

## Flexible Working at Watercare

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Approved for issue by: Chief People Officer	Last Revision: NA
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Application: All Staff	Issue Method: MyPlace

At Watercare we pride ourselves on operating as “One Team”. This means that we work together and collaborate with others to deliver a co-ordinated and streamlined service.

In terms of how we work, we recognise the benefits of working flexibly.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance for managers and employees on how to apply a flexible approach to working at Watercare.

### Application of Policy

We encourage flexible working wherever possible and recognise the benefits this brings. Working flexibly creates a work environment that enables us to complete our work in the most effective way for us, with a focus on outputs rather than presenteeism whilst also balancing our life priorities effectively.

Additionally, spending less time and money commuting to and from work brings numerous benefits to us all in terms of our wellbeing, our environment and saving money.

At the same time, we need to ensure the way we work meets our business needs and that of our customers. This means that working flexibly can look different across our business groups.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse environment where our people can bring their whole self to work. To do this, we support the wellbeing of our people by offering a range of flexible working options.

Flexibility is available to all employees whether permanent, fixed term or casual and the nature of flexible working options will vary depending on our role, team, customer needs, location and technology.

It is important to note that depending on these factors, flexibility will not be feasible for all employees.

## Flexible Working options

### Flexible working hours

This isn't the same as changing your contractual terms but may include varying the times at which you start and finish your day whilst still working your daily hours.

Under this arrangement you are still required to work your contracted hours per day i.e. an average of 40 hours per week for a full-time person. However, you may vary your start or finish time in discussion with your manager and depending on business needs.

This does not apply to you if you work set rostered shifts.

This arrangement does not allow for time banking.

### Flexible locations

This could include working from another site or working from home, all or some of the time.

## How to apply

Flexible working arrangements fall under two categories: Informal and Formal.

### Informal Flexible Working Arrangements

These are usually short-term arrangements which do not require a formal change to the way you are working.

Examples include varying your hours to accommodate a one-off or short-term family or other commitment or working from home to be available for a delivery or to complete reports, projects etc. without office distractions.

### Formal Flexible Working Arrangements

These are usually longer-term arrangements which require a formal agreement to be in place.

To apply for a flexible working arrangement:

- Email your request to your manager include details of what you are requesting and a brief explanation of the reason for your request
- Your manager will discuss this with you
- Your request will need to be approved by your manager and Chief

- Once approved you will receive confirmation in writing of the arrangement

## Refusal

If there is a valid business reason why your request cannot be approved, your manager will work with you to consider alternatives that could work for both parties. If an appropriate alternative cannot be found, you should continue to work in your normal way.

Formal flexible working arrangements will be reviewed regularly by your manager, People and Capability Business Partner and Chief to ensure they continue to meet the needs of all parties.

A formal flexible working arrangement may be concluded by agreement between you and your manager with reasonable notice; or immediately in certain circumstances such as where you or Watercare have a genuine business, performance, privacy, security, or health and safety concern; or if you have engaged in misconduct.

## Health, Safety and Wellbeing

We must ensure that we all comply with and abide by our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, its amendments and any substituting legislation.

This means that we all must ensure that we take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that in the performance of our jobs, we do not undermine our own health and safety or the health and safety of any other person.

## Working from home

Where your flexible working arrangements involves working outside of a Watercare office, for example from home, you must complete the following;

- [Working Remotely learning module](#)
- Read the TBI Health - Workstation Guide (see appendix)

Things to consider when working from home;

- Make sure you have a suitable work space to ensure you can perform your job effectively and your work activities are kept separate from home or family activities;
- Ensure equipment is properly installed for example, ensuring that electrical sockets/plugs are not overloaded, and that wires and cables are tidy and controlled;

- Take all reasonable steps to keep the Company's technology and equipment safe and in working order;
- Immediately notify the company of any potential health and safety risks through iCare;
- Any work-related hazards or materials are stored securely and are not accessible to family members or others who might have access to the home-based workplace;
- Manage your working time effectively, including taking appropriate rest and meal breaks;
- Ensure you report any sickness or injury or work-related health issues to your manager immediately as you would if you were working in the Company's office;
- Apply for leave in the normal way if you need time away from work.

In all instances you should remain communicative with your manager and report any concerns or problems in relation to working from home in general.

### Responsibilities

Our values underpin everything we do at Watercare. A flexible way of working relies heavily on our values to work effectively.

### Accountability

'Accountability' means we follow through on our promises and meet our commitments. Working flexibly means we deliver on our work commitments, we ensure we work our agreed hours, we remain contactable and responsive to our team mates, our customers and leaders.

We also ensure we monitor our own wellbeing by taking regular breaks and not working excessive hours. When working from home you should ensure you are able to manage any personal interruptions in the same way you would at work.

### Location and equipment

You will be provided with the right tools and equipment for your role. When working at another location, you will need to equip yourself with anything additional you need or in the case of another Watercare location, use shared spaces.

For example;

- If you work from home most of the time, you will not be able to have a designated work space in the company office. You will of course be able to utilise shared spaces in the office such as hot desks, the hub or meeting spaces.

## Travel

When working flexibly you may be required to travel to other locations such as from home to the office for example to attending meetings. This time and cost should not be considered work time and won't be covered by the company. Refer to our fleet policy for further guidance.

## Security Considerations

When working from home ensure you safeguard all business/work-related information and documentation from access by other members of the household and/or visitors.

When using company equipment follow security protocols including;

[Digital Security Policies](#)

## Considerations

We are committed to providing a workplace where everyone can work flexibly to suit individual requirements. However, there may be times when for business, individual or team reasons this is not possible.

There may be others, but a valid business reason which might warrant flexible working as not suitable could be:

- There is no capacity to change the working arrangements of other employees to accommodate the requested flexible working whilst satisfying or maintaining our business and customer needs.
- There are concerns that the quality and/or delivery of your work is compromised while working flexibly.
- The requested flexible working would be too costly to accommodate.

**At any point, your manager may review your flexible working arrangement. This can result in any flexible working arrangement coming to an end. This will be discussed with you and where practical reasonable notice to return to standard working given.**

Where you provide primary care or support for a member of your household who requires care because of illness or injury, this should be taken as leave in the normal way. The company would not support flexible working arrangements which involve employees working from home and taking care of dependents at the same time.

## Flexible Working Arrangement

Where a request for flexible working arrangements pursuant to Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 is received, this request will be managed outside of this policy.

### Authorities

The following authorities will be applied where the criteria outlined in this policy is met.

Request	Approved by
Flexible Working Arrangement	Immediate manager AND 'Chief' of division

If an employment agreement is inconsistent with this Policy, the terms of the employment agreement or contractor agreement will be first applied by Watercare.

Watercare reserves the right to review, amend or add to this Policy at any time upon reasonable notice to its staff members.

This Policy revision has been approved by the Chief People Officer in June 2020 and will next be reviewed in June 2021.

### Appendices

TBI Health - Work Station Guide

TBI Health – Office stretches