

No./Title:	4.12 Flexible Working (formerly Working from Home)
Section:	Section 4: Staffing & Work Environment
Document Type:	Policy
Responsibility:	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date:	27/06/22
Due for Review:	Within 3 years of approval date
Context:	This document forms part of the WHGNE Policy & Procedure Manual located at: Whgne.sharepoint.com 1. Organisational>Policies & Procedures>Section 4
Purpose:	This policy outlines WHGNE's requirements for staff to work flexibly. The purpose of these arrangements is to provide a flexible workplace environment, to alleviate pressure on workplace accommodation, and to provide business continuity in times of emergencies.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

All WHGNE staff have the option to work flexibly. This means that they can work from the designated WHGNE office, or they can work from home or another suitable venue (such as a library or co-working space for example). Staff may also, with agreement from all parties, choose to designate their home as their workplace. This policy also allows for flexibility in relation to working hours, with reference to the Employee Collective Agreement 2020.

The WHGNE flexible working policy is designed to accommodate the changing nature of work in our community and to acknowledge that we seek to employ staff who live across the whole of WHGNE region, not only those that live near our office.

This policy covers two types of working arrangements:

1. Flexible Working (FW): This is available to all staff as a condition of their employment. While the designated workplace is the WHGNE office at 86-90 Rowan Street, Wangaratta 3677, staff may work from another location if it is practical for them. Under this arrangement staff are expected to be able to attend the WHGNE office in person for meetings (where pre-arranged), and to attend work-related meetings onsite at stakeholder's workplaces or at third-party venues where required for their role.
2. Working from Home (WFH): This is available by prior arrangement and only in exceptional circumstances. This arrangement recognises the staff member's home as their designated workplace. All other conditions remain the same as for flexible working.

The following components are to be acknowledged and agreed to by all parties under this policy:

- Unless otherwise stipulated in an employee's contract of employment, the Wangaratta Office is an employee's work location.
- Work hours fall within the Employee Collective Agreement (ECA) span of hours (8am to 8pm Monday to Friday).
- Staff must comply with WHGNE's OHS, organisational, property, and intellectual property requirements and policies.

- Staff will not invite other employees or stakeholders into their physical home on work-related business
- Staff will notify WHGNE (as per standard workplace practice) of absences or sick/annual leave days and submit hours worked on rostered days in an agreed format (i.e. WHGNE timesheet).
- Any travel to/from the designated workplace is in the employee's own time and at their own expense.
- As our formal place of work is the Wangaratta office, any travel required for in-person stakeholder meetings is to be done during work time, on the assumption that the travel is initiated from the Wangaratta office. That is, all work-related travel should be calculated *as if* traveling to and from the Wangaratta office.
- Staff/WHGNE must complete and submit the 'Flexible Working – Guidelines & Application Form'.

And in addition, where a staff member is WFH:

- Authorisation has been obtained from Chief Executive Officer.
- Staff/WHGNE must complete and submit the 'Working from Home – Guidelines & Application Form' (instead of the 'Flexible Working – Guidelines & Application Form' mentioned above).
- An employee who's designated workplace is their home, that is requested to attend a work-related event/activities deemed necessary by their Manager, will be reimbursed for travel expenses to the value of a return public transport fare from their closest station/transport hub to the destination point. Accommodation expenses will be reimbursed if the staff member is required to attend for multiple days, if this has been agreed in advance with their Manager and then upon presentation of receipts.
- WFH arrangements are subject to review and may be changed or discontinued by WHGNE management. WHGNE management will notify staff of any such change or discontinuation in writing, noting the reason & date for the change/discontinuation.

2. POLICY DETAILS

2.1 FLEXIBLE WORKING

2.1.1 GUIDELINES & APPLICATION

Flexible working is the standard working arrangement for all staff employed at WHGNE. Any exceptions to this arrangement will be discussed with a staff member during recruitment or on application for a role that requires a staff member to work from the office in order to perform their duties.

While all staff are able to undertake their work from a location other than the designated office, there will be times where in-person meetings are required and, in these cases, staff will be asked to attend the designated workplace or another physical location as needed.

2.1.2 HOURS OF WORK

A record of hours worked must be maintained. Hours of work will be within the Employee Collective Agreement (ECA) span of hours unless mutually agreed by all parties. At no time will WHGNE require a staff member to work outside of the ordinary hours determined by the ECA, however a staff member may request to vary their hours outside of the ordinary hours. Any variation in hours will be at the request of the staff member, with the agreement of their supervisor and will take into account the overall health and wellbeing of the staff member as well as organisational priorities. For example starting before 8am or finishing after 8pm may be acceptable, but working a 12 hour day or overnight with no break would not be in the best interests of any party.

2.1.3 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

WHGNE have obligations under Worksafe to ensure a safe working environment for all staff. In order to ensure that we are fulfilling our obligations, staff will be required to complete 'Flexible Working – Guidelines & Application Form' that asks questions and provides prompts to ensure that the flexible working arrangement is appropriate.

Employees who choose to work in a flexible manner, will be covered by WorkSafe if injured while performing WHGNE work in the designated work area of the home.

2.1.4 OFFICE ACCESSIBILITY

From time to time, WHGNE staff may not be able to access the WHGNE office due to legislative or policy requirements. In this case all staff will be paid a \$5.00 "working from home" allowance for the days they are rostered on but prevented from accessing the office. This allowance will not be paid to staff on leave. This allowance is taxable and will be reported on PAYG summaries.

2.1.5 OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Eligible staff for the purposes of this policy, are those that are employed full-time or part-time on a contract of one year or longer.

WHGNE are responsible for the insurance and maintenance of WHGNE equipment used off-site, unless an alternative agreement has been agreed.

All *eligible staff* will be provided with the following resources to ensure their ability to complete their role at WHGNE, to be returned at end of employment term:

- Laptop
- Laptop Bag
- Keyboard
- Mouse

In addition to the equipment noted above, *eligible staff* will be paid a \$200 one off allowance to put towards home office setup (e.g., chair, printer or desk). Any equipment purchased using this allowance belongs to the employee and is not required to be returned should they cease employment. This allowance is taxable and will be reported on PAYG summaries.

WHGNE will also provide each staff member with a direct VOIP phone number so that they can safely use their laptop or personal mobile phones to make calls without disclosing personal contact details.

WHGNE will reimburse staff members for reasonable office expenses such as phone calls and stationery, per 6.03 Reimbursement Staff Expenditure Policy.

2.1.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff must always be aware if holding confidential information or discussions, of safety and of confidentiality. If meetings are held in spaces where non-staff members may be near, confidential information should not be discussed or displayed on screens. Any printed information containing confidential information must be locked away when not in use.

2.2 WORKING FROM HOME

2.2.1 APPLICATION & APPROVAL

The opportunity to work from home should not be seen as an entitlement or a right and can only occur by formal agreement between WHGNE management and employee/s. The approval process is evidence-based and will be made on the basis of information documented in the "Working from Home – Guidelines & Application Form".

While all staff can apply to work from home, positions which require "face-to-face" interaction, supervision of staff, or direct supervision of work being performed, will generally not be approved for this arrangement.

2.2.2 IMPLEMENTING/REVIEWING AND/OR DISCONTINUING WFH ARRANGEMENTS

Working from home arrangements will be negotiated for a set timeframe, after which time they will be reviewed. The review will occur at least annually.

Working from home arrangements may be changed or discontinued on the basis of:

- Changes to position requirements
- Organisational requirements
- Work performance
- Non-compliance with OHS standards

When a decision is made to change or discontinue a WFH arrangement, employees will be given written notice advising them of the change, the reason, and the date the changes will take effect.

2.2.3 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Employees who are approved to work from home will be covered by WorkSafe if injured while performing WHGNE work in the designated work area of the home.

WHGNE may engage an appropriate staff member or external resource to assess the safety of the homework site.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibilities of the organisation and employees are detailed in the 'Working from Home – Guidelines & Application Form' and the 'Flexible Working – Guidelines & Application Form'.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [4.12A Flexible Working-Guidelines and Application Form](#)
- [4.12B Working from Home-Guidelines and Application form](#)
- [6.03 Reimbursement Staff Expenditure Policy.pdf](#)
- [WHGNE-Enterprise-Agreement-2020-updated-rates](#)

5. VERSION CONTROL

Version Number	Content Updated	Person Responsible	Date Updated
2.2	Added links for Related Documents	Knowledge Translation and Quality Systems Officer	20/02/2023
2.1	Insertion of clauses relating to confidentiality and flexible working hours	CEO	June 2022
2.0	Full revision of the Policy to include Flexible Working conditions introduced in March 2020	CEO	April 2022
1.0	Original Policy (originally called 'Working From Home')	CEO	19/5/2020