe work environment, upholding ergonomic working standards, and ensuring personal and information security, while considering the unique needs of team members to support their overall welfare under flexible working conditions. Read more on page 7 of this guidance – Considerations for each request.
- **Active monitoring and reporting**  
Read more on page 9 of this guidance – Recording Flexible Working Arrangements; and Continuity.

### b) Culture, connection and collaboration

Read more on page 11 of this guidance – Conversation topics for people leaders.



### c) Transparency

Trust lies at the heart of flexible working. The issue of trust can make or break workplace flexibility. People leaders and employees must build and maintain trust in each other, and team members must be able to trust each other. Everyone in the team needs to deliver to agreed expectations. It is a collective responsibility – individuals, people leaders and team members – to ensure flexible arrangements are set up to function effectively.

There is a balance to be struck between respecting and maintaining individual privacy, particularly where there is sensitivity concerning a person's need for flexibility with involving teams in conversation around supporting one another to work flexibly. The fact that you have a flexible working arrangement in place, is not private information. Read more on page 11 of this guidance – Sensitive conversations.

### d) Shared responsibility

People leaders should be confident their teams are delivering the work expected. There will be some instances where they will need to have difficult conversations with individuals in their teams whose performance is not as expected, or changes over time. It is important to understand and respect individual circumstances, keep in mind the organisation's needs, build trust within the team, with stakeholders and ultimately deliver what we are tasked to achieve.

Most teams require people to be in the office some or all of the time. Each team and each role are likely to have different requirements for working from a DPMC or NEMA premises. This may vary at different times of the year or in response to changes in expectations and/ or deliverables.

People leaders are responsible for ensuring everyone in their team has a clear understanding of what those needs are. For example, presence in the office may be needed to carry out the role of buddy for new starters, working with a colleague to learn new processes or provide coaching and development. Read more on page 6 of this guidance – Involve your team.

### e) Flexibility goes both ways

Flexibility goes both ways. Everyone needs to be flexible to accommodate schedule changes, unexpected issues, or the need to support new starters to be buddied by an existing team member, as well as coaching and development of colleagues.

Every effort should be made to arrange meetings at times that all attendees are available. Sometimes, this will not be possible, and people need to demonstrate a willingness to be flexible and temporarily adjust to meet the needs of others. Examples include altering your usual start or finish times or your work-from-home day or swapping a non-working day. It is also expected that your people leader and your team will be accommodating of your need to flex your arrangement, for out-of-work commitments. People with formal flexible work arrangements are not required to adjust their arrangements and agreeing to do so is at their discretion.

## Flexible working arrangements

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**Formal: an arrangement that affects terms and conditions of employment and is outlined in the IEA, for example, part time hours.**

Formal flexible arrangements are situations that will affect the terms and conditions of employment such as changing hours e.g. going to part time from full time or vice versa; or where there is a phased approach to returning to work or retiring, or career breaks. These kinds of arrangements require the people leader to have a discussion with Human Resources

(HR) to understand any impacts to the IEA and need to involve the relevant Level B <sup>1</sup>, which is likely to be a DPMC ELT member or NEMA Deputy Chief Executive (DCE).

It is recommended to have a trial arrangement before entering a formal arrangement.

**Informal: an arrangement that is intended to be regular and ongoing but does not affect terms and conditions of employment or the Individual Employment Agreement (IEA)**

Most flexible work arrangements will be informal or ad hoc and individuals, people leaders and teams can agree this together. Working from home is considered to be an informal arrangement because it does not change the terms and conditions of employment.

Where an employee wishes to work from home more than one day per week on a regular basis, people leaders need to fully consider the request under the policy and consider all other arrangements across the team. The people leader will make a recommendation to approve or decline to their Level B leader for decision.

#### ***What about working from home or an alternative location to care for others?***

Working from home arrangements are agreed to on the basis that employees are delivering their work from home instead of the office. It is not expected, or acceptable, to plan work-from-home arrangements to care for dependants. There is no simple definition of “dependant”. For the purposes of the Flexible Working Policy this generally refers to any person with high needs, such as children, elderly or disabled people who are heavily reliant on care and support from the employee, and whose safety and wellbeing are the employee’s responsibility. Where unexpected circumstances arise, such as a sick dependant, leave options are available. It is expected that the employee and people leader will come to an agreement as to whether work can be carried out under these circumstances, using their reasonable and sensible judgement relevant to the circumstances.

#### **Ad hoc: irregular, as needed, often one-off and not part of any ongoing arrangement**

For example, varying location or time of work to accommodate personal appointments, or to be able to work from home for a specific piece of work.

#### ***What about emergency or personal circumstances?***

If an employee is affected by emergency or personal circumstances, including family violence<sup>2</sup>, and they would like a short-term (up to 2 months) flexible working arrangement they should speak with their people leader.

We understand that when unexpected things happen this may be an upsetting and stressful time for employees, and people leaders can verbally approve a short-term arrangement.

#### Examples of formal flexibility

- A change in total hours worked per week
- Change to leave entitlements
- Change to the designated workplace

#### Examples of informal and ad hoc flexibility

- Varying start and finish times
- Working more hours one day and less the next
- Working from home

<sup>1</sup> A Level B leader holds Level B human resources delegations in the DPMC/NEMA [Delegations Policy](#). They are likely to be a DPMC ELT member or NEMA DCE.

<sup>2</sup> Employment Relations Act 2000 Part 6AB.

Examples of short-term arrangements may be to enable a staff member to attend a series of hospital appointments with a family member, or temporarily relocate when a personal change in circumstances has occurred.

If family violence is disclosed, the people leader should ask their employee to complete any required [paperwork](#) when the time is right for them to do so. In all situations, where an employee chooses to disclose that they are affected by family violence their people leader is required under Part 69 ABE of the Employment Relations Act 2000 to let them know what [support services](#) are available. This information is also included on the response form.

Please see Appendix 2 for “Where to get help and support”.

## Making a request

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### Involve your team

All requests for flexible working should be made by an employee to their people leader and discussed within teams where practicable as it is important to consider the impact on the team before agreeing to any arrangement. For example, a request for an ad hoc arrangement may require someone else to be flexible and change their agreed arrangements to ensure the team can maintain its performance.

### Formal flexible working

Formal flexible working constitutes a change to the terms and conditions of employment and a change to the IEA.

The [Flexible Working Arrangements Employee Request Form](#) needs to be completed to ensure there is a shared understanding of a flexible working arrangement involving:

- **Reduced hours** - a formal arrangement recorded in an employee's IEA where the Hours of Work are required to be fewer than 8 hours per day or fewer hours worked within the week or fortnightly pay cycle.
- **Change to the designated workplace** - physical location at which an employee is required to be based. If the employee's designated workplace is a location (city and/or building) that is not a DPMC or NEMA office this would be called **remote working**.
- **Change to leave entitlements** - some changes require changes to an IEA.

In the first instance, the people leader should discuss the request with HR, which will provide guidance on impacts on the IEA and any consequential considerations, including sign-off procedures.

### Informal and ad hoc flexible working

In most cases flexible working arrangements will be ad hoc or informal and do not affect terms and conditions of employment that are documented in your IEA. This can include varying start and finish times, working more hours one day and less on another day (it is expected that this should balance out over a two-week period) and working from home.

It is possible to have an ad hoc request in addition to an existing informal or formal arrangement. For example, an employee might have an arrangement to work from home on a Wednesday but also need to take a pet to the vet on a specific Tuesday.

Note, agreements to work flexibly from home are not formal changes to the designated workplace – the place where DPMC and NEMA provides your usual working facilities.

## Recommendation to approving leader

Where informal flexible working arrangements include more than one regular day per week working from home or an alternative location, approval is required from a Level B leader with human resources delegations (refer to the [Delegations Policy](#)). It is expected that people leaders below level B will consider the request in the context of team deliverables and arrangements, have the relevant discussions with the requestor and team and make a recommendation to the Level B leader.

## Reporting

Once agreed, informal arrangements **must be recorded**, by the people leader using the recording mechanism provided by HR, to allow DPMC and NEMA to report to the PSC as required. See the "Recording flexible working arrangements" section below for more information.

## Considerations for each request

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When review a flexible working request of any type, leaders will need to consider the following:

### a) **Health, Safety, and Protective Security requirements must be met, financial and workload implications must be considered**

Flexible working arrangements that involve working from home or an alternative location, must meet all **health, safety and protective security** requirements. Employees and people leaders have a joint responsibility to review and consider health, safety and security requirements, but ultimately the people leader is responsible for ensuring that the employee's home location meets the requirements before they approve requests.

It is appropriate for people leaders to request a description and/ or a photo of an employee's home working set up. If it is not suitable for health, safety and security reasons approval will not be given to work from that location. Refer to [Working Away from the Office Guidelines](#).

**Financial** implications for DPMC and NEMA may arise where additional costs are incurred in order to support a particular form of flexibility. For example, someone who has previously been part-time and wishes to increase their hours would have ongoing budgetary impacts. An individual's personal circumstances may be a factor in their request for flexibility (read more in the guidance - Sensitive conversations on page 11).

Flexible working has **boundaries and wellbeing** must be considered. Working flexibly has the potential to blur the lines between work time and personal time and it's important to set boundaries and maintain your wellbeing. If you are attending to personal commitments during the day or have finished work early to attend to an out-of-work commitment it is your responsibility to communicate your availability.

When working from home, some people will take advantage of the lack of commute time to catch up on work, but long hours from home are still long hours. Employees, teams and people leaders need to set appropriate boundaries.

Implications on the **workloads** of others need to be considered, for example if reducing the FTE allocated to a task means others' workloads increase.

### b) **Engage with teams and stakeholders to understand possible impacts**

Conversations with teams and key stakeholders remain vital in ensuring that impacts and requirements on others are able to be anticipated and appropriate adjustments made

across a team to support flexible working arrangements. For example, if work must be signed-out or delivered and the person working flexibility who is responsible is not available to do so, others may need to complete their tasks.

We recognise the importance of supporting one another thereby increasing our collective ability to deliver outcomes for DPMC and NEMA. Communication and collaboration within and across teams is a critical element for the success of the organisation. Team discussion about expectations and responsibilities should occur regularly. Everyone needs to understand what is expected of them and what the non-negotiables and negotiables are.

**c) Agree and implement strategies and actions to mitigate against any possible negative consequences**

After having understood the impacts, specific actions should be identified to determine if they can be readily implemented to mitigate any negative impacts.

**d) Performance is part of the conversation**

A culture of trust and respect underpins successful flexible working, and individual contribution and performance is an important part of this. A satisfactory level of performance is expected for all regular and ongoing flexible working arrangements; this applies before a request is made and throughout the time the arrangement is in place. If you are not sure what this looks like in your role, reflect on your most recent performance conversation and any other feedback.

It is the responsibility of the people leader to have regular performance and development conversations with each of their team members and to have respectful conversations about any performance concerns as they arise. Employees should expect support and / or development to resolve performance issues. Depending on the nature of the performance issue, this may include the cessation of some flexible work arrangements in order to be in the office to access the relevant support, collaboration or training from leaders or teams.

## Approval authority

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***\*\*Refer to the [Flexible Working Policy](#) and the [Delegations Policy](#) for full information about approval delegations relating to flexible working. The details are not repeated here.***

### Formal flexible working requests

People leaders should assess the request for formal flexible working, ensure HR are consulted and provide a recommendation to the relevant Level B leader<sup>3</sup> for decision (refer to the Delegations Policy but this is likely to be a DPMC ELT member or NEMA DCE).

### Formal flexible working requests involved compressed hours

People leaders should assess the request, ensure HR are consulted, provide a recommendation to approve or decline to the relevant Level B leader and send the request to the relevant DPMC or NEMA CE for decision within the legally required one month response time frame.

### Informal requests that include one day working from home or alternative location

People leaders at all levels can approve informal and ad hoc flexible working requests from their immediate team members.

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<sup>3</sup> Level B leader, holding Level B human resources delegations

### Informal requests that include more than one day working from home or alternative location

People leaders should assess informal requests that include more than one day working from home or an alternative location and provide a recommendation to the relevant Level B leader to approve or decline.

### Ad hoc requests

People leaders at all levels can approve ad hoc flexible working requests.

### Emergency or personal circumstances

People leaders can verbally approve a short-term arrangement (up to 2 months) if an employee is affected by emergency or personal circumstances, including family violence. Any necessary written requests and decisions can be followed up when appropriate to do so.

In all instances where family violence is disclosed, people leaders are required under Part 69ABE of the Employment Relations Act 2000 to provide individuals with documents about how to get support.

## Recording flexible working arrangements

The recording template is intended to be a transparent document (*it should not include reasons for flexibility or any personal information*) that people leaders can share with their teams from time to time to ensure it remains up to date and correct.

This record is intended to support team communication and collaboration activity and enable teams to arrange meetings to suit everyone.

Ad hoc arrangements do not need to be recorded. People leaders may find it helpful to keep a record of these arrangements which can be filed in iManage personnel folders.

Type of flexible working	Recording responsibility	How to report
<b>Informal</b>	People Leader to put a record on employee's personnel file	People Leader to record working from home days on reporting mechanism provided by HR
<b>Formal</b>	Human Resources to maintain records of IEAs	People Leader to report part-time and remote workers on reporting mechanism provided by HR
<b>Ad hoc</b>	Recommend people leaders keep a record	Not required

## Continuity

Maintaining a high performing DPMC and NEMA that is delivering on its strategic and operational plans is at the core of individual performance. Informal flexible working arrangements should enhance productivity and the ability of staff to achieve their work objectives.



## Periodic Review

Informal flexible working arrangements should be reviewed periodically with the employee, and with the team and key stakeholders to ensure that the principles are still being met. In many cases, the review won't need to be formal – people leaders should check-in with an employee during a regular six-monthly Individual Development Plan (IDP) catch up.

If everyone is happy with the arrangement let employees know. Alternatively, if it is not working, people leaders should be prepared to have the discussion and be open to exploring alternate solutions.

## Trial arrangements

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Employees are encouraged to trial flexible working arrangements for up to three months before seeking an ongoing arrangement. Approvals for trial arrangements follow the approval delegations for informal and formal flexible arrangements outlined above and in the Flexible Work Policy and Delegations Policy.

Trials require review at an agreed point to ensure the principles are still being met. The agreed-point for a trial should generally be at the mid-point of the arrangement (in most cases six weeks after commencement), so that information for the review can feed into the decision as to whether to confirm, decline or adjust the arrangement on an ongoing basis.

## How to support a good team culture

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Flexible working will work best where there is high trust amongst colleagues, and open, honest and respectful communication. There are also great foundations for great team performance too. Here are some ideas to consider for leaders and teams to support a positive team culture.

- Have a daily stand up to understand where everyone is and what they're doing for the day. Discuss milestones, significant deliverables or non-negotiable deliverables for the day or coming up that week.
- If you have a new starter in the team, make them feel welcome and included by having the rest of the team come into the office for the person's first few weeks. This might require people to flex their flexible working arrangements. Have a shared lunch or team coffee in that time (see below).
- Agree some kind of rotation system to make the new person feel welcome and introduce them to other people and teams on the same floor as you or with people they'll interact with. Different people in your team will have different contacts and people they know around the business.
- Build some informal things into the day, don't make work all about work. Have a team cuppa or lunch on a periodic basis. If you have a daily stand up, have people get a drink to bring in. Keep things simple and low cost – find a suitable shared space and have lunch together, maybe bring a plate to share. Go out for a coffee/tea on occasions if that's practical for your team.
- Incorporate celebrations and shout outs into a regular team gathering, whether it's a formal meeting or informal gathering.

## Conversation topics for people leaders

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Helpful prompts and topics for people leaders to generate open discussions and contribute to expectations and culture within teams:

- Initiate the shared team discussion about everyone's arrangements. As people leaders begin to populate the recording spreadsheet for HR it might be useful to use that as a basis for team conversation about current arrangements.
- What types of flexible working might suit the team? See appendix 3 for some options.
- Discuss how current arrangements are going with each team member at their six-monthly IDP conversation.
- Create team norms of behaviour or discuss ways the team can collectively create a positive culture (see above).
- Talk with the team about how working flexibly can create a supportive and flexible environment for people returning from extended leave, and how the team can contribute to this.
- Raise the topic of fairness and consistency – in some teams this will be achievable, and everyone will be content, but sometimes this won't be achievable. Everyone has different needs and preferences, and they'll perceive things differently. Its best to be open and honest about what can be achieved in regard to fairness around flexible working.

## Sensitive conversations

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Employees and people leaders may need to have sensitive conversations on matters concerning an employee's personal circumstances to ensure full consideration of requests for flexible working arrangements. For some this may involve managing health issues, family concerns, or financial considerations.

Personal privacy is an entitlement. However, if there are circumstances that should be taken into consideration by a people leader or a Level B leader, then these would ideally be disclosed.

Examples may include:

- For some people, the family budget may need some time to adjust to any reduction in working from home arrangements if required to come into the office. This applies for ad hoc or informal arrangements, particularly where before or after school care needs to be sourced and paid for, or the commuting cost is difficult to meet.
- Managing health issues which may require frequent hospital or other clinical appointments, or to manage fatigue.

For help in managing these conversations, employees may wish to seek support from our Employee Assistance Provider (EAP).

Ultimately, while we strive for a transparent and collegial approach, we must each accept and understand that at times the reasons why flexibility is being agreed for a colleague will not be apparent to respect their privacy, and that may give rise to a perception of lack of fairness or equity. To resolve such concerns, building a culture of trust is essential.

## Process flow charts

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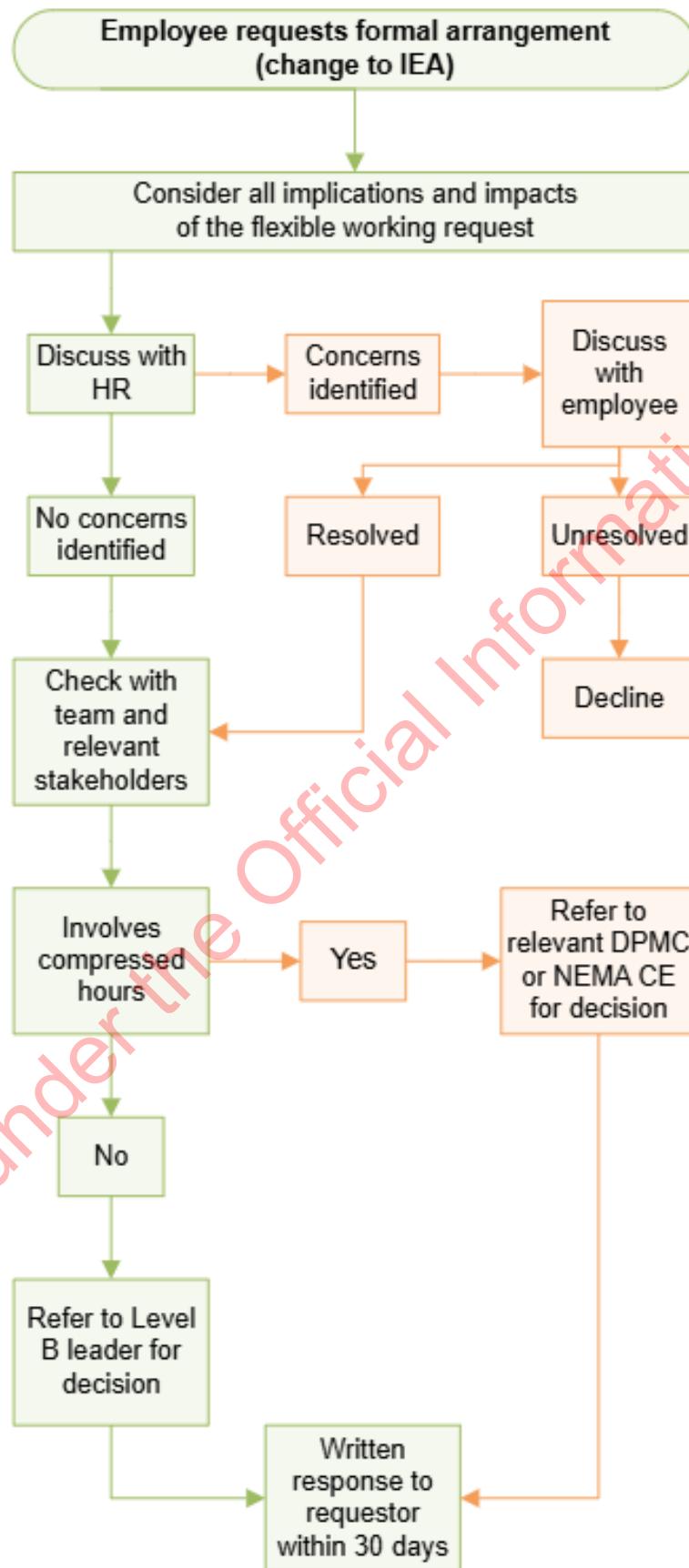
People leaders should reflect on the following question about their team when considering flexible working requests:

- Have I built a positive and safe team culture where all staff can talk openly and honestly about their work, options for flexibility, and comment on those arrangements, including their teammates?

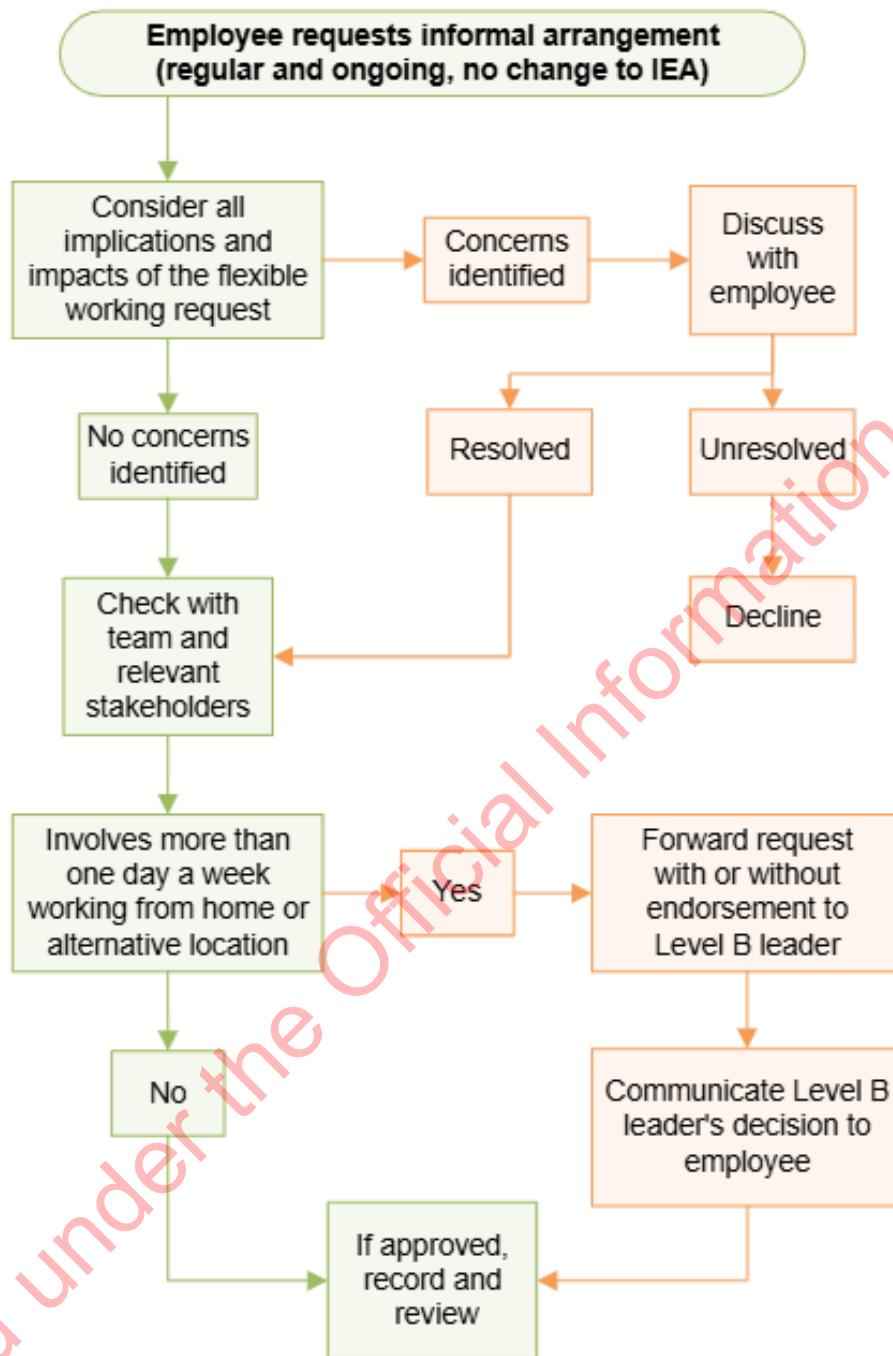
Taking time to reflect on team culture and dynamics ensures any decisions are made with full recognition of the people element of work and its overall impact on the team and organisation.

The following maps detail each process for considering formal, informal and ad hoc flexible working requests.

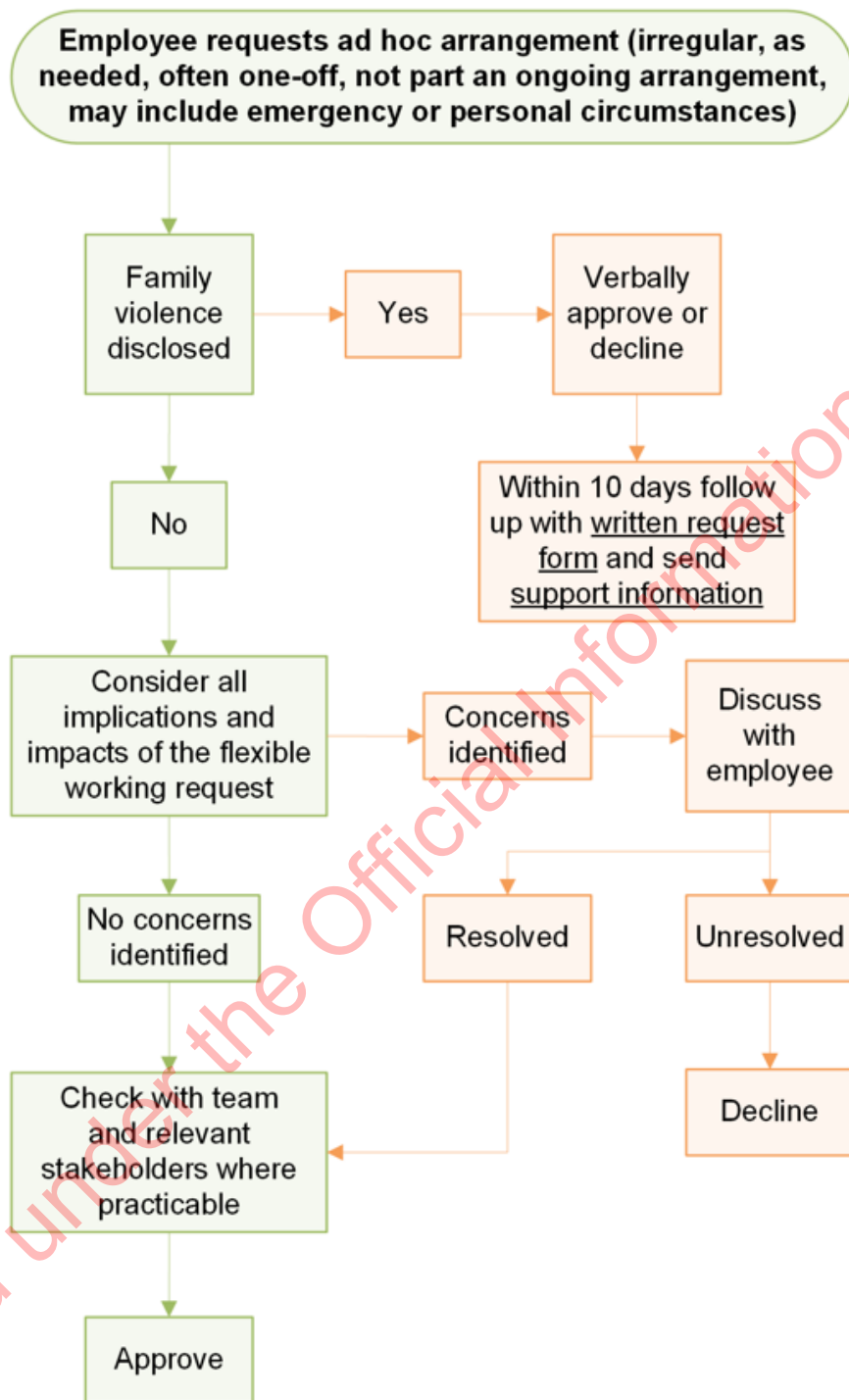
## Formal flexible working request process map



## Informal flexible working request process map



## Ad hoc flexible working request process map





## APPENDIX 1: Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. Are all employees eligible for flexible working?

Yes, all employees are eligible for flexible working, regardless of tenure, role level, gender, seniority.

### 2. What do employees need to consider when making a request for flexible work?

It is the employee's responsibility to look at the options that will suit them and to consider the potential impact on the team and business needs.

It is best to talk to your people leader about how you see it working and you can discuss any impact and or changes that might be required with them. In some cases there will be no impact to your own or the business deliverables, and in other cases your manager may need to make changes to accommodate your request. Team culture is an important factor to take into consideration.

There will be ongoing check-in points for employees, teams and people leaders to review how the arrangement is working.

### 3. What happens if an employee is working flexibly and would like to return to their original work arrangement?

Should an employee wish to change their flexible working arrangement, they will need to discuss this with their people leader and get agreement on the new arrangement.

### 4. What happens if meetings, training sessions or other important events are scheduled at times when an employee is working flexibly?

Employees, teams and people leaders should work together to determine how best to manage the situation. Flexibility and compromise are expected from everyone, in order to make it work. Employees (including people leaders) may need swap their work-from-home day or vary their usual start or finish time to accommodate something.

For part-time workers, despite best endeavours to be inclusive, there will be times when an event or meeting is outside of your regular working hours and you may not be able to participate.

### 5. When working from home, how do people leaders and employees assess potential health, safety and security risks?

As an employer, DPMC and NEMA, have several responsibilities under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#). These responsibilities include a duty to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees while at work, or undertaking work for DPMC and NEMA.

Individuals have personal responsibility as well. This duty applies not only to employees who work on DPMC and NEMA's premises, but also extends to employees when they are working from home. When discussing a flexible working request explore the potential health & safety and security risks by reviewing the [Health and Safety policy and the Guidelines for Working Away from the Office](#). Any concerns should be addressed as part of the assessment of the suitability of the proposed flexible working arrangements, and an agreement reached about whether and how these concerns can be managed to ensure safe remote working.

Self-employed or independent contractors not covered by the policy are still workers when carrying out work for DPMC and NEMA. These guidelines may be considered useful for managers as under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 we have obligations to all workers, regardless of their employment status. Applying the principles of flexible working

may be an appropriate response to their individual situation and in the interests of positive and safe working environments. Consideration may need to be given to the contractual undertakings of both parties in such situations.

**6. What happens if your people leader or Level B leader doesn't approve a flexible working request?**

If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome of their request for flexible working arrangements, they should raise it with their people leader in the first instance. They may also raise it with the people leader's manager. Employees may also request advice and assistance from the HR team.

In most cases there will be some form of flexible working option available, however some roles support more flexibility than others. Ensure there is an open and ongoing conversation about what options could work. If someone has a concern with their people leader, we encourage them to discuss this with them directly, or if this isn't possible, refer to our Speaking Up safely process. Further information is on our [Resolving issues](#) page on Kāinga.

**7. What if a people leader agrees to an informal or regular flexible working arrangement, but then needs the employee to attend work at DPMC and NEMA?**

The people leader should give as much notice as possible if an employee is needed on site on an agreed flexible working day, i.e. they are working from home.

The employee is not required to attend work if it is a scheduled day off in an arrangement recorded as part of their IEA, in the same way most staff are not required to work on a weekend as part of their IEA.

**8. How does a people leader measure what is being achieved working offsite?**

To maintain DPMC and NEMA [performance expectations](#), it is essential to establish clear expectations and responsibilities, as well as having effective performance, development and growth conversations.

**9. If an employee applies for a new position within DPMC and NEMA will their flexible working arrangement continue?**

Arrangements should be discussed with the hiring manager who will apply the policy.

**10. How do I get IT equipment for working from home or alternative location?**

For our new starters, CASS Finance Treasury team have set up a process with CASS IT for these purchases to be recorded against a code in Treasury that will inform invoicing to the specific DPMC or NEMA unit that is receiving the equipment.

Where equipment is not supplied by CASS IT, it should be procured by the business unit using our standard suppliers. All equipment must be returned to DPMC and NEMA at the conclusion of employment.

People may use their Wellbeing Allowance to purchase monitors, desks or chairs. It is acceptable to connect equipment such as wireless mouse and keyboard to DPMC and NEMA laptops.

**11. How does the Flexible Working Policy align with NEMA's operational requirement and need for flexibility of its staff in times of response and recovery?**

This is a business-as-usual policy and applies to NEMA the same way all corporate policies do. We appreciate that NEMA staff have operational requirements, which requires a degree of flexibility. NEMA has response and recovery specific policies and procedures (including [On-Call, Call-Back Policy](#)) which supports and recognises the efforts of NEMA staff during these times.

## APPENDIX 2: Forms (Request and People Leader Decision Forms)

### Formal Flexible Working Request Form

**From:** *Enter your name and location*

**To:** *Enter people leader's name and location*

I would like to request a variation to my current individual employment agreement under [Part 6AA](#) of the Employment Relations Act 2000.

**My current working arrangement is:** *(fill in the areas of flexibility which relate to your request)*

Place of work: *(Give full street address)*

Days and hours of work: *(Example: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm)*

Role: *(how my role is performed or divided)*

Leave: *(current leave arrangements)*

**The working arrangement I would like to have in the future is:**

Place of work: *(Give full street address)*

Days and hours of work: *(Example: Monday and Tuesday 8.00am to 1.00pm, Wednesday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm)*

Role: *(how my role could be performed or divided)*

Leave: *(proposed leave arrangements)*

☐ I would like the new working arrangement to be permanent and commence from: Click or tap to enter a date.

OR

☐ I would like the new working arrangement to be temporary commencing from Click or tap to enter a date.

and ending on Click or tap to enter a date.

**Please complete the declaration and security considerations below declarations**

**Health & Safety considerations:**

**Please complete**

Do you or have you experienced OOS?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what steps will you take to ensure working offsite will not exacerbate this condition?

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Have you read and understood the guidelines for <a href="#">Working Away from the Office</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have any concerns about your health, safety or security while working offsite?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Describe your working from home set-up and how you'll meet health, safety and security obligations. What are your concerns?		
<b>Security Considerations</b> You are required to keep all DPMC and NEMA equipment and information secure and hidden from view while not in use. This includes in a locked house/apartment/flat/a secure cabinet with an expectation that you will consider and use the safest option. Further information is found in the <a href="#">Protective Security page</a> on Kāinga.		
Do you have any security concerns about keeping DPMC and NEMA equipment and/or information secure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
What security concerns do you have and what mitigations would you take to ensure that DPMC and NEMA's equipment and information are secure and hidden from view when not in use?		

**Policy and understanding confirmation:** Please mark each policy and guideline you have read and understood

Policies and Guidelines	Tick
<a href="#">Working Away from the Office</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Health and Safety Policy</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Protective Security Policy</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Central Agencies IT Acceptable Use Policy</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>For flexibility of workplace:</b>	
<a href="#">Flexible Working Policy</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Flexible working at DPMC and NEMA – a guide for managers and their teams</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outline below any concerns relating to health, safety and security considerations and how these can be managed in a way that allows me to work offsite:

**Optional:**

<b>Explain the value of the new arrangement if not already covered in team conversations.</b>
---

The new working arrangement will enable me to: *(Example: I will be coaching the local junior football team on Wednesday afternoons)*

The new working arrangement will affect my employer and colleagues or my responsibilities in the following way: *(Example: I will not be able to work with James on Monday afternoon as I do now)*

I think the effect on my employer and colleagues can be managed by: *(Example: James and I could work together on either Thursday or Friday afternoon)*

I have discussed my proposed new working arrangements with: *(Example: Our team, customers, stakeholders)*

#### Personal details:

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Staff or payroll number: Click or tap here to enter text.

People leader: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

#### Note to your people leader

This is a request for a flexible working arrangement made under [Part 6AA](#) of the Employment Relations Act 2000 to be dealt with within one month of receipt.

You can email me to confirm your receipt of my request.

#### EMAIL YOUR COMPLETED REQUEST FORM TO YOUR PEOPLE LEADER

##### People leader's confirmation of receipt (to be completed and emailed to employee)

**To:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Subject:** Confirmation of flexible working request

I confirm that on Click or tap to enter a date. I received your request to change your working arrangement. You will receive a response to your request within one month.

Email Signature block:

## People Leader's Decision Form – Formal Flexible Working Request

This form is used to approve or decline your employee's request or approve an alternative arrangement. This form can be cut and pasted into an email

For decisions on requests submitted by employees affected by emergency or personal circumstances, please use separate form.

To: *insert employee's full name*

I have considered your request for a variation to your working arrangements.

### IF DECLINING

I am sorry but I am unable to accommodate your request on the following business ground/s: *(indicate the ground/s)*

- ☐ Cannot reorganise work among existing staff.
- ☐ Cannot recruit additional staff.
- ☐ Negative impact on quality.
- ☐ Negative impact on performance.
- ☐ Not enough work during the periods that you propose to work.
- ☐ Planned structural changes.
- ☐ Burden of additional costs.
- ☐ Negative effect on ability to meet customer demand.

The ground(s) apply in the circumstances because: *(indicate relevant detail)*

### IF APPROVING

***Either***

- ☐ I confirm that I have approved your request.

***Or***

- ☐ I am unable to accommodate your original request.

However, I am able to offer the following alternative arrangement which we have discussed, and you agreed would be suitable to you.

Your new working arrangement will be as follows: *(insert details)*

Your new working arrangement will commence from: *Click or tap to enter a date.*



**And**

☐ Your new working arrangement is a trial or temporary arrangement and it will end on:  
Click or tap to enter a date.

**Or**

☐ Your new working arrangement is a permanent change to your individual employment agreement, conditional on our review of the arrangements demonstrating no business grounds to refuse continuance.

**And**

We will review the arrangement with our team by: Click or tap to enter a date.

If you have questions on the information provided on this form, please contact me to discuss these as soon as possible.

**People leader's name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Note to employee**

Please note that the change in your working arrangement will be a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment unless a specified period of time is identified and agreed for which the new arrangement will last. If the change is permanent, you will have no right to go back to your previous working arrangement unless this is agreed. A new request would have to be made to adjust your working arrangements.

**RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR EMPLOYEE AND COPY TO HUMAN RESOURCES.**

## Flexible Working Request Form – Employees Affected by Emergency or Personal Circumstances Short-term (up to 2 months)

<b>Full Name</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Job Title</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>People leader</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> (If family violence is disclosed) I would like to request under <a href="#">Part 6AB</a> of the Employment Relations Act 2000 a variation to my current working arrangements which are:</p> <p>(specify which current working arrangement you wish to change)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (If family violence is not disclosed) I would like to request under <a href="#">Part 6AA</a> of the Employment Relations Act 2000 a variation to my current working arrangements which are:</p> <p>(specify which current working arrangement you wish to change)</p>			
<b>Current place(s) of work</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Current days and hours of work</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>My proposed working arrangement is:</b> (Tick appropriate box)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Working from home	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexi time	<input type="checkbox"/> Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/> Job share
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced hours/ days	<input type="checkbox"/> Compressed hours/ days		
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative arrangement: (detail below this may be a combination of two arrangements or a different version)			
<p>The details of my proposed flexible working arrangement are:</p> <p><i>If applying to work from home, please include technology requirements here</i></p>			
<b>Place(s) of work</b> <i>(If more than one location state both addresses)</i>	<i>Full street address(s)</i>		

<b>Days and hours of work</b> (specify at each location)	If flexitime state hours to work between
<b>I would like the new short-term working arrangement to be for the period</b>	
<b>Starting:</b> Click or tap to enter a date.	
<b>Finishing:</b> Click or tap to enter a date.	
<b>The reason for my request is:</b> (because I am a person who is affected by [family violence/ emergency or personal circumstance] and to assist me to deal with the effects of [family violence/emergency or personal circumstances] I need this request approved)	
<b>I believe that the new short-term working arrangements:</b> (Complete all relevant sections, if there are no benefits or impacts on a specific group state 'Not Applicable')	
will assist <u>me</u> to deal with the effects of [family violence/ emergency or personal circumstances] by:	
could have the following impacts for the business (and employer):	
could have the following impacts for the team:	
could have the following impacts for the customers:	
I suggest we could manage the impacts by:	

**Note to your people leader**

This is a request for a flexible working arrangement made under the Employment Relations Act 2000 to be dealt with within one month ([Part 6AA](#)) or 10 working days ([Part 6AB](#)) of receipt. You can email me to confirm your receipt of my request.

**EMAIL YOUR COMPLETED REQUEST FORM TO YOUR PEOPLE LEADER**

## People Leader's Decision Form – Employees Affected by Emergency or Personal Circumstances Short-term (up to 2 months)

This form can be used to approve your employee's request, approve an alternative arrangement or decline a request. This form can be cut and pasted into an email.

<b>To:</b>	<i>Insert employee's full name</i>	<b>On the</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>In position of</b>	<i>Insert job title</i>		
I <u><i>insert people leader's name and position</i></u> have considered your request for a variation to your working arrangements			

### ***EITHER***

<input type="checkbox"/> I can confirm that I have approved your request for short-term flexible working:
<i>Details of the arrangement, please including place(s), days and times of work.</i>

### ***OR***

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

### ***OR***

<input type="checkbox"/> I am sorry but I am unable to accommodate your request on the following business ground/s as discussed with you: (indicate the ground/s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Cannot reorganise work among existing staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot recruit additional staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact on quality. <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact on performance. <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough work during the periods that you propose to work. <input type="checkbox"/> Planned structural changes. <input type="checkbox"/> Burden of additional costs. <input type="checkbox"/> Negative effect on ability to meet customer demand.
The ground(s) apply in the circumstances because: (indicate relevant detail)

Details of the reasons

[If family violence is disclosed] I am required to provide you with information about appropriate specialist family violence support services. These are outlined on page three of this form.

Your new short-term working arrangement will commence from:

**Start Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Finish Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Note to employee**

If you have any questions on the information provided on this form, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss.

If working from home is part of this arrangement, then you are responsible to ensure your home environment is set up appropriately to work safely (see *Working Away from the Office Guidelines*).

**RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR EMPLOYEE AND COPY TO HUMAN RESOURCES**

## Where to get help and support for family violence

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If you or someone else is in danger right now, call the police on 111.

If you think you or someone you know might be affected by domestic violence, you're not alone, you can get help. Specialist organisations can help you understand what's going on in your relationship and give emotional support. They can give you information about what you can do and tell you about services near you that might be able to support you.

### Family Violence Information Line:

**0800 456 450, open every day from 9am to 11pm.**

[www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)

This helpline is part of the 'It's not OK' campaign to reduce family violence in New Zealand and is run by the Ministry of Social Development. The line gives self-help information and connects people to services where it's needed. The website gives information about family violence and where to go for help.

### Women's Refuge:

**0800 743 833, open every day - 24 hours a day.**

<https://womensrefuge.org.nz>

A bicultural organisation working with women and children to provide support through advocacy, safety plans, emergency accommodation, and ongoing support for victims and their family members. Women's Refuge also gives training to organisations wanting to learn more about and improve their policies on family violence.

### SHINE:

**0508 744 633, open every day from 9am to 11pm.**

[www.2shine.org.nz](http://www.2shine.org.nz)

The helpline provides support, information, help with risk assessment and safety planning and referrals to local services. Shine supports adult and child victims – all genders – to become safe. Shine also works with men who have perpetrated family violence to motivate and support behaviour change. Shine provides a range of domestic violence training programmes. Shine's DVFREE programme offers policy consultation and workplace domestic violence training.

### Safe-to-talk:

**0800 044 334, open every day - 24 hours a day.**

[www.safetotalk.nz](http://www.safetotalk.nz)

Safe-to-talk is a free, confidential and anonymous helpline for people affected by sexual violence. You can contact a trained specialist by phone or web chat. They can answer your questions, give you information about sexual harm, and refer you to specialists in your area. They can also provide information about how to help a friend or family member.

**You can also visit these sites to find out more about domestic violence:**

[www.justice.govt.nz](http://www.justice.govt.nz)

[www.victiminfo.govt.nz](http://www.victiminfo.govt.nz)

[www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)



UNCLASSIFIED



DEPARTMENT OF THE  
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET  
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA



National Emergency  
Management Agency  
Te Rākau Whakamarumaru

## Flexible Working Policy (FWP) update for People Leaders

Thanks, we value engagement

- We're grateful for the way people have engaged with on how we have aligned our policy to Public Service Commission guidance.
- Our staff provided a great amount of feedback, sharing many ideas, concerns, and suggestions.
- These were subsequently considered and helped inform final clarifications and simplifications to our policy and guidance.
- We have compiled a FWP consultation feedback response document that will be shared with everybody alongside the new policy and guidance.

What's been simplified?

- **Some delegations have been updated to** specify who holds approval authority for each type of flexible working request, and when Human Resources must be consulted.
- **Read** the updated FWP, the guidelines and the Delegations Policy carefully.
- People leaders are **responsible for recording** all approved informal flexible working arrangements for their team. Details on how to do this will be provided soon.

What's been clarified?

- It's still '**no surprises**' – issues or concerns should be known, understood and under management prior to requesting, changing or ceasing flexible working arrangements.
- Familiar processes remain for formal flexible working arrangements—those affecting an Individual Employment Agreement (IEA). These still require people leaders to **consult with HR** and seek approval from a leader with Level B human resources delegations.
- People leaders are expected to **continue making empowered decisions** around flexible working requests with their people and teams in good faith.
- Employees are still required to **agree** all informal flexible working arrangements with their people leader **in advance**.
- It is still **not expected to plan work-from-home arrangements to care for dependants while working**. Employees and people leaders will use their reasonable and sensible judgement to agree whether work can be carried out relevant to the circumstances.
- People leaders continue to be able to **approve ad hoc arrangements**, including for short-term emergency and personal circumstances including Family Violence.
- **Review** of flexible working arrangements and conversations with your people (as individuals and within teams as appropriate) should continue to happen **on a regular basis** to ensure they are beneficial to all.
- People leaders are empowered to **change or cease informal arrangements** that are not working well for everyone involved including where there are performance issues or concerns regarding an individual.

## Implementation – next steps for people leaders

### 1. Prepare your team to manage immediate reactions

- Initiate a conversation with your team.
- Let them know the new policy is in effect and begin to set expectations that align with the new policy.
- You may need to reassure some staff depending on the extent and types of flexible working arrangements previously in place.

### 2. Manage expectations

- Talk about what the plan is for reviewing and approving current arrangements within your group. This is to be guided by your ELT member.
- Some informal arrangements are likely to change, because they may not meet the requirement to be beneficial to the team and / or the organisation. We know this because this was feedback provided through the consultation process.
- Formal arrangements that form part of an IEA are not affected.

### 3. Foster a culture of trust, respect, and cooperation

- Read the Guidelines.
- Talk about fostering a culture of trust and respect that underpins successful flexible working. Individual contributions and the ability for the team to perform is part of this.
- Encourage frequent and open discussions about flexible working preferences and experiences to help normalise them, ensuring it's viewed as a regular aspect of work / life planning
- Personal matters may not be appropriate to share with the team and this is OK. However, working from home arrangements are not personal information and should be shared within the team. It's important that everyone in the team knows where others are working from on any particular day.
- Explore the reality of having to balance the preferences and circumstances of multiple individuals while ensuring the team can still deliver its work and meet stakeholder expectations.
- Expectations may flex or change overtime as work/life circumstances also change
- Positively frame any issues or conflicts
- Encourage an open-door policy – expect people feel comfortable enough to raise and have a conversation about any issues or concerns so we may find a solution.
- Share Speaking Up Safely processes for those feeling they are being treated unfairly.



## Executive Leadership Board Meeting Minutes

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 25 March 2025
<b>Time</b>	09.00am – 12.00pm
<b>Venue</b>	CE's Office
<b>Chair</b>	Ben King
<b>Members</b>	Ben King, Clare Ward, Dave Gawn, Janine Smith, Katrina Casey, Rachel Hayward, Sean Bolton, Bridget White
<b>Other attendees</b>	Whole meeting: Rito Tapuke (Chief Adviser Māori), Glenn McStay (Chief Financial Officer), Kathrine Wrigley (Chief Adviser to the CE)  Item 3: Angela Mansell, Catherine Hammond, Richard Hall
<b>Minutes</b>	Rona Caird
<b>Apologies</b>	Dave Gawn, Glenn McStay

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### Strategy and Policy

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### Item 3: Flexible Working Policy

7. Angela, Catherine and Richard presented this paper.
8. The Board thanked the team for their work on the policy and the staff consultation sessions organised for DPMC and NEMA.
9. The feedback indicated that some staff were concerned that the changes would remove the ability to work from home completely. Staff were reassured that the focus of the changes was largely on clarifying and simplifying (for example the new policy is explicit that working from home to care for dependents is not acceptable). However, the main change relates to how flexible working is monitored.
10. The Board agreed that any flexible working arrangements would need to work for individuals, their teams, and suit the needs of the broader organisation. Refinements to the policy's language were proposed to reflect this. The Board also agreed the language of the policy and any associated communications would need to align with government expectations.
11. When considering flexible working arrangements for staff, people leaders would need to be satisfied that appropriate working conditions, including security compliance measures, were in place.
12. The importance of consistency in the policy regarding children in the workplace during school holidays, was also raised, but it was also acknowledged this would require managerial discretion.
13. A review process for flexible work arrangements was proposed, with provision for more frequent reviews as needed. To ensure the new policy could be consistently implemented, the Board agreed on the need for concise guidance and robust support mechanisms for both staff and leadership.
14. The Board:
  - a. **Noted** the changes made to the Flexible Working Policy as a result of consultation
  - b. **Agreed** to recommend the DPMC Chief Executive approves the Flexible Working Policy and associated changes to the Delegation Policy
  - c. **Noted** that the accompanying guidelines will be approved by the Executive Director, Strategy, Governance and Engagement
  - d. **Agreed** to move forward with the planned communications to employees and have all communications to staff by Monday 31 March and
  - e. **Noted** that ELT members would discuss their approach to aligning with the policy at their forthcoming leadership team meetings.



# Memorandum

## FLEXIBLE WORKING BY-DEFAULT POLICY OPTIONS

To: Executive Leadership Team Board

Date	30/10/2024	From	Clare Ward, Executive Director, Strategy, Governance and Engagement
		Prepared by	Jude Ulrich, Director Organisation Direction and Development, and Margaret Cassie, Human Resources Manager

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to set out some options for adjustments to the Flexible Working By-Default (FWD) Policy and Guidelines which apply to all people working in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

### Recommendations

2. We recommend you:
  1. **note** that the FWD Policy is overdue for a policy review
  2. **note** that the Public Service Commission (PSC) has issued a data collection request and anticipates issuing revised guidance shortly
  3. **agree** that changes should be made to the policy for clarity around how arrangements can be made for flexibility of place (working from home and remote working) arrangements **YES / NO**
  4. **discuss** the options proposed for those changes, and **YES / NO**
  5. **agree** on the approach for staff engagement. **YES / NO**

### Background

3. In 2018, Ministers committed to the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan milestone that by the end of 2020, all agencies will be flexible-by-default. DPMC undertook an extensive engagement process with staff, resulting in ELT Board approval of the current policy.
4. The policy complies with the Employment Relations Act 2000, in that a request for a flexible working arrangement (including for reasons of family violence) can only be refused for reasons permitted under the Act which include:
  - a. inability to reorganise work among existing staff

- b. inability to recruit additional staff
  - c. detrimental impact on quality
  - d. detrimental impact on performance
  - e. insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
  - f. planned structural changes
  - g. burden of additional costs, and
  - h. detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand.
5. A “working arrangement” in relation to an employee, means one or more of the following:
- a. hours of work
  - b. days of work
  - c. place of work (for example, at home or at the employee's place of work).
6. Requests in writing from staff to vary a working arrangement in terms of the legislation are referred to by DPMC as **formal working arrangements**. That is because these require a specified process and timeframe, and result in a change to the employee's terms and conditions of employment, either on a temporary or ongoing basis.
7. The policy allows for other arrangements to be made, referred to by DPMC as **informal working arrangements**, which do not reach the threshold of a change to terms and conditions of employment.
8. Recent expectations communicated by the Prime Minister and Minister for Public Services relate to the policy settings for working arrangements relating to **working from home**. New guidance is expected to be issued by the end of 2024 and the two guidance documents for agencies (Flexible Working By-Default and Hybrid Working) are expected to be joined.
9. The definitions provided by PSC to support the data collection exercise due for submission by 22 November 2024 include:
- a. **Working from home (WFH)** - means that someone is performing their usual work from their usual place of residence, instead of in a location that is required by their employer (e.g. office, client's house, airport). Working at a home location for their convenience that is not required by their employer, should be considered working from home.
  - b. **Remote working** - when someone is contractually entitled or obligated to perform their duties from home for **all** the hours they are contracted to work. They may or may not come into an office occasionally. This is different from working from home because the home is, in this instance, the employee's permanent location for work.
  - c. Working from home can only be considered remote working when it is contractually agreed. Staff who would otherwise be working in an office but typically work from home full time by informal arrangement are not considered to be remote working. Temporary agreements (e.g. while caring for a relative or recovering from an injury) to work full time from home do not constitute remote working, unless accompanied with a change to an employee's employment agreement.

### Our policy is overdue for review

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10. Our policy and guidance were developed with significant input from staff, in an area that was newly formed. As a result, there is a greater level of detail included than in our usual corporate policy approach.
11. Suggestions for improvement to existing material include:
- a. reduce the number of principles
  - b. be clearer around the approach to informal and formal arrangements



- c. include a section dedicated to requests for flexibility of place (WFH and remote working)
- d. update language from 'manager' to 'people leader', and be more inclusive of NEMA
- e. reduce the Guide to remove information better suited to background material
- f. update the formal request forms and correct statutory references, and
- g. strengthen requirements for monitoring arrangements.

### **There are new expectations to be included**

12. On 23 September 2024, the Minister for Public Services wrote to Chief Executives setting out the Government's three expectations for working from home:
  1. Working from home arrangements in the Public Service are not an entitlement and must be by explicit agreement between an employee and their employer. Chief Executives and managers must ensure that where any arrangements are made, they are subject to consistent monitoring and oversight.
  2. Working from home arrangements should only be agreed to where they will not compromise the performance of employees, their teams or their agencies. This requires agencies to adequately weigh the benefits of employees being physically present for work, the cumulative impact of widespread working from home arrangements, and to consider performance in its widest sense: including potential impacts on learning and development, productivity, team culture and engagement.
  3. Agencies must actively monitor working from home arrangements and be able to regularly report to the Public Service Commission about the number and nature of the agreements they have in place, including having a clear understanding of the impact these agreements will have on particular days of the week.
13. While most of the policy will not require adjustment to accommodate these expectations, you have already discussed policy revisions which could be met through:
  - a. incorporating most of the wording from expectation 2 as the definition of what 'works for DPMC'
  - b. establishing a 'semi-formal' process for maintaining local and central records of WFH working activity (below the threshold of a formal arrangement) to meet expectations 1 and 3 to support ongoing PSC data collections, using an electronic form (such as the gifts and hospitality online form) or using Āwhina, our payroll system
  - c. updating Human Resources Delegations to reflect that people leaders have the ability to approve no more than one day per week as a WFH informal working arrangement, subject to all other policy requirements being met
  - d. in addition, people leaders able to approve more than one day WFH per week in specific circumstances (for example, a work deliverable, illness, train strikes etc)
  - e. requiring all other arrangements, including remote working formal working arrangements, to be approved by the Level B (ELT member) delegation holder or ELT Board for compressed hours' decisions
  - f. strengthen the advice to support people leaders in having a team discussion before progressing applications, and
  - g. ensuring our remote working health and safety, and wellbeing guidelines are aligned.
14. The majority of our people work in roles that already offer flexibility of hours within the working day. We do not recommend recording any mixed hours arrangements of short duration (ie, leaving early on Thursdays to pick up kids and then logging in later that night). However, there are choices as to whether longer periods of flexibility of hours may need to be recorded.

## Guidance is expected soon

15. PSC is expected to issue draft revised guidance shortly. All recommended changes will be reviewed against the draft guidance before consultation commences.
16. The final guidance issued by PSC will be incorporated prior to final decisions on DPMC's policy.
17. The benefit of this process is that the guidance prepared by PSC will have been discussed with the Public Service Association (PSA). This will allow for a single round of changes, align with the centre (which is required for consistency) and provide clarity for our people on what requirements we must reflect in our policy.

## Our staff will be highly invested

18. It would be helpful to signal to staff:
  - a. that we need to review of this corporate policy given the recently communicated Government expectations on WFH working arrangements
  - b. our policy was due for a tidy-up two years ago
  - c. we know how much work went into its original development to reflect the expectations of the government of the day and that you will want certainty around what is and isn't going to be changing
  - d. flexible arrangements come in many shapes and sizes; we're mostly going to focus on WFH working arrangements because that's what the Government has asked us to do
  - e. we'll be looking to provide more clarity around what can be decided locally and how those decisions should be informed
  - f. when we have those clarifications, we'll share them with you
  - g. and we'll be doing a deep-dive at DPMC's November leadership forum on how to operationalise any changes in your teams
  - h. it's possible there will need to be more tweaks once PSC issues its guidance towards the end of the year, although for now, the direction is clear.
19. Once ELT Board has signalled how it wishes to approach these changes, and agreed the key messages the following communications and engagement process could occur and may be adjusted as further information comes to hand:

Date	Event	Responsibility
Wednesday 30 October	If approved at ELT Board, heads up at all people drop in that during November we will be looking at the policy	ODD and Comms
Friday 1 November	ELT Pānui item (align with NEMA Pānui to ensure joined up messaging)	ODD and Comms (DPMC and NEMA)
Monday 4 November	Information in People Leaders' snack pack with timelines, how to engage their people and key messages for team conversations	ODD and Comms
	Leaders provide heads up to their teams and individuals about what is happening with the WFH policy review	Leaders

Thursday 14 November (earlier if possible)	Email to all people leaders (check NEMA approach) advising of draft policy arriving on Friday and Q&A	ODD and Comms (DPMC and NEMA)
Friday 15 November	Draft policy and guide published on Kāinga policies out for consultation and news story, ELT Pānui items	ODD and Comms (DPMC and NEMA)
Tuesday, 19 November	Leadership Forum	ODD and HR
	Leaders, teams and individuals discuss policy and provide feedback by 29 November	
Friday, 29 November	Consultation closes, feedback considered and adjustments recommended to policy as appropriate	ODD
	Pānui article on what next	
Monday 2 December	People Leader Snack Pack on what next with the policy	
Tuesday, 3 December	Consultation response and revised policy discussed by ELT	ELT
Thursday, 5 December	Consultation response and Policy approved by Chief Executive	CE
Friday, 6 December	Consultation response published Policy updated on Kāinga, ELT Pānui (pre-briefing for people leaders may be needed, possibly in-person Q&A update)	ODD and Comms (DPMC and NEMA)

20. The Culture and Engagement Network, and employee-led networks will also be engaged in this process through their regular communications channels.

21. Manager, Human Resources will engage with the PSA as appropriate.



## Executive Leadership Board Meeting Minutes

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 30 October 2024
<b>Time</b>	10.30am – 12.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	CE's Office
<b>Chair</b>	Ben King
<b>Members</b>	Ben King, Clare Ward, Dave Gawn, Janine Smith, Katrina Casey, Rachel Hayward, Sean Bolton, Bridget White
<b>Other attendees</b>	Whole meeting: Rito Tapuke (Chief Adviser Māori), Glenn McStay (Chief Financial Officer), Joanna Anderson (Chief Adviser to the CE) Item 2: Jude Ulrich, Margaret Cassie
<b>Minutes</b>	Rona Caird
<b>Apologies</b>	Rachel Hayward

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### Strategy and Policy

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#### Item 2: Flexible working policy

2. Jude and Margaret presented this paper.
3. The Board thanked Jude and Margaret for the paper. This paper was proposing to review aspects of the policy in advance of the Public Service Commission (PSC) guidance being received, with a further review once the guidance has been received. It was noted that PSC guidance was still under development.

4. The Board noted that it was important to align with Government policy and expectations in this area and others. The Board decided that it wanted to stay in line with PSC's process and follow their lead and that they would like to review our policy once the guidance has been received which would mean consultation with staff in early 2025. It was suggested that as part of the consultation and guidance we include examples to make things clear for staff and people leaders.
  5. The Board noted that PSC data collection would be starting soon.
  6. The Board discussed how the department will deal with the cultural change aspect of this, including how are people leaders being empowered to hold these conversations. It was agreed to consider this as part of the work.
  7. The Board:
    - a. **Noted** that the FWD Policy is overdue for a policy review.
    - b. **Agreed** to review the policy after the Public Service Commission (PSC) guidance has been received, with consultation with staff in early 2025.
    - c. **Noted** that the Public Service Commission (PSC) has issued a data collection request and anticipates issuing revised guidance shortly.
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## Flexible Working By-Default Policy

<b>Version</b>	2.0	<b>Contact</b>	Jude Ulrich, Director Organisation Direction and Development
<b>Status</b>	Draft <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Approved by</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Date for review</b>	31/10/2022	<b>iManage</b>	4315742

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Brook Barrington	Chief Executive		30/11/20

### Objective

1. This policy sets out the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (DPMC) approach to normalise flexible working so that it does not undermine career progression or pay and is equally available to all regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability and other dimensions of diversity.

### Policy statement

2. To support this objective DPMC is committed to ensuring flexible working practices are embedded throughout the organisation's culture, systems and processes to benefit both employees and DPMC. We will do this through:
  - a) commitment to flexible working being available to everyone, where all roles can have elements of flexibility;
  - b) ensuring flexible working arrangements are enabled through the way we manage people. This includes role design, attraction, recruitment, retention, engagement, leadership, performance, and ways of working; and
  - c) ensuring DPMC meets its legal obligations both in terms of its duty to consider flexible working arrangement requests and in meeting other relevant obligations such as health and safety, privacy and security.

## Principles

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3. The following principles underpin DPMC's approach to meeting the policy objective:
  - a) **If not, why not?** All roles are treated as flexible unless there is a good business reason for a role not to be. Flexibility is equally available to women, men and gender diverse employees, irrespective of the reason for wanting it. It is not a special provision or reward that needs to be earned, nor does it undermine career progression or pay.
  - b) **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.
  - c) **Works for teams, managers and DPMC.** Flexible working manifests at a team level where arrangements should enable performance. It should not result in increased workloads overall and should enable managers and teams to deliver on their wider accountabilities within DPMC. Arrangements should work for everyone: good for the individual, good for the team, and good for DPMC.
  - d) **Requires shared responsibility.** Flexible working should not be viewed as an agreement solely between an employee and manager. To be successful, flexible arrangements require collective obligations on employees, managers and teams to be open and adaptable. Minimising impacts on others requires a 'no surprises' approach as well as open communication and engagement within and across teams to agree changes necessary to enable flexible working.
  - e) **Builds on a culture of trust and respect.** There is communication and transparency across DPMC about flexible working. Teams and individuals have ongoing, open and honest conversations. All employees have a shared understanding, knowledge and ability to request flexible working at DPMC.
  - f) **Actively championed by DPMC managers.** DPMC leaders champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves. Flexible working is regularly discussed, encouraged and experiences openly shared to align DPMC's commitment to embracing diverse and inclusive practices.

## Applies to

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4. This policy applies to everyone in DPMC and the National Emergency Management Agency, including permanent, fixed-term, secondees, casual and agency temporary staff (together referred to in this policy as 'employees'), regardless of position or seniority.
5. The policy does not apply to self-employed or independent contractors. However, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 we have obligations to all workers, regardless of their employment status, and applying the principles of flexible working may be an appropriate response to their individual situation. In the interests of positive and safe working environments, managers may refer to the policy guidelines.



## Definitions

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6. The following terms contained in this policy are defined as:

Compressed hours	A formal arrangement recorded in an employee's Individual Employment Agreement where the Hours of Work are agreed to be more than 8 hours per day while met within specified days of the week
Designated workplace	Physical location at which an employee is required to be based
Flexibility of leave	Flexible leave arrangements
Flexibility of place	Working from alternative locations
Flexibility of role	How a role is performed or divided
Flexibility of work schedule	Working flexible hours
Hours of Work	As defined in each employee's Individual Employment Agreement
Reduced hours	A formal arrangement recorded in an employee's IEA where the Hours of Work are required to be fewer than 8 hours per day or fewer hours worked within specified fewer days of the week or fortnightly pay cycle

## Policy detail

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### Making a request

7. Flexible working arrangements may include flexibility of role, place, work schedule and leave. DPMC already provides general flexibility with start and finish times and lunch breaks for most roles.
8. Guidelines are available to assist employees intending to request a flexible working arrangement. This will encourage appropriate team-based conversations to occur.
9. An employee's privacy in respect to personal information shared in the course of making an application for flexible working will be protected with appropriate information shared by the employee in team discussions.
10. Requests for a flexible working arrangement are made in writing to the employee's line manager, who has a duty to consider the request before in writing confirming the arrangement, agreeing a modification to it, or declining the request no later than a month after the request is received.
11. Requests made by employees affected by emergency or personal circumstances not otherwise covered by specific leave provisions may be made and granted verbally in the first instance with the necessary written request and decision made after the initial verbal application has been accepted and no later than 10 days after the request is received.

12. As DPMC's policy is flexible working-by-default, a flexible working arrangement will only be refused for the reasons as permitted under the Employment Relations Act 2000<sup>1</sup>.

### Team consideration and review

13. Teams may establish protocols or trial ways of working to enable productivity, support employee performance, and manage for outcomes.
14. Any people leader or employee can raise concerns about how flexible arrangements are working within their team at any time.

### Manager consideration

15. When considering a request, a manager will refer the employee to the health and safety, privacy, and security information guidelines. Together these requirements need to be satisfied in order to ensure that working arrangements are healthy and safe, and that there will be no adverse consequences or impacts on the quality of the work or the performance of the organisation.
16. Managers will consider the financial cost to DPMC associated with a request for flexible work including, but not limited to, costs associated with backfilling, outsourcing or recruiting additional staff.
17. Managers will not consider requests for flexible work as a means to manage workload intensification or volume issues. Those matters should be addressed in terms of work design, task allocation, processing and technology aids, service standards, customer expectations, team support, training and development needs and other relevant workload management considerations.
18. Where a manager requires an employee to work additional hours in specific response situations, the Time off in Lieu (TOIL) policy applies.

### Funding

19. DPMC allows its laptops to be used remotely, and provides an additional headset, travel docking station, charger, keyboard and mouse for employees working remotely.
20. Employees may make a Wellbeing Claim to purchase additional equipment for use away from their designated workplace.
21. Funding will not be provided for employee travel, heating, power, internet, telephone, catering or other miscellaneous costs associated with flexible working.

### Decision delegations

22. Managers must discuss all proposals for permanent arrangements of compressed or reduced hours, changed leave provisions or change to designated workplace with HR.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer Parts 69AAF and 69ABF which include, amongst other reasons, (a) inability to reorganise work among existing staff; (b) inability to recruit additional staff; (c) detrimental impact on quality; (d) detrimental impact on performance; (e) insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; (f) planned structural changes; (g) burden of additional costs; (h) detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand.

23. An agreement to permanent compressed hours requires approval from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Board and will be recorded as a variation to an employee's Individual Employment Agreement (IEA).
24. An agreement to permanent reduced hours, certain changes to leave entitlements, or a change to the designated workplace requires approval from a manager with Human Resources Delegation at Level B and will be recorded as a variation to an employee's Individual Employment Agreement (IEA).
25. All other ongoing, temporary or ad-hoc flexible working arrangements are not recorded as adjustments to an IEA and are managed at a local level by the line manager, other than a trial arrangement affecting an IEA (see paragraphs 26 to 27).

### **Trial arrangements affecting an IEA**

26. Managers must discuss with HR all proposals for trial arrangements of compressed or reduced hours, changed leave provisions or changes to designated workplace. HR will assess whether the proposed arrangements require a temporary variation of the IEA to enable adjustment to payroll or leave calculations, and to ensure appropriate records are maintained for any approved trial.
27. All trial arrangements requiring a temporary variation of an IEA must be approved by the ELT Board if it concerns compressed hours. For any other type of temporary variation to an IEA, requests must:
  - a. be approved by an ELT member in respect to one of their direct reports; or
  - b. be approved by the manager above the immediate line manager of the employee; and
  - c. be agreed in writing;
  - d. not exceed three months;
  - e. not be extended; and
  - f. have a written review conducted at the mid-point of the trial period.

### **Review of arrangements**

28. Employees and managers will agree to appropriate monitoring and review of a flexible working arrangement. This will include, but not be limited to, feedback obtained from other team members, customers or stakeholders.
29. The actions which may be taken following a review should form part of the original approval decision, including whether automatic withdrawal or modification of arrangements is possible.
30. For the avoidance of doubt, the existence of either a past request or a current agreement for flexible working itself will not be taken into consideration or form part of an employee's performance assessment, career development, pay or progression within DPMC.

### **Employee request for review of refusal**

31. If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome of their request for flexible working arrangements, they may raise it in the first instance with the line manager's manager. Employees may also request advice and assistance from the human resources team.

32. If still not satisfied with DPMC's response, or at any time, an employee may raise their concern with their representative or with the Employment Relations Authority.

## Related policies, guidance and information

33. Other documents that should be read in conjunction with this policy include:

- Delegations Policy
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Flexible Working at DPMC Guidelines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Individual Employment Agreement
- Leave Policy
- Leave for Alternative Duties and Special Leave Policy
- Performance, Development and Growth Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Protective Security Policy
- Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Working Away from the Office Guidelines 2020

## Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Approving the Flexible Working By-Default Policy following appropriate consultation.
<b>Business Unit/ Group Managers</b>	<p>Ensuring that they understand DPMC's Flexible Working By-Default Policy and processes, and implement these appropriately in line with employment terms and conditions for individuals;</p> <p>Handling individual queries relating to DPMC's Flexible Working By-Default Policy and processes for their own employees, consulting with HR to discuss and clarify any areas of uncertainty;</p> <p>Considering any routine flexible working request made, engage with those affected and respond with a decision in writing (letter or email) as soon as possible, and in any event, no later than one month after receipt of the initial request;</p> <p>Providing verbal approval to any flexible working request made by employees affected by emergency or personal circumstances and enable a written application and written response with a decision no later than ten days after receipt of the initial request;</p> <p>Consistently applying DPMC's Flexible Working By-Default Policy procedures and processes;</p> <p>Referring staff to this policy when appropriate;</p> <p>Considering, and approving or declining, flexible working requests;</p>

Role	Responsibilities
	<p>Developing and nurturing a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly;</p> <p>Carrying out effective reviews and obtaining feedback on flexible working arrangements;</p> <p>Managing the health and safety of workers.</p>
<b>Employees</b>	<p>Seeking flexible working in accordance with the principles stated in this policy;</p> <p>Developing and nurturing a team culture that supports one another when working flexibly;</p> <p>Participating in effective reviews and providing feedback on flexible working arrangements;</p> <p>Complying with the Flexible Working By-Default Policy.</p>
<b>Human resources team</b>	<p>Supporting managers in achieving the aims of DPMC's Flexible Working By-Default Policy, through providing support and advice to managers and processing working requests</p>