

DETAILS

Council ☐ Admin ☒

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Contact officer:	Chief People and Culture Officer
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File reference:	HR136/171(P1)
iSpot #	This policy
	Value Proposition
	23744870
	45569174

OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

Objectives	To provide a flexible work option that will ensure the safety of employees working from home
Performance measures	Number of employees injured working from home
Risk assessment	Low

POLICY STATEMENT

Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council) recognises the potential benefits of providing flexible working arrangements that will assist employees with balancing the demands of work with their family and/or personal responsibilities.

In accordance with the provisions of the Working from Home Guidelines Attachment A, approval may be given for an employee to work from home where it has been clearly identified that one or more of the following apply:

- the arrangement would enhance or maintain productivity;
- there is a benefit to Council;
- there would be no significant additional expenses incurred;
- working from home is an approved condition of employment; and/or
- there are valid personal or family reasons.

Approval of working from home is at the discretion of the Branch Manager.

Approval to work from home on a regular or ad hoc basis is subject to operational requirements and efficiency, productivity and cost considerations in accommodating the request, along with considerations of the employee's personal circumstances.

The provision of information technology equipment and services for employees working from home is subject to availability and approval by the Branch Manager.

If an employee works from home on an ad hoc, regular or long term basis, a Working from Home Agreement approved by the employee's Manager is required. A specific workspace must be designated at the employee's home and that workspace must be assessed in accordance with Council's [Workplace Inspection Checklist](#) by the employee or an appropriate Council representative.

An employee cannot be directed to work from home. Work from home arrangements can only occur by agreement between the employee and their Manager. The Manager or the employee can terminate a working from home agreement on four weeks' notice.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees. Nothing in this policy is intended to alter or override the terms and conditions of Council's Certified Agreement.

DEFINITIONS

Ad hoc - less than ten days within a three month period is considered as ad hoc.

Appropriate Council representative - an employee, Directorate or Corporate Work Health and Safety Advisor who has experience in conducting workstation assessments and has knowledge of Council's work health and safety policies and procedures.

Council – Council of the City of Gold Coast.

Employees - includes ongoing employees, Executive Officers, fixed term and casual employees.

Information technology equipment - computer, telephone, fax or other electronic and related equipment required for the conduct of work.

Furniture - chairs, desks and other furniture normally provided at the Council work site.

Home based office - an area designated in an employee's private dwelling which has been agreed by Council and the employee for use by the employee to perform home based work.

Home based work - the agreed duties to be performed by the employee at the home based office – *as per the relevant Working from Home Agreement Attachment B.*

Manager – Branch Manager (must be the Manager of the branch in which the employee works)

Remote access - access to Council's information systems from a location not within a Council office.

RELATED POLICIES AND DELEGATIONS

Corporate Security Policy
ICT Resource Usage Policy
Information Management and Information Privacy Policy
Information Security Policy
Return to Work and Injury Management Policy
Work Health and Safety Policy

LEGISLATION

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Gold Coast City Council Certified Agreement 2012
Workplace Inspection Checklist iSpot #27883132
Computer Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist iSpot #31076969

Attachment A - Working from Home Guidelines

Attachment B - Working From Home Agreement

Attachment C - Work Health & Safety Checklist & WHS-Assessment

RESPONSIBILITIES

Sponsor	Director Organisational Services
Owner	Chief People and Culture Officer

VERSION CONTROL

Document	Date	Approved	Amendment
23744870 v6	02.05.2019	COO	iSpot #73401751
23744870 v5	29.09.2016	CEO	iSpot #58306958
23744870 v3	14.04.2011	CEO	iSpot #30838768
23744870 v2	31.08.2010	CEO	iSpot #28758285
23744870 v1	12.10.2007	CGC 070905.014	

Working from Home Policy

Attachment A - Working from Home Standards

1.0. APPROVAL

The Manager may approve an employee working from home either on an ad hoc basis (section 1.1) or on a regular/long term basis (section 1.2).

The approving Manager should consider the issues described in section 2.0 before approval is granted.

1.1. Ad hoc arrangements for working from home

The Manager may permit an employee to work on projects, tasks or reports at home on an ad hoc basis where it is considered by the Manager that it would be appropriate or more productive to do so.

The Manager must forward a completed, signed copy of the Agreement Attachment B and C to the employee and the People and Culture Branch to be placed on the employee's personnel file. The Agreement must be reviewed at least every 12 months or sooner if change occurs.

1.2. Regular or longer term arrangements for working from home

Where an employee wishes to work from home on a regular or longer term basis, other than covered in 1.1 (more than ten days within a three month period) a *Working from Home Agreement* must be signed and approved beforehand. In such cases, the following process is to be followed:

Step 1

The employee and Manager discuss the reasons for working from home and the feasibility of doing so (see section 2.0).

Step 2

If agreed, the employee and Manager discuss the terms and conditions for working from home and complete Attachment B.

Step 3

The employee or appropriate Council representative conducts a home based site inspection using Attachment C Guide and Assessment Checklist.

Step 4

If applicable, the Manager and employee discuss requirements for information technology equipment and services with the service provider (refer to the (ICT) Resource Usage Policy and the Information Security Policy). Provision of ICT resources by the employee's Manager is subject to availability and will depend on variables including the employee's existing technology equipment and connectivity at home.

Step 5

The employee must ensure that *Attachment B* contains a complete list of furniture and equipment required and that all costs of the proposal are specified.

Step 6

The Manager must ensure that Attachment B and C have been signed by the appropriate parties.

Step 7

The Manager must forward a completed, signed copy of the Agreement Attachment B and C to the employee and the People and Culture Branch to be placed on the employee's personnel file.

The Agreement must be reviewed at least every 12 months or sooner if change occurs.

Working from Home Policy

Attachment A - Working from Home Standards

2.0. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION BEFORE AN APPLICATION IS APPROVED

Approval to work from home should only be considered where it has been clearly identified that one or more of the following apply:

- the arrangement would enhance or maintain productivity;
- there is a benefit to Council;
- there would be no significant additional expenses incurred;
- working from home is an agreed condition of employment or there are valid personal or family reasons; and/or
- there is no quiet area within Council that can accommodate officers to work without interruption.

Working from home arrangements are not suited for work that requires a high level of face-to-face interaction with clients and colleagues or where the employee needs to regularly access particular documents (i.e. files) that are physically located in a Council office.

All working from home agreements must be approved before the arrangement commences.

Requests for working from home will be considered by the employee's Manager after assessing the following aspects:

- suitability of the position for working from home;
- the reasons for the application to work at home;
- the result of the home – based work WHS-assessment;
- the suitability of the residence (security, confidentiality); and
- the past performance of the employee.

Valid personal or family reasons for working from home include:

- an illness or injury restricting the employee's ability to attend the workplace
- short term caring for a sick or disabled person

The underlying circumstances for the request by the employee need to be considered. For example, it is important to understand that working from home is not a substitute for regular childcare or other carer's responsibilities. Employees who work from home must ensure that they have suitable childcare/carer arrangements in place.

Council will not authorise an employee to work from home without the approval under this Policy.

Non Valid Reasons may include:

- Long term care for a child or other person would not normally be a valid reason for working from home unless it is an agreed condition of employment.
- Lack of available office accommodation – Managers are expected to plan for and provide appropriate office accommodation for their employees. A lack of available office accommodation would not normally be a valid reason for allowing an employee to work from home however, during specific events or disasters, working from home may be approved.
- ICT - The information, communication and technology needs and, if required, the feasibility of providing a standard of support that is comparable with the support available at a Council office must be taken into consideration. Any requests for remote access will need to be referred to the service provider for assessment in accordance with the relevant ICT policy with approval from the employee's Manager pending the assessment.

Working from Home Policy

Attachment A - Working from Home Standards

- Pool or Council Vehicles - if an employee working from home is allocated a car pool vehicle or an operational use vehicle, the vehicle must be made available at the appropriate Council site for that purpose. Any variation to this requires the approval of the relevant Director and Manager Fleet.

Other factors to consider include:

- whether the duties are suitable for work at home including the types of work and the amount of work that can be performed;
- whether the employee has demonstrated the ability to work independently and without supervision to achieve required outcomes;
- the maintenance of quality customer service and the need for employees and line leaders to take action to maintain services, e.g. diverting telephones to home;
- if the employee should be required to attend the workplace for duty at agreed intervals;
- the provision of career development opportunities, such as training, with appropriate consideration as to location, duration and timing;
- the establishment of communication processes to ensure that employees are aware of developments during the time when they are not at the workplace; and
- the opportunity to participate in activities such as employee meetings and other employee networking activities.

Return to work after illness or injury

In cases of an illness or temporary disability which inhibits attendance at work, the Manager should consult with the Corporate Safety and Risk section to determine if a Return to Work Program is needed and/or a medical certificate is required stating that the employee is able to work safely from home (refer to Council's *Injury and Illness Management and Return to Work Policy*).

3.0. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The conditions of employment for employees who work from home are the same as the conditions at the Council office except where there is an agreed variation. All Work from Home Agreements and any variations to these Agreements must be approved by the Manager prior to implementation.

Any variations (for example, to the hours worked) must comply with the provisions of the Certified Agreement (CA) or any other statutory instrument. Any payment to employees must be in accordance with the provisions of the CA.

4.0. THE PROVISION OF FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

All costs associated with the approval of a Work from Home Agreement will be met by the employee's directorate.

Managers may approve the provision of standard IT equipment, subject to availability up to \$1,000. The cost of any additional equipment, furniture or expenses in excess of \$1,000 requires approval by the relevant director.

Working from Home Policy

Attachment B - Agreement

1. SCOPE

The **Working From Home Agreement** (the Agreement) is a voluntary and cooperative arrangement between the Council of the City of Gold Coast (**Council**) and the employee. The terms and conditions of employment between Council and the employee that apply at the employee's place of work also apply at the home based office unless varied by agreement between Council and the employee within the scope permitted by the Certified Agreement (CA).

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Council and the employee have designated the home based work site (the site) specified in this Agreement.

The employee agrees to cooperate with Council to ensure that the home based work site conforms with Council's work health and safety standards.

Council is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the employee while at the site. Council will ensure that the site and the equipment to be used are in accordance with the provision of the *Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (Qld)* and Council's WH&S policy.

The employee consents to Council having access to inspect the site if required, prior to the commencement of the Agreement, and subject to the provision of 24 hours' notice or by agreement. The inspection can only take place within designated working hours.

The employee consents to a Council representative entering the home based work site in the event of a dispute arising on an issue of health, safety or welfare for the sole purpose of resolving the dispute.

The employee has the right to have a union representative or third party present during visits by Council representatives.

The employee agrees to notify the Manager of any work related injury, accident, illness or disease arising out of home based work, as soon as practical but no later than within 24 hours of the injury occurring.

The employee agrees that Council is not responsible for any liability in respect of a third party, unless the third party or parties are present in connection with work related duties.

3. FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

The furniture and equipment listed (in the *Attachment B*) is to be used by the employee in the course of carrying out work at the home based work site.

The equipment owned or leased by Council and for the use of the employee at the home based work site will be used solely for the purposes of Council work. All equipment owned or leased by Council will remain the property of Council or contracted lessor and the employee agrees that Council may have access to the home based site during hours of work and after provision of 24 hours' notice for the removal of the equipment.

Council or the contracted lessor will maintain the equipment owned or leased by Council.

The employee agrees to notify Council, within 24 hours, if any problems or difficulties arise with the operation of the equipment and allow access to replace, service or repair the equipment. Any failed equipment is to be returned to the Council site for repairs.

If it is agreed that the employee's equipment is to be used at the home based work site for Council work, the percentage of costs of maintenance, repair and insurance of the equipment to be borne by Council will be agreed prior to the agreement commencing. The manner in which consumables are to be supplied (e.g. toner, paper etc.) will also be agreed.

4. SECURITY OF ASSETS AND INFORMATION

Provision for security of Council assets (including furniture and equipment, computers, mobile phones and other mobile technology) shall be the same as for Council's office based employment.

The employee agrees to ensure that Council owned assets and information will be managed and secured in accordance with Council information management, information confidentiality and information and communication technology security policies. The employee agrees that suitable precautions will be taken to prevent theft or misuse of equipment and information, the unauthorised disclosure of information, or unauthorised access to Council systems.

5. INSURANCE

All Council owned equipment is covered by Council insurance arrangements. Property owned by the employee is covered under their own insurance policy conditions. A copy of the employee's insurance policy must be provided by the employee to Council on request.

6. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND VARIATIONS

The terms and conditions of employment that apply at the Council office (as stated in the CA and Council policies) will also apply at the home based office. Any variation must be approved in writing and within the scope of the CA and policies before being implemented.

7. HOURS OF WORK

The employee agrees to the hours of work as stated in Attachment B.
Any overtime hours of work must be approved in advance and paid in accordance with the CA.

8. ACCESS TO THE EMPLOYEE

The Manager and other relevant Council officers have the right of access to the employee to discuss work related issues, during the agreed normal working hours.

9. FAMILY AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees who have personal responsibilities such as child care or elder care will be expected to manage these responsibilities in a way that allows them to successfully meet their employment obligations as stated in the Attachment B.

10. WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WHS

The work environment of an employee's home based office will comply with Council WH&S policy and other relevant legislation with control measures in place to minimise risk to health and safety.

The employee's home based office will be assessed by an appropriate Council representative prior to commencement of a work from home arrangement to ensure that it complies with the above requirements. It is recommended that Council's *Computer Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist* iSpot #31076969 is used.

The designated workspace at the home based worksite will be maintained by the employee to a safe standard that complies with Council's Work Health and Safety Policy and the *Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*.

The provisions of the workers compensation legislation apply for employees engaged in working from home in accordance with this agreement.

Working from Home Policy Attachment B - Agreement

For the purpose of defining work related accidents or illnesses and the application of workers compensation laws, the employee's work hours will conform to Attachment B agreed upon between the Manager and the employee.

All accidents, incidents or near misses must be reported immediately to the relevant Manager and entered into Council's Health and Safety System (**HandS**) within 24 hours. Any changes to the work hours must be approved in advance.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

The Manager and/or Line Leader and the employee will ensure regular opportunities for communication and take all reasonable steps to ensure the employee receives all relevant information concerning staff meetings, training and career development opportunities.

The employee agrees to be contactable during the periods in which home based work is carried out and available for communication with the Manager and other employees as required.

12. PERFORMANCE

The Manager and the employee agree to the methods by which the performance of the employee at the home based work site can be monitored and measured as stated in Attachment B.

13. TRAINING

Council agrees to ensure that training and career development opportunities are provided on the same basis for all employees whether they work from home or not.

14. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Subject to availability, the Manager will ensure that the employee has appropriate access to information technology and information systems for carrying out the agreed duties.

15. TERMINATION AND/OR REVIEW OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement may be terminated by either party prior to expiry, provided that the party wishing to terminate gives a minimum of four weeks' notice.

Grounds for Agreement termination may include:

- a breach of this Agreement
- non-compliance with the criteria for working from home (see 2.0)
- changed operational requirements which affect the criteria for working from home
- not meeting deadlines and/or objectives

This Agreement is to be regularly reviewed by the Manager and revised at least every 12 months.

Working from Home Policy Attachment B - Agreement

1. EMPLOYEE DETAILS

Employee Name	
Employee number	
Home office address	
Home phone number	
Mobile	
Email	

2. MANAGER DETAILS

Manager's name	
Branch and Directorate	

3. TIME AND PLACE OF WORK

Days at home based office	
Days at employer's office	
Commencement date	
Completion date	
Hours of Work	
Address of proposed workplace	
Home based office	Describe the location of the proposed workplace within the address.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The following work will be performed at the home based work site

Duties	Outputs

5. FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

The following furniture and equipment is required	
To be provided by Council	To be provided by employee

Privately owned equipment should not be used without prior approval.

Working from Home Policy Attachment B - Agreement

6. IT EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (if applicable)

Describe any IT equipment and services to be provided and special requirements, such as high speed internet access or remote access (See Information Security Policy).

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7. COSTS TO COUNCIL

Council will pay for the following items	
Item	\$
TOTAL	\$

All costs are to be met by the employee's directorate. It is the employee's responsibility to pay for modifications that add value to the home such as lighting, doors and locks.

8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR CONDITIONS

E.g.: Variations to standard work hours / requirements for recording hours / supply of paper, cartridges etc.

9. RATIONALE AND BENEFITS

List the reason(s) for working from home and any benefits to Council and/or the employee.

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Working from Home Policy Attachment B - Agreement

10. AUTHORISATIONS

10.1. WH&S INSPECTION

The home based site has been assessed in accordance and complies with the Checklist Attachment C.

Name of employee / assessor

Signature and date

10.2. AGREEMENT

I have read and accept the terms and conditions of this ***Working from Home Agreement***

Name of Employee

Signature and date

10.3. APPROVED / NOT APPROVED

Branch Manager

Signature and date

10.4. EXPENDITURE APPROVED / NOT APPROVED

Manager / Director

\$ _____
Amount

10.5. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:

(Maximum 12 months)

The Manager will ensure a copy of this signed agreement is sent to both the employee and People and Culture Branch to be placed on the employee's personnel file.

The signed agreement Attachment B and Work Health and Safety Checklist Attachment C must be saved to the employee's personnel file using file part **HR/180/728/Employee ID/02** and using the acronym **WFM** in the internal reference field in the profile for reporting purposes. A copy must be provided to People and Culture Branch and full edit access given to **DL OS People and Culture** in iSpot.

Working from Home Policy

Attachment C - Work Health & Safety Checklist

***Note: This is a general guide only.**

For details about work health and safety, contact the Corporate Safety and Risk Branch and refer to Council's Work Health and Safety Policy.

LIGHTING AND GLARE
Ensure the computer screen is not facing an uncovered window.
Are there are window/s in the workroom?
Is there ability to adjust lighting through the window?
Ensure there is no reflection or glare on the computer screen.
Is the desk positioned at right angles to the window or main source of light?
Is the level and positioning of overhead lighting satisfactory?
Is the layout of the work area and items to be used appropriate to prevent undue twisting or lifting?
Is access to the work area free from obstacles?
Are there any trip or slip hazards?
Is the level of noise conducive to concentration?
Is ventilation and thermal comfort adequate?
Are storage facilities adequate?
WORKSTATION AND EQUIPMENT
Check desk height and dimensions. Is it appropriate?
Is the chair appropriate?
Does the chair have castors?
Non-adjustable armrests are not recommended for working at a computer.
When seated, check that the elbows are at or slightly above the desk when arms are at the side of the body and shoulders relaxed. In this position feet should be resting comfortably on the floor with knees bent at 90 degrees. If this cannot be achieved a footstool is required.
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT
Ensure the top of the computer screen is at eye level when seated in their chair.
Ensure the keyboard is straight on the desk and in line with the body and the monitor.
Keep the monitor at least arms distance when seated in front.
Are the characters on the computer display set at an appropriate size and colour for reading?
Is a document holder available?
Is the image on the screen steady? If it flickers the refresh rate may need to be reset.
Is the mouse being used at the same level and as close as possible to the keyboard?
If applicable, check with IT Operations to ensure power supply complies with any Council warranty agreements.
SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Is a first-aid kit/supplies available?
Is an earth leakage circuit breaker installed?
Ensure all electrical cords and connections are safe (undamaged, unimpeded, not caught under equipment).
Are power boards and double adaptors being used?

Working from Home Policy

Attachment C - Work Health & Safety Checklist

Working from Home Arrangements Workstation Assessment Checklist

Prior to approval of any Working from Home (WFH) arrangement, an employee must complete and sign the following Assessment Checklist in relation to his / her proposed home based work site and submit with the WFH application for approval. **Photographs** are to be provided with the checklist. *Computer Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist* iSpot #31076969 must be completed and attached.

Equipment	Council owned (√)	Employee owned (√)
Computer / Laptop (please circle)		
Wireless Internet Access / Modem (please circle)		
Printer		
Landline / Mobile phone		
Has your line leader instructed you in WH&S requirements for working from home?		
Workstation environment (add photos)		
Is the floor space free of tripping hazards (cables etc.)?		
Is the lighting adequate for the tasks being performed?		
Are noise levels acceptable?		
Is the room temperature comfortable – heating and cooling as required?		
Is the chair fully adjustable?		
Does the chair have a 5 star stability base?		
Does the chair have adequate lumbar support?		
Are there adequate power outlets to run the computer and other equipment?		
Is your house protected by a circuit breaker and the computer by a surge protector?		
Is modem/wireless internet access available?		
IT equipment, software and service requirements have been confirmed with IT Services and can be supported.		
Computer ergonomic setup – Complete <i>Ergonomic WHS-Assessment</i> (iSpot #31076969) and attach.		
Is the computer monitor approx. 600mm from you?		
Is the top edge of the computer monitor at the eye level of the user?		
Is the computer monitor free from glare and reflections from lights?		
Can the angle or position of the monitor be easily changed?		
Is the keyboard at a comfortable tilt angle or flattened for touch typing?		

Signature of Employee: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Signature of Line Leader: _____

Signature of Manager: _____

Date of approval: _____