COVID-19
WORKING FROM HOME GUIDELINE
Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Making arrangements for staff to work from home can help minimise the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, as well as meet requirements for self-isolation or provide greater flexibility in supporting relatives who may be unwell. The focus of this document is to provide guidance in support of:

- the health, safety and welfare of employees and other persons (volunteers, contractors and students)
- maintaining critical services and business as usual
- planning a 'phased' approach to implementing alternative operating arrangements in the event of an increasing number of employees being absent, and to minimise the spread of infections

The Working from Home Assessment and Application Form is designed to ensure employees and managers can establish a satisfactory working environment during periods of working from home.

An employee may request or be asked to work from home where this is reasonable and practicable. Programs and Business Units are encouraged to adopt more flexible arrangements wherever possible to accommodate an employee request for working from home or where self-isolating. Whilst a Working from Home arrangement is not an employee right or entitlement, and is subject to operational requirements, delegates are encouraged to exercise delegation where the arrangement assists in managing COVID-19.

Eligibility Criteria

The criteria to discuss, assess and approve a Working from Home application for purposes related to COVID-19 can include:

- Operational feasibility, (e.g. is it operationally feasible to work from home for FTE or part thereof).
- Impact on provision of clinical and other services.
- Consideration of the needs of the overall work area as well as the individual employee
- The employee undertakes to ensure that the home-based worksite is maintained to a safe standard which complies with SA Health Work Health and Safety requirements.

Line Managers Roles and Responsibilities

Directors/Managers are encouraged to consider each case individually and must be operationally feasible and practical for the overall operation of the work area. Consideration of a Working from Home arrangement should commence with a discussion between the employee and their Manager regarding the feasibility, details and necessary resources required to enable the employee to work from home.

Set clear expectations
Set common ground rules and then ensure consistency of application across the team. It's a good idea wherever possible to develop these with input from the team to promote 'buy in'. It is important to establish new team norms and ways of working as a remote team so team members are clear on what is expected of them.

Timesheets
Working from home enables an employee to work specified hours at home instead of at their usual worksite location. Completion of timesheets remains a requirement. Flexi time should not be accrued unless prior written authority from a manager is sought.

Keep in touch
Maintain regular contact with employees, and team members, just as you would in the workplace. Utilise resources and systems as you normally would, keep in touch with team members using email, phone conversations and video conferencing to limit social isolation.

Work performance
At the commencement of the Work from Home period, establish an agreed pattern including, performance of business as usual tasks, status update, new tasks or activities and clarity of tasks. Record this information in the Working from Home application form. Agree on frequency for check-ins between managers and employees, what time and how (via phone, video conference etc.).

Performance, Review and Development (PR&D)

PR&D focuses on providing staff with clarity on performance expectations, aligning individual and organisation goals, and identifying areas for employee learning and development. Managers are required to record the date of the Mid-Cycle Review and Annual Review discussions of a PR&D cycle on HR21 after the conversation has taken place and PR&D form completed and signed. A step by step guide is available on the quick reference guide on how to enter a PR&D in HR21.

Employees Role and Responsibilities

Look after yourself

Ensure that your work space is set up to be as comfortable as possible. Ergonomic setup of computer workstation guide It is important to be aware of your working environment to mitigate any potential risks. Take appropriate precautions to help you avoid placing your body under needless stress. This can include performing light stretches and moving at least every 30 minutes, using a workstation if available (if not available use a suitable table and chair), being mindful of your posture and make necessary adjustments. Remember you have a responsibility to look after your own health and safety while working at home.

Maintain your routine and plan your day

Maintaining a routine is key. Get up at the same time, shower, dress (in your work clothes, even), and have breakfast (if you normally do that, too). These routines let your brain know it's getting ready for work. Maybe instead of a commute, do some exercises or listen to a professional podcast, and it will help your brain snap into work mode. Set a schedule for when you will start work, have a break and plan to finish work.

Set clear goals for your working day and week, and agree these with your manager. If it helps, break these goals down further into smaller goals for the morning and afternoon. Writing these goals or a 'to-do list down at the end of the day or first thing in the morning can be helpful to keep you on track.

Avoid Isolation

Try and make sure that you talk to at least one other colleague each day. Schedule catch–ups or virtual coffee time with colleagues using Microsoft Teams or WebEx.

Where possible use video as this will make you feel much more connected.

Check in regularly with your manager and ask for regular one-on-one meetings so you can ensure you are on track.

Update Emergency Contact Details

Although basic information and emergency contact details have been gathered at the time of the employees' initial engagement, it is recognised that in some cases these records are no longer current. To update these details, complete the LHN004 – Change of personal details form.

Avoid Distractions

If you find yourself distracted by the number of jobs you notice around the house, capture these in a list and leave it for another time. You may also choose to do a chore during a formal break.

If you are struggling to progress a task discuss it with your manager or work with a colleague to try and focus on a way forward.

Set ground rules with other people in your home or who share your space. If you share a home with someone, there's a good chance they will also be working from home. Do your best to identify a designate spot for each individual, no matter how small, as separate as possible. Discuss your schedule so you can wherever possible schedule meetings etc at different times so you are not talking over each other.

If you have children who come home from school while you're still working, ensure where possible that they have clear rules about what they can and cannot do during the time you are still working.

Reach out if needed

Looking after your own wellbeing will help you to stay healthy and will enable you to look after the wellbeing of others. Working from home does not mean you are required to 'go it alone' – it is important you maintain contact with others. It is important to share any concerns or issues with a peer, your manager or a colleague. Also remember to share your successes as it is more difficult to see achievements when working remotely.

Remember you can also contact and speak to Employee Assistance Program.