



s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) of 11 April 2023. I will respond to each part of your request as follows:

Does your department provide office space to a Union?

- *If yes, which Union is it and do they pay for the office space?*
 - *If yes, how much does the Union pay for the office space?*
 - *If no, what is the rental value of the office space given to Union?*

Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) does not provide designated office space to a union. However, we have employees who are PSA Delegates, who undertake PSA/HUD delegate responsibilities from our offices. This approach is aligned to the provisions of the Employment Relations Act 2000 which specifies that employees who are delegates are entitled to spend reasonable paid time undertaking union activities during their normal hours of work. There is no rental value or cost for this.

Please provide us with your department's current working from home policy.

I am providing a copy of two documents that detail our flexible working policies. Please find attached the following documents:

- HUD's Flexible Working Guidelines
- HUD's Flexible Working – Decision making flow chart

I have also included the following excerpt from the Ministry's Collective Agreement and Individual Employment Agreement which outlines our guiding principle that all roles are treated as flexible unless there is a genuine reason for it not to be:

9.1 Working flexibility

HUD are committed to creating a flexible working environment by being guided by the following principles:

- If not, why not – all roles at HUD are treated as flexible unless there is a genuine business reason for it not to be
- Needs to work for the role – whilst every role is suitable for some form of flexibility not every type of flexibility will work for every role
- Works for HUD & teams – Flexible is not something just between the person and their Manager. The impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams and HUD as a community
- Requires give & take – between people, Managers and teams. We need to be open and adaptable so collectively being flexible works for everyone
- Mutually beneficial – flexible working should benefit HUD and its people. It should not result in increased workloads for anyone
- Actively championed by Managers – Managers support, champion and role model flexible working in their teams and with themselves.

How much does the department pay to rent its offices?

In the period between March 2022 and March 2023, the Ministry spent \$2,517,173 excluding GST on rent across our three offices. This includes a rent increase on our Auckland Policy Office site that took effect from August 2022.

What is the current staffing occupancy level of your offices?

During March 2023, the average occupancy of the Ministry's Wellington office was 65 percent. We have started to track occupancy of our Auckland office however we do not yet have enough data to respond.

How much has the department spent on stationary in the last 12 months? Please provide a breakdown of costs.

For the period between March 2022 and March 2023, the Ministry spent \$29,417 excluding GST on office supplies. This amount includes the cost of pens, paper, ink, batteries and other office equipment, as well as kitchen supplies such as coffee, tea bags and milk.

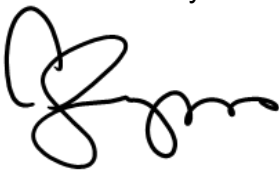
How much does the department spend on newspaper and magazine subscriptions? Please provide a breakdown of costs.

For the period between March 2022 and March 2023, the Ministry spent \$8,970 excluding GST on newspaper subscriptions. This consists of the cost of publishing gazette notices as well as digital subscriptions for the New Zealand Herald, Newsroom, NBR and Citizen Space. The Ministry has not incurred any costs related to magazine subscriptions.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely

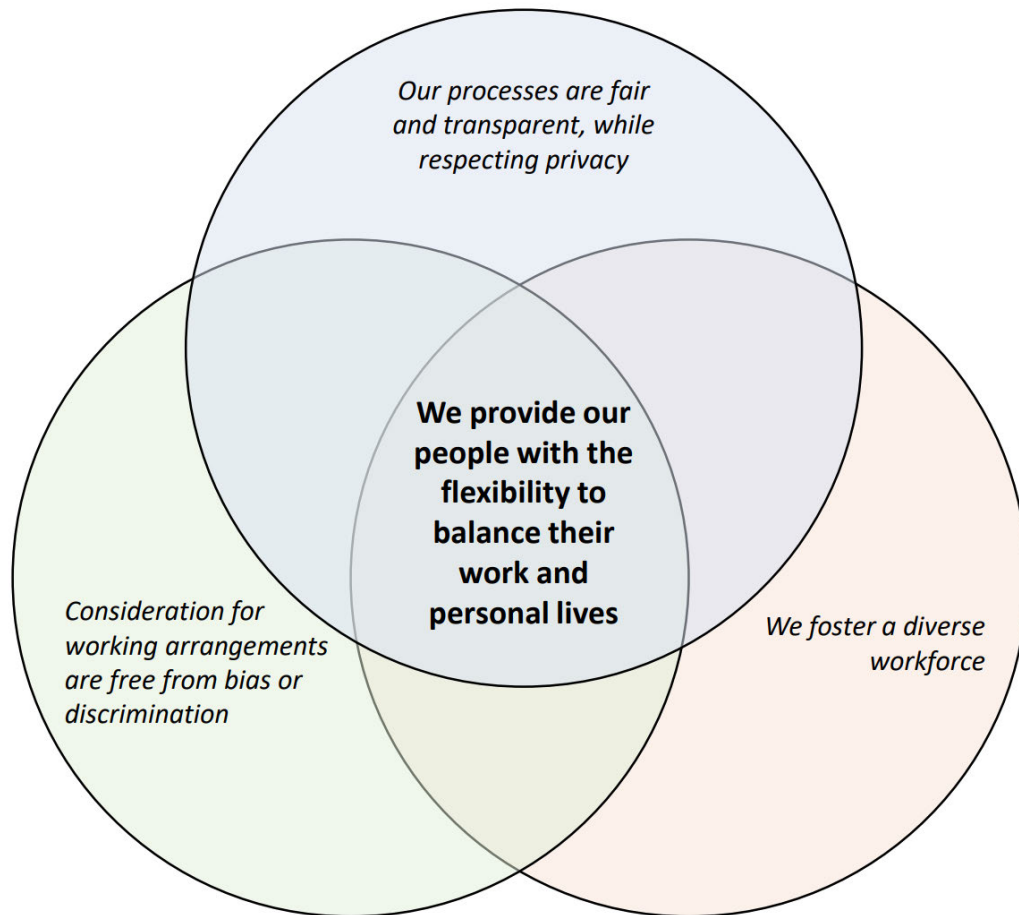
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony De Gregorio', with a stylized, cursive script.

Tony De Gregorio
Head of Finance



HUD's flexible working guidelines are published as an intranet page accessible and available to all HUD staff and managers.

Why have flexible working?



HUD supports working flexibly because:

- Having flexible working as the way we work helps support a vibrant and flourishing HUD community
- Flexible working supports wellness – enabling our people to balance their home and community life with their work-life
- Flexible working makes HUD a more attractive place to work for prospective employees
- Flexibility builds a richer, inclusive and diverse workforce by appealing to a wider range of people with varied working requirements
- Working flexibly should not undermine career progression or pay
- Flexible working builds our business continuity and strengthens our ability to operate in crises



- Working flexibly is a focus across the public service that all government departments are committed and have signed up to.

What is flexible working?

Flexible working covers a wide range of arrangements outside the traditional working week and can be different based on an employee's needs. There are four different types of flexible working.

Types of flexible working

Schedule	Place	Role	Leave
People can vary their work hours or days either on a regular or from time to time basis (e.g. vary start and finish times, part-time hours, compressed week or fortnight).	People can work from locations other than their designated workplace (e.g. remote working - home, another office, partner or delivery organisation).	People can manage their roles and careers more flexibly (e.g. career breaks, job-sharing, seasonal working, phased retirement or return to work).	People can vary their leave patterns (e.g. leave without pay, study leave, term-time working, salary sacrifice for leave).

Flexible working arrangements can involve a combination of the different types. Arrangements can be formal or informal, ad-hoc or regular, temporary or permanent.

Formal flexible arrangements

If you want to change the hours you work in a day and/or how this is distributed over a week or fortnight, please have an initial conversation with your manager.

Changes in hours worked will also have an impact on how Payroll calculate leave. It is important that you understand these implications *before* making these changes. If you are unsure about these impacts, please contact Payroll@hud.govt.nz.

Once you have understood the impacts, you can complete the [Formal flexible working request form](#). This will go to your manager for formal consideration and they will respond to your request within one month.

Principles



If not, why not	Works for the role	Works for HUD and teams
All roles are treated as flexible unless there is a genuine business reason for a role not to be. Flexibility is equally available to women, men and gender-diverse employees, irrespective of the reason for wanting it. Working flexibly does not undermine career progression or pay.	Every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility but not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons may mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles.	Flexible working should not be viewed as something which is just agreed between an employee and manager. This means that the impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams and the organisation as a whole.

Requires give and take	Mutually beneficial	Actively championed by leaders
People can vary their work hours or days either on a regular or from time to time basis (e.g. vary start and finish times, part-time hours, compressed week or fortnight). Flexibility requires give and take between the employee, manager and team. It also places collective obligations on employees, managers and teams to be open and adaptable so that it works for everyone.	Flexible working needs to work for HUD, teams and employees. Consideration should be given to how flexible work arrangements can maintain or enhance service delivery and the performance of HUD, teams and employees. It should not result in increased workloads for employees working flexibly, or for other team members who are not.	Leaders support, champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves.



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Manager and individual's toolkit

Read the manager and individual's flexible working tips to learn how you can start working more flexibly and positively contribute to HUD's culture of how we work.

Tips for managers

Below are some suggestions of ways you can lead culture change across HUD by:

- discussing how flexible arrangements might affect the work of the team and raising any concerns
- visibly role modelling flexible working
- modelling an 'if not, why not' approach when responding to flexible working requests
- 'sense-checking' for your own bias when responding to issues and making decisions
- challenging resistance to flexible working and/or the emergence of any negative outcomes, like work intensification or expectations of your team being available 24/7.

Foster inclusion and cohesion by:

- providing development opportunities equitably – flexible workers, especially part-time workers, can miss out on these opportunities and this can contribute to slower career progression
- avoiding siloed working. Have contingency planning or supporting roles to provide coverage when needed
- encouraging regular informal interactions between team members working in the office and those working remotely
- where people join a virtual meeting, deliberately making space for contributions of those participating remotely.

Clarify expectations and responsibilities with individuals by:

- being clear that flexible arrangements need to work for the agency, the team and the individual
- setting clear expectations about quality standards and timelines for delivery, and that you trust them to do this
- communicating what you need from your team to feel confident their work is on track
- discussing performance regularly, rather than waiting for formal review times
- planning work allocation with the team so everyone knows what work is being done by who.

Support team members' wellbeing when individuals work remotely by:

- being clear that your team working remotely are not expected to be available at any hour



- encouraging your team to take breaks and establish clear distinctions about when they are 'at work' and when they are not
- agreeing when and how individuals can be contacted and whether they can shift times and hours to cover unexpected work and/or times when face-to-face (kanohi ki te kanohi) engagement is important, such as in Māori settings, with Ministers, when establishing relationships with stakeholders, or when discussing sensitive or tough issues
- remembering that when you have many team members working remotely, the structure and processes that work naturally in an office need to be replaced with more deliberate communications and expectations

Distinguish between issues with the flexible arrangement and performance issues by:

- regularly discussing how the flexible arrangement is working. This will help ensure solutions to any issues with the arrangement itself are addressed as they arise
- identifying if there are performance issues with an employee who works flexibly, deal with them as you would for an employee who doesn't work flexibly
- considering review periods to test how arrangements are working with HUD, the team and the individual.

Tips for individuals

Below are some suggestions of ways you can clarify expectations and responsibilities with your manager by:

- asking your manager what they need from you to feel confident that your work is on track
- being aware of your work responsibilities outside your immediate team
- letting your manager know if you can shift your hours or location when unexpected work arises or face-to-face engagement (kanohi ki te kanohi) is important and agreeing whether you can trade with other hours or days off
- having on-going review conversations with your manager about how the arrangement is working and helping find solutions to any issues if they arise

Contribute to team cohesion by:

- sharing your hours and contact details with colleagues (including with colleagues you work with outside your immediate team) by:
 - using your calendar to show when you are working remotely
 - stating your hours/days in your signature block
 - using out of office email, Teams status, and voicemail when you are unavailable, include when you will respond in the message
- maintaining professional and informal contacts with your colleagues, if you work remotely or different hours, remembering that you may have fewer incidental opportunities for updates and check-ins with colleagues

Self-manage by:

- talking with your manager about how they would like to be kept in touch with your progress and with any risks to delivery. If you are working remotely or different hours you may have fewer incidental opportunities for updates and check-ins with your manager



- briefing your manager in advance if a work issue might arise in times or on days you are not working, including how you propose the issue be dealt with.

Process for applying for flexible working arrangements

Informal arrangements

For an informal flexible working arrangement, (e.g. trialling a varied place), an individual should discuss with their manager how they'd like this recorded. Usually an email exchange will suffice.

Once agreed, each party should keep a copy of the email.

Arrangements may be shared at a team meeting so everyone is aware and can support this. This needs to be balanced with respect for privacy if requested.

It is recommended that a manager review all flexible working arrangements (especially new arrangements) with individuals every three months (at least) to ensure they are still meeting the individual's needs, the needs of the team and business.

Formal arrangements

Formal flexible working arrangements (i.e. changes that affect payroll details such as working hours/pattern), requests must be made in writing to your manager. When doing so, make sure you:

- confirm your name
- confirm the date the request is made
- confirm that the request is being made under section [69AAC of the Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
- specify the variation of your working arrangements and whether it is intended to be permanent or for a set period of time
- specify the date on which you propose that the variation take effect. If the variation is for a period of time, specify the date on which the variation is to end
- explain, in your view, what changes HUD may need to make if your request is approved (if any).

Note: Requests for flexible working will remain private and confidential. Information provided will be stored against the applicant's employee file in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993.

Information provided may be used for statistical purposes and any reporting will be released in aggregate form to retain privacy in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982.

Your manager will send you confirmation this has been received and that they will consider your decision and get back to you within **one month**.

With HUD's six guiding principles in mind, your manager will consider the proposed flexible working arrangement. During this time, they may consult with People and Culture about suitable options.



Each individual's request will be treated on a case-by-case basis, assessing the individual's needs with the team's work programme and organisation's priorities. Once your manager has reached a decision, they will respond to your request in writing, within the one-month period.

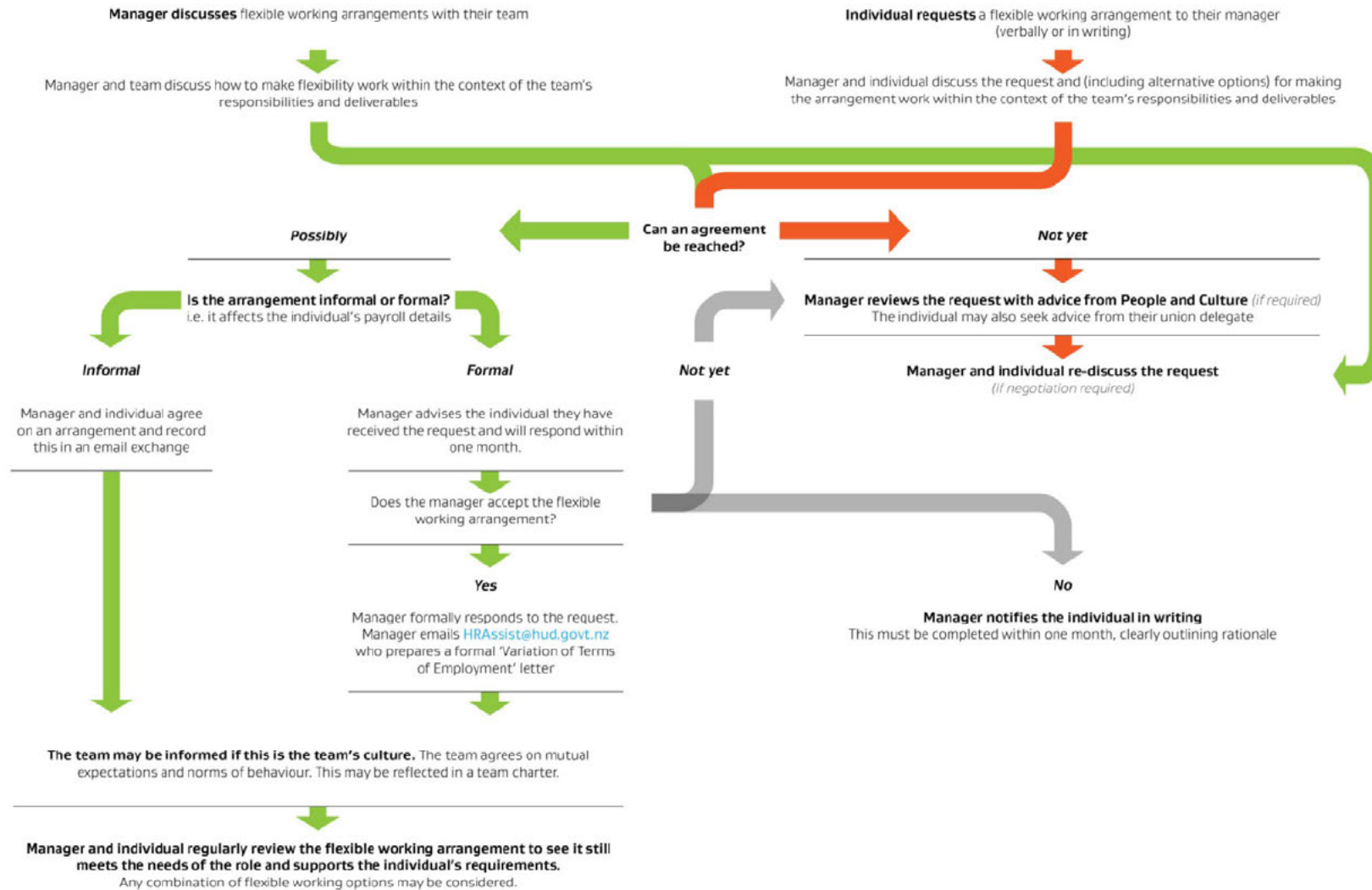
If your manager agrees to the arrangement, they will email HRAssist@hud.govt.nz who will prepare a formal 'Variation of Terms of Employment' letter. In this, they will calculate any adjustments required for pay and leave balances depending on the start date of the agreement.

A manager may refuse a request only if it cannot be accommodated on certain grounds as specified in the Employment Relations Act [section 69AAF\(2\) or \(3\)](#); and state the ground for refusal; and explain the reasons for that ground.

It is recommended that a manager review all flexible working arrangements (especially new arrangements) with individuals every three months (at least) to ensure the arrangement is still providing the individual with the balance they sought, and is mutually beneficial for their team and the organisation



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Frequently asked questions

Still have questions about working more flexibly? Read the frequently asked questions page.

What's the process if I want to work more flexibly?

Please refer to HUD's working flexibly decision tree, then have a conversation with your manager. They are likely to take some time to consider your requests, with the needs of the team and the business requirements. They may decline your request or agree to trial it for a few months to see how it works out.

Please refer to the manager and individual's toolkit for more detailed information on this process.

What's the difference between working from home during COVID and working flexibly?

Flexible working is far more than working from home. While we developed a lot of experience and insight during the first COVID-19 lockdown, this was a government requirement. Requests to work flexibly can incorporate other types of flexible working such as varying your schedule, varying your role, or exploring different leave options. Arrangements can be formal or informal, ad hoc or regular, temporary or permanent.

Who can I speak to if I don't feel my manager will support my flexible working request?

Approach your manager with options on how flexible working could work for you in the first instance. If you are unable to reach an agreeable solution, please speak with your People and Culture Business Partner or email HRAssist@hud.govt.nz. If you are a PSA member then you may also like to talk to your delegate to seek their support.

Do individuals have to work harder if their team works flexibly? Especially if working when others are unavailable?

Individuals working flexibly and their managers share responsibility for making flexibility work in an ongoing way. Teams can agree on some norms of behaviour (in a team charter, for instance) to ensure everyone plays their part while delivering on the team's work programme.

Could working flexibly affect my career progression or development opportunities? i.e. if I reduce my hours or have fewer responsibilities



No. As we explore our flexible working approach, more of our people are finding arrangements that best suit their needs as well as the needs of the business. Teams will develop their own processes to ensure work programmes are delivered. There are ambitious managers and leaders who already work flexibly at HUD, e.g. shifting their hours.

Working flexibly should not inhibit anyone from applying for any roles they are suited to. During the recruitment process, we recommend you discuss your flexible arrangements early to understand if they will impact on your ability to meet the role's requirements.

In your next one-on-one conversation with your manager, discuss how your development opportunities can fit in with your working arrangements. There are many ways in which you can be developed e.g. attending courses, job shadowing, mentoring, webinars etc.

How will performance be managed?

Performance is the joint responsibility of a person and their Manager, the person should understand what is expected of them and the manager should be setting out clearly what is required of the person and the team. It is through this understanding that flexible working arrangements could be discussed.

How can I work flexibly when I have inflexible deadlines?

Flexible working can include any combination of schedule, place, role, leave. Talk with your manager and explore the options that best suit you, while still being able to effectively manage your workload.

Can we put our formal flexible working arrangements in our email signatures? E.g. hours or days?

The email signature page shows you how to set up your email signature templates, including the option to add your preferred pronoun and brief statement on your working hours, e.g. "I work flexibly and leave at 2pm on Wednesdays. Sometimes you may receive an email from me outside of usual working hours. Please respond when it's convenient."

You can also include your working arrangements within your Microsoft Teams status.

How do I change the hours in which I work across a day/week/fortnight? e.g. more or fewer hours on various days, or a 9 day fortnight?

Please have an initial discussion with your manager. They will have some context about what will work best for you and the team. You should also know that changing your hours on any day will have an impact on how Payroll calculate leave. It is important that you understand these implications before making these changes. If you are unsure about these impacts, please contact Payroll@hud.govt.nz.



If you still want to make the changes, complete the Formal flexible working request form. This form will go to your manager for formal consideration and they will respond to your request within one month.

What tools can I use to help my team keep informed of each other's whereabouts and work schedules?

Here is some software that is already being used successfully across HUD

- Microsoft Teams – Updating your status, or sharing any variances in a Teams chat using @mention.
- A Team calendar in Outlook – Shows days or times when you will be located outside your usual office.
- Microsoft Shifts – Used to plan desk/seating arrangements for when your team will be in the office.

What equipment will HUD provide me with so I can work from home?

If someone requests to work from home (which is different from being required to work from home), HUD is not obligated to replicate the office equipment to allow working from more than one location.

If working from home, make sure your workspace is set up ergonomically and doesn't cause any pain or discomfort. If it does, please refer to the Experiencing and Managing Pain page on our intranet.

Remember to take regular breaks from your work. Ensure your workstation is set up optimally and free from obstacles or tripping hazards. Also, take care that all work-related information is handled securely and with privacy in mind.

Some people have been asking about using a mobile phone to enable them to work more flexibly. Please have a chat with your manager if you feel there is a genuine business need for this.

What's the maximum number of days I can work from home in a week?

HUD is an operational business that has a need for people to be office-based the majority of the time. Have a conversation with your manager, bringing a few options to the discussion and hopefully there'll be a mutually agreeable solution. This may include other options of flexible working such as schedule, role, or leave types.

When I joined HUD, my contract clearly spelled out the hours I was expected at the office, is that still the case?



Your hours of work are covered in your Collective Agreement or Individual Employment Agreement. Changes have recently been made to our employment offer letters to reflect a more flexible approach as our norm and any new HUD Collective Agreement and HUD Individual Employment Agreements will also reflect this approach.

If you have specific hours of work in your current employment agreement, this does not exclude you from working flexibly or being able to request flexible working arrangements. Remember that working flexibly is more than just varying your hours: It may also mean varying where you work, varying your role (e.g. job sharing), or varying your leave.

HUD's normal hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 6am to 7pm. Hours of work will generally be within these hours of operation but may be outside this by mutual agreement.



Team guide

You may also want to implement a [team guide - how we work together](#). This can help to provide further guidance about how your team operates within flexible working and provides clarity with any expectations to assist with setting the right culture about how we work. However, a guide could raise some sensitivities. Test what will work best for you and your team.

Team guide example (more formal approach)

Guide for [insert team name]

Overview

[Include a brief description and the context within which your team functions].

Mission and goals

[Outline the purpose of your team - – should be a short high-level statement of no more than one to two paragraphs. (These may also be the organisation's new ways of working mission and goals.)]

Team

[This keeps you across who has agreed to this if people join or leave the team]

Role	Name
Manager	[insert name]
Team member 1	[insert name]



Team member 2	[insert name]

Operational arrangements

Define rules the team agree to operate under. The following are for example only. Any can be removed, added, or amended as required:

As a team, we have agreed the following action points:

1. To respect the privacy of the team, outside the hours of xxxx and xxxx Monday to Friday, we will not send emails. Instead, we will save them as drafts and send them within these hours, so people won't feel pressured to connect in with work. We feel this sets the right tone for our team, and manages the expectations of our stakeholders.

or

We send emails in the hours we work, including outside office hours. There is no expectation that people action these immediately. We give reasonable lead-times and clearly state achievable deadlines.

[Please have a team discussion considering the culture you want to set with external stakeholders if communicating outside expected hours and how those perceptions may be managed. This is all about framing and the tone of the message. Be aware of that when sending an email.]

2. If we have an informal arrangement and something impacts those hours, we notify the team using [insert method]. This ensures we are connected and know each other is safe.

3. Any formal or on-going changes, such as a change in schedule, place, role, or leave will be considered by the manager.

4. When you have approved a request, discuss how it will be managed with your team so we can support that arrangement, and have full transparency.

or

It is up to the individual to advise the team as it is a matter of privacy, and there will be trust that any arrangements or priorities will be managed between that person and the manager. (i.e. the reasons for a request are only relevant when discussing what type of flex options might work and an employee may not want these reasons shared with others in the team).



5. We manage the custodial care of each of our team members by [xxxx].
6. As a team, we will use [insert tool name] to keep an approximate tab on our team members. This will also help us manage desk availability.
7. Applying for any flexible working conditions will not adversely impact us for any career opportunities.
8. As a team, we agree to check in regularly [can be specified if required] to ensure the flexible working arrangements are still fit for purpose for everyone.
9. When connecting as a team, unless the internet connection is bad, agree to have everyone's cameras on to assist with feeling connected.

Review

[Outline how often the charter should be reviewed. E.g. every time someone new joins the team, otherwise every 6 months?]

Document control

Complete the revision history below: (Storing this in Kete also helps keep older versions.)

Revision date	Version	Summary of changes	Author



Team guide example (more informal approach)

e.g. Job opportunities are available to all

What this is

- Learning and Development is equally available, regardless of flexible working arrangements.

What this is not

- Assumptions that someone should be excluded because of any current working arrangements.

e.g. Team home days / team at workdays

What this is

- Specific days where the team are needed in the office, or days when everyone could optionally work from home.
- An opportunity to have 'meeting-free' periods to concentrate on specific tasks

What this is not

- Telling everyone where they have to work.
- A team black-out of unavailability.

Principles

e.g. We are aware of flexible working arrangements

What this is

- Trust and confidence that work is being completed. Any issues will be handled by management
- Respecting people's privacy about their flexible working situations if required.

What this is not

- Monitoring others progress

e.g. We check in on each other

What this is

- We notice our colleagues and ask them about their health and wellbeing

What this is not

- Clock-watching, or making jokes about being a 'late-starter' or 'part-timer'



The form below is accessible by staff via a link on our intranet page and is an automated form.

Formal flexible working request form

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Upon completion, this form will be sent to your manager. They have one month to consider your request and respond. If they agree to your proposal, it will be sent to HR who will prepare a letter to formalise the arrangement. Please allow at least 2 weeks' notice before implementing a new Flexible Working Request. Ideally changes to hours or work pattern should start on a Thursday to align with our pay period that runs from Thursday to Wednesday. Please note: Decreasing your hours might impact your leave allowance and balance. Please consult with Payroll if you are in any doubt about this. Requests for flexible working will remain private and confidential. Information provided will be stored against the applicant's employee file in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020. Information provided may be used for statistical purposes and any reporting will be released in aggregate form to retain privacy in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982.

Hi, [name]. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

Required

1. Please enter your full name

2. Please enter your role title

3. My current working location is:

- ☐ 7 Waterloo Quay, Wellington
- ☐ 45 Queen Street, Auckland
- ☐ Other (please specify)

4. Please enter your manager's name

5. Please enter your Team name

6. Please select your Group

- ☐ Te Kāhui Kāinga Ora
- ☐ System and Organisational Performance
- ☐ Housing Supply, Response and Partnerships
- ☐ Place-based Policy and Programmes

7. Please describe the days and hours you would like to work over a fortnight cycle

8. I would like this new working arrangement request to start from: (this should be a Thursday immediately following a pay cycle)

9. I would like this new working arrangement request to end: (leave this blank if it is until further notice)



10. Please explain the benefit(s) from your perspective:

11. Please explain the impact on your team, internal or external stakeholders

Submit