

# Flexible working policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for flexible working and to ensure that it is consistently applied.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency [Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025](#) ('the Enterprise Agreement').

## Scope

This policy applies to all Ahpra employees covered by the Enterprise Agreement. The principles of flexible working as outlined in this policy apply to all Ahpra employees covered by an individual contract.

## Policy

### 1. General

- 1.1 Ahpra supports a hybrid working environment that provides flexibility to employees who are able to work in the office for a minimum of two days per week and from home up to three days per week without the need for an agreed flexible working arrangement.
- 1.2 Ahpra supports flexibility and strives for a team-based approach that delivers great results and enables employees to do their best work. Recognising the unique attributes of teams and individuals and supporting an environment that supports the well-being of our employees is key to ensuring we all live and perform at our best. Ahpra also acknowledges the benefits to individuals and culture when bringing people together in an office environment.
- 1.3 Access to flexible working delivers a range of organisational and employee benefits including:
  - increased employee engagement, retention and reduction in unplanned absences,
  - increased productivity and performance,
  - operational flexibility and responsiveness in meeting fluctuating demands, and
  - assisting employees to achieve balance between work and personal commitments.
- 1.4 Flexibility does not have a one size fits all approach and Ahpra is committed to taking into account operational and individual needs to ensure that flexibility is fit for purpose, and that employees understand when, where and how work is done to successfully achieve objectives and balance performance.
- 1.5 There is an inherent requirement for all Ahpra employees to attend an Ahpra State or Territory office throughout the course of their employment.
- 1.6 Employees will be required to attend an Ahpra State or Territory office in the following circumstances:
  - where work cannot be efficiently or successfully completed remotely,
  - where work can not be performed safely remotely,
  - when meeting with external stakeholders, agencies or bodies,
  - when meeting or supporting visiting internal stakeholders, including board or committee members,
  - strategy and planning activities and meetings,
  - for project work, training, collaboration and/or team activities, and

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- when directed to attend based on business requirements.

## 2. Principles

2.1 This policy is based on the following principles:

- 2.1.1 At Ahpra, flexibility works. All positions, regardless of location or function, can operate flexibly.
- 2.1.2 All employees can make an application for a mutually agreed flexible working arrangement that supports differing organisational arrangements and operational requirements.
- 2.1.3 To meet operational needs or to fulfil responsibilities that fall within their role, an employee on a flexible working arrangement will be required to spend a minimum of 2 days in an Ahpra office per week. Exemptions to this are in exceptional circumstances only and are subject to consideration and approval by the relevant delegate.
- 2.1.4 As the Serraview office booking system is implemented across all Ahpra offices, the designated national team office day will be progressively phased out and all Ahpra employees will be required to attend the office on a designated local team day each week (refer page 5 for definitions).
- 2.1.5 A local team representative, to be approved by the National Director, or equivalent, for that function, is to liaise with the State and Territory Manager to agree on the local team day for the local team they represent.
- 2.1.6 National Managers or equivalent will endorse a local team day for their team members within a location prior to the local team representative seeking State and Territory Manager agreement and will act as the escalation point for any scheduling issues.
- 2.1.7 Employees can be directed to attend the office over and above the minimum two day per week requirement to meet business needs.
- 2.1.8 All flexible work practices and flexible working arrangements are individual in nature to reflect an employee's unique circumstance.
- 2.1.9 When working remotely, employees are responsible for ensuring they have appropriate connectivity to perform their duties effectively and can demonstrate a safe working environment.
- 2.1.10 A flexible working arrangement must be regularly reviewed and can be re-assessed if it no longer achieves operational requirements or position objectives.
- 2.1.11 There may be days where no employees will be present in the smaller offices (i.e., ACT, NT).

## 3. Flexibility versus formal flexible working arrangement

3.1 Flexibility refers to work practices and arrangements that allow for flexibility in the way employees undertake and complete their work. Ahpra employees have access to a range of flexible work practices to accommodate both short-term and long-term needs. Flexible working should be managed in consultation with line managers and can include:

- one-off/ad-hoc requests to work from home or another location,
- variation to start and finish times, and
- use of flexi time.

3.2 Where an employee takes leave on a scheduled office day, there is no mandatory requirement to attend the office on an alternate day, subject to the policy principles.

3.3 A flexible working arrangement is used to formally request:

- temporary increase or reduction in working hours, variation to where work is performed i.e from a location other than their home or their usual Ahpra office for an extended period,
- to work from home for more than three days per week and/or
- compressed working hours.

- 3.4 A flexible working arrangement is not required when an employee works in the office more than two days per week.
- 3.5 A flexible working arrangement must be approved by the relevant delegate.

#### **4. Employee responsibilities**

4.1 Employees are responsible for:

- 4.1.1 initiating a conversation with their manager to discuss flexible working options and any request for a flexible working arrangement, including any practicalities and impacts on operational requirements,
  - 4.1.2 following discussion with their manager, submit the request for a flexible working arrangement in Unit 4, including the change being sought, the reason and period of the change to allow for proper consideration,
  - 4.1.3 complying with any conditions that apply to the flexibility or flexible working arrangement, including demonstrating that a safe remote working environment is available and being used,
  - 4.1.4 appropriate connectivity (internet and phone) to ensure performance and connection to manager, teams and stakeholders,
  - 4.1.5 the continued achievement of performance objectives of the role, and
  - 4.1.6 participating constructively in periodic review discussions.
- 4.2 Where an employee is unable to demonstrate a safe or appropriately connected remote working environment, they may be directed to attend their local Ahpra office.

#### **5. Manager responsibilities**

5.1 Ahpra empowers people leaders to make decisions around what level of flexibility works for the team. People leaders must ensure employees have clarity as to what is expected of them, performance objectives are clear and understood and people are accountable.

5.2 People leaders have a responsibility to:

- 5.2.1 be receptive, discuss and genuinely consider a range of flexible work options to reach an agreement that balances the need of the organisation, the employee and the team,
- 5.2.2 seek advice, support and approval from the relevant delegate to ensure consistent and fair application of flexibility across the team,
- 5.2.3 seek advice from a People and Culture business partner to facilitate consistent application of requests for flexible working arrangements where appropriate,
- 5.2.4 regularly review flexible working arrangements as required and in accordance with agreed timeframes,
- 5.2.5 set a specified number of days an employee is required to attend their nominated Ahpra office per week and ensure compliance with attendance,
- 5.2.6 monitoring compliance with any conditions that apply to the flexibility or flexible working arrangement, including demonstrating that a safe physical and psychologically remote working environment is available and being used,
- 5.2.7 implement practices within teams to instil a culture of collaboration and engagement within and across Ahpra teams and functions, while working in a hybrid working model,
- 5.2.8 ensure employees understand they may be required to attend an Ahpra office on days where they normally work from a different location,

- 5.2.9 ensure that employees who are working flexibly are made aware of and have access to training and professional development programs that support their role or that contribute toward their career development,
- 5.2.10 ensure that the performance of employees working flexibly is evaluated consistently with Ahpra's regular performance management system,
- 5.2.11 make employees aware of their obligations under Work, Health and Safety legislation and Ahpra policies, and
- 5.2.12 outline consequences of breaches of conditions related to flexible working, including non-compliance with health and safety legislation and Ahpra policies.

## **6. People and Culture responsibilities**

- 6.1 People and Culture Business Partners provide advice and guidance where appropriate to both employees and managers in making and considering flexible working arrangements requests.
- 6.2 People and Culture will work directly with People Leaders to document the outcome of an employee request for a flexible working arrangement in writing.

## **7. Reviewing a decision**

- 7.1 Where an employee is dissatisfied with any matter arising under this policy, or a related policy or procedure, they should, in the first instance, meet with their manager and understand the reason(s) as to why the request was denied.
- 7.2 Should they wish to have this decision formally reviewed they can raise a grievance in accordance with Ahpra's [Grievance Resolution Policy PC005](#).

## **References / links to other documents / related documents**

### Related documents

- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency [Enterprise agreement 2022 - 2025](#)
- [Definitions – people policies and procedures](#)
- [Instrument of Sub-delegation](#)
- [Clean desk policy](#)
- [Flexible working arrangement guidelines](#)
- [Performance Development Plan](#)

## Definitions

Term	Definition	Explanatory notes
<b>Local team day</b>	A day that the local team agrees for attendance in the office.	There may be more than one local team day where necessary – i.e., if there are insufficient desks for all employees in that local team to attend on one day, more than one local team day may be chosen, and attendance split between them.
<b>Local team (non Reg Ops)</b>	All employees within a specific Directorate, who are in the same office.	Examples of local teams: Finance & Risk, Melbourne office People & Culture, Melbourne office Information Technology, Perth office Strategy and Policy, Adelaide office
<b>Local team (Reg Ops)</b>	All employees within a specific Regulatory Operations function who are in the same office, i.e., Registration, Notifications, Compliance or Legal.	Examples of local teams: Notifications Brisbane office, Registration, Brisbane Office, Notifications, Adelaide Office, Compliance, Adelaide Office, Compliance, Melbourne Office, Legal, Melbourne Office, Legal, Darwin Office.

Document control	
<b>Approval authority</b>	National Executive
<b>Policy Owner (administrative)</b>	Executive Director People and Culture
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Senior Business Partner
<b>Approval date</b>	April 2023
<b>Start date</b>	July 2021
<b>Next review due date</b>	12 April 2025