

## Telecommuting (home-based work)

### Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service

#### 1. Purpose

This guideline describes the minimum mandatory standard, practice, procedure or process to be followed when entering into a telecommuting arrangement that meets operational requirements and complies with relevant Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service (GCHHS) human resource policies.

#### 2. Scope

This guideline applies to all GCHHS employees requesting to work at a location other than their primary GCHHS workplace. This also applies to GCHHS line managers and delegates responsible for assessing such requests.

#### 3. Guideline for Telecommuting (home-based work)

##### 3.1. Employee and role suitability

Line managers are to assess individual employees and the nature of the work that they need to perform to determine their suitability for a telecommuting arrangement. Work requiring one of more of the following conditions is not suitable for telecommuting:

- A high degree of supervision.
- Frequent direct client face-to-face contact.
- Frequent access to physical resources within the primary workplace.
- Full-time training responsibilities.
- Team-based work that demands face-to-face contact with other employees and which is not appropriate to be conducted in a home office.

For full-time employees, telecommuting arrangements are not to exceed 3 working days per week, except in extenuating circumstances or where directed by the delegate. Otherwise, at least two working days must be spent at the telecommuter's primary workplace.

##### 3.2. Telecommuting agreement

Telecommuting arrangements may be entered into subject to the employee's work being suitable to be done away from the primary place of work and the operational requirements of the work unit.

The employee and their line manager are to sign a telecommuting agreement detailing all working arrangements and conditions prior to the commencement of a telecommuting arrangement.

An *application* for telecommuting is to include a:

- *telecommuting (home-based work) agreement* detailing employment conditions, WorkCover protection, security of equipment and other assets, confidentiality of information and copyright clauses.
- telecommuting (home-based work) work management strategy outlining clear performance goals for the work to be undertaken at home as well as expected output during the telecommuting period.
- communication strategy for communication between the employee and line manager, work teams and other colleagues.
- completed *telecommuting self-assessment form* to enable line managers to assess the safety of the employee's work space at home. Line managers are to assess the completed form and ensure that the employee's work while telecommuting is safe in accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011*.
- *telecommuting (home-based work) asset loan approval form*, if the employee is bringing home an asset such as a laptop. An employee should not be allowed to remove an asset from the workplace until the completed loan approval form is submitted and approved by the delegate.
- where a work asset is used at home (e.g. work laptop), evidence that the employee has sufficient home and contents insurance that can cover a working from home arrangement as Gold Coast Health will not accept liability for any damage to an employee's personal property caused by a Gold Coast Health asset.
- evidence that the employee has completed the *Cyber Security Essentials* training on Learning on Line (LOL).
- where relevant, evidence of public liability insurance if the employee is required to undertake work-related travel (e.g. meeting with clients outside a Gold Coast Health or Queensland Health facility) under a telecommuting arrangement.

An employee requesting to enter into a telecommuting arrangement must submit their written request to their line manager. Final approval / non-approval is at the discretion of the delegate as provided in item 16.4 of the *HR Sub-delegation Manual*.

A decision to refuse a telecommuting request must be provided to the employee in writing. The line manager is responsible for retaining a copy of the decision to refuse the request as well as copies of telecommuting agreements where these have been approved.

### 3.3. Worker's compensation

Telecommuting employees have workers' compensation and rehabilitation coverage under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003. All preventive safety measures must be applied to prevent injury. Any injuries that occur during a telecommuting day are to be reported immediately to the relevant line manager. Appropriate workplace health and safety procedures are to be applied.

A daily work diary is to be maintained and regularly updated during each home-based telecommuting day. The diary accounts for all significant movements and activities during the course of a telecommuting day for workers' compensation and management information purposes.



### 3.4. Insurance

Indemnity is provided for all GCHHS employees provided the employee has carried out their duties and functions in good faith and without gross negligence. Refer to the [Queensland Government Indemnity Guideline](#) for more information.

Telecommuting employees are responsible for ensuring they have adequate public liability insurance where work-related travel during telecommuting days are required. These employees have a responsibility to check with their insurance provider to determine whether their policy is valid under the telecommuting arrangements.

Telecommuters who use a work asset at home (e.g. work laptop) are responsible for ensuring they have adequate home and contents insurance. GCHHS accepts no responsibility for any damage to a telecommuter's personal property that has been caused by GCHHS assets or otherwise. Home and contents insurance is not required where the employee does not require a work asset to work from home.

### 3.5. Expenses

Telecommuting arrangements must be cost- neutral and not adversely impact operations or service delivery.

Expenses relating to telecommuting arrangements will be managed as follows:

- Consumables such as paper are to be documented as part of the telecommuting agreement and whenever possible, provided from within the relevant work unit's existing resources and stocks.
- The telecommuter is to be responsible for utility expenses incurred for work undertaken at home or any other location away from the primary workplace. These include expenses associated with internet, heating or cooling and electricity.
- Agreement must be sought from the line manager and financial delegate prior to incurring any cost for which reimbursement will be applied for.
- Approved applications for reimbursement relating to telecommuting expenses are to be met by the telecommuter's work unit. Claims for reimbursement must be supported by appropriate evidence.

### 3.6. Information technology

Provision and maintenance of GCHHS computer equipment to telecommuters for official use is to be undertaken in accordance with relevant GCHHS and Queensland Health policies. When telecommuting requires the use of computer equipment, line managers are to assess the information technology required to perform the specified work from home. Line managers are to consider the financial implications of providing appropriate computer equipment before any arrangements are entered into.

Employees are not to be issued with additional mobile telephones for the purpose of home-based telecommuting.

#### 3.6.1. Technical support for GCHHS equipment

GCHHS equipment is to be returned to the telecommuter's primary workplace for maintenance and repair, where required. GCHHS will provide helpdesk support and services including installation, troubleshooting and fault recording.

**3.6.2. Remote access**

When employees participating in approved telecommuting arrangements require access to GCHHS network resources, prior approval is to be obtained via the remote access service. Costs associated with remote access are to be met by the telecommuting employee's work unit.

Not all telecommuting arrangements require remote access to GCHHS network resources. When remote access is used, the remote access service is the only recognised electronic security protocol for external access to information held on GCHHS network resources.

**4. Supporting / Relating Documents and Reference Material****Policy Instruments**

(POL, PRO, PLA, WI, GL, MEDPRO)

- [POL1424 Flexible Working Arrangements](#)
- [PRO2103 Managing Staff Redeployment During a Pandemic](#)

**External Documents**

- [Queensland Government Indemnity Guideline](#)

**Online Documents**

(Clinical forms and GOV documents (information sheets etc.))

- [Telecommuting \(Home-Based Work\) Agreement template](#)
- [Telecommuting \(Home-Based Work\) Application form](#)
- [Telecommuting Self-Assessment form](#)
- [Daily Work Diary template](#)
- [Telecommuting \(home-based work\) Asset Loan Approval form](#)

**References and Suggested Readings**

- [GCH HR Sub-delegation Manual](#)

**5. Definition of terms**

Term	Definition	Source
Flexible working arrangements	Flexible working arrangements include, but are not limited to, part-time employment, job share arrangements, telecommuting, variable working arrangements, and purchased leave.	POL1424
Home-based telecommuting	The agreed regular performance of part of an employee's ordinary hours of duty at a home-based office during prescribed hours of work, using information technology and telecommunications as a substitute for commuting to the primary workplace. When telecommuting is referred to in this policy it is home-based work.	POL1424

## 6. Compliance Requirements and Obligations

<b>Legislation and other compliance requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Industrial Relations Act 2016</i></li> </ul>
<b>National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard 1; Clinical Governance</li> </ul>
<b>Other Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Health Service Directive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

## 7. Consultation

Key stakeholders who reviewed this version are:

- Grant Brown, Senior Director, HR Services
- Bettina Tracey, Director, Workforce Policy and Performance

## 8. Committee Endorsement

- N/A

## 9. Approval and Implementation

**Delegated Lead:** Senior Advisor, Workforce Policy and Standards

**Responsible Authority:** Director, Workforce Policy and Performance

**Approving Officer:** Senior Director, HR Services

**Approval date:** 01/04/2020

**Effective from:** 07/04/2020

**Next Review Date:** 01/04/2023

**Supersedes:** GL0258v2 Telecommuting (home-based work) Processes

**Keywords:** *telecommuting, remote access, work from home*

## 10. Guideline Development and Approval History

Version No	Developed by	Content authorised by	Approved by	Date of Effect
1	Benedicto Reyes – Senior Workforce Policy and Standards Advisor	Bettina Tracey – Manager, Workforce Policy and Performance	Damian Green – Executive Director, People, Systems and Performance	03/08/2015
2	Benedicto Reyes – Senior Workforce Policy and Standards Advisor	Bettina Tracey – Manager, Workforce Policy and Performance	Grant Brown, A/Senior Director, Human Resource Services, People and Engagement	20/09/2017
3	Benedicto Reyes – Senior Workforce Policy and Standards Advisor	Bettina Tracey – Director, Workforce Policy and Performance	Grant Brown – Senior Director, HR Services, People and Corporate Services	

## 11. Appendices

- Nil

