



<b>GUIDELINE</b>	
<b>Flexible Work Arrangements</b>	
<b>Scope (Staff):</b>	All permanent and fixed term employees
<b>Scope (Area):</b>	Child and Adolescent Health Service
<b>Child Safe Organisation Statement of Commitment</b>	
CAHS commits to being a child safe organisation by applying the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. This is a commitment to a strong culture supported by robust policies and procedures to reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people.	

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## Aim

This guideline is a practical reference tool for employees and managers to use in considering and implementing flexible work arrangements.

The guideline is designed to;

- improve the awareness and understanding of the different types of flexible work arrangements available within the Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS);
- provide employees with the tools which will encourage them to discuss their specific needs and individual requirements with their line manager; and

- provide managers with the tools to adequately and fairly assess flexible work applications and successfully implement flexible work arrangements.

### Background

CAHS supports and encourages a work-life balance for its employees. Work-life balance is having the ability to manage work commitments with personal interests and goals as well as family, community and cultural responsibilities. Flexible work arrangements can enable employees to achieve a work-life balance, thereby optimising their contribution to the health service.

The information within this guideline is intended as a general information resource for CAHS employees and should be read in conjunction with the [CAHS Flexible Work Policy](#).

### Definitions

**Flexible work:** includes any alternative and/or flexible arrangements to work, within the context of the relevant industrial instrument, that support the employee whilst ensuring that service needs continue to be met.

**Job share:** an arrangement which is voluntary and involves sharing or dividing the duties and responsibilities of a full time position among two or more employees on an agreed basis.

**Phased retirement:** an arrangement which includes one or more flexible work arrangements to assist mature age employees who are nearing retirement.

**Mature age employees:** employed people aged 45-64 years<sup>1</sup>.

**Working from home:** an arrangement in which an employee undertakes their normal occupation from their home address or another agreed location in agreement with their employer.

### Key Points

- Flexible work arrangements are to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and approved in accordance with the [CAHS Authorisation Schedule](#).
- Access to flexible work arrangements varies for different positions and categories of employees and needs to be considered within the context of the relevant industrial instrument.
- Employees returning to work from parental leave may return on a part time or job share basis or on another modified basis in accordance with the relevant [industrial instrument](#).
- When a flexible work arrangement has been put in place any remaining full time equivalent (FTE) must be filled in accordance with the requirements of the WA Health Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy.

### Benefits

- Benefits of flexible working arrangements to **employees** may include:

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics – Mature Age Workers  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/D4CD96E96875500DCA256F7200833041>

- better work-life balance and therefore increased satisfaction at work and outside of work;
  - greater ability to meet family, community or cultural commitments;
  - improved social support and connectedness;
  - maintenance of skills;
  - employment for those whom full time work would be difficult;
  - the social and financial benefits of ongoing employment; and
  - Improved employee satisfaction and reduced stress.
- Benefits to the **health service** may include:
    - improved patient outcomes;
    - improved continuity of care;
    - improved attraction and retention of skilled and valued employees;
    - increased morale and employee engagement;
    - reduced absenteeism;
    - improved productivity;
    - improved employee satisfaction and reduced stress; and
    - enhanced protection against unlawful discrimination.

### **Barriers**

- There are a number of barriers to implementing flexible work arrangements for both employees and managers to be aware of including:
  - lack of awareness of the flexible work arrangements available;
  - lack of support and inability to access flexible work arrangements;
  - potential cost implications;
  - impact on operational requirements;
  - stigma attached to those accessing flexible working arrangements; and
  - lack of understanding of the benefits of flexible work arrangements to employees and the wider organisation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Common Flexible Work Arrangement options**

- CAHS has a number of flexible work arrangements available to employees, subject to service needs, operational obligations and the requirements of the individual, manager and the broader team.
- The following section outlines the three main arrangements in more detail including tools and resources for implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wgea.gov.au/lead/strategic-approach-flexibility>

- In addition, the table in [Appendix 1](#) provides a detailed overview of options available.
  - Refer to the relevant [industrial instrument](#) for additional information on these options as well as other leave entitlements.

### **Job share**

- Job share arrangements can encompass a number of possibilities but usually involve:
  - a) a full time position divided between employees but each is responsible for **separate** duties of the position;
  - b) a full time position divided between employees with **shared** responsibility for **all** the duties of the position; or
  - c) a combination of the above.

### **Management of job sharing**

- Each job share arrangement is different, necessitating its own design.
- Where possible, job sharers should be consulted regarding the job design. Factors to consider include:
  - the workload being commensurate with the number of hours worked;
  - the work performed being commensurate with the classification level of the job; and
  - the job offers varied tasks to ensure skill maintenance and development.
- Job sharers and managers should develop adequate communication and coordination processes so the outcomes of the role can be achieved.
- An agreement should include a plan of action for when either of the job sharers takes leave, leaves the position or health service, or wishes to revert to full time.
- An example of a *Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement* is available on [HealthPoint](#). This can be adapted for a job share arrangement.
- The job share arrangement must be implemented and managed in accordance with establishment requirements.

### **Phased retirement**

- Phased retirement is a strategy that may deliver a number of benefits to CAHS and its' mature age employees including:
  - assisting mature age employees in making the transition from employment to retirement while also assisting the organisation to better manage knowledge and skill transfer;
  - contributing to improved retention of mature aged employees with skills and knowledge over a longer term; and
  - facilitating succession planning by moving to another suitable position or undertaking the mentorship of a more junior employee.

- A mature age employee may request a phased retirement arrangement for a number of reasons including:
  - combining work with family and caring responsibilities;
  - reducing the mental or physical demands of working full time;
  - delaying retirement and remaining in meaningful work for longer; and
  - achieving a desired work life balance leading up to retirement.

### ***Working from home***

- Forms and resources specific to working from home arrangements are available on [HealthPoint](#).
- A working from home arrangement may be instigated by the:
  - **Employer** in situations where access to the workplace or alternative working arrangements need to be considered to meet a short term business need (for example in exceptional circumstances or as part of a return to work program); or
  - **Employee** to support flexible working arrangements and a work-life balance.
- Working from arrangements may be ad hoc or occasional, short term (up to 6 months) or longer term (over 6 months) arrangements.
  - Ad hoc or occasional working from home arrangements do not require a formal arrangement, however employees are still required to complete an [OSH Self-Assessment](#).
- The following criteria apply when considering working from home arrangements:
  1. The duties and responsibilities of the role can be partially or fully undertaken at home with minimal supervision or impact on operational requirements/service delivery.
  2. There is sufficient IT access to meet the job requirements such as appropriate access to required software and official documents/records.
  3. The employee has a device and any other hardware requirements to be enable working from home.
  4. The [OSH Self-Assessment](#) has been completed by the employee and reviewed by the line manager and CAHS Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).
- Working from home does not provide for the employee's primary place of work to be the employee's home or other nominated location.
- The employee is responsible for any costs associated with establishing an appropriate working from home environment. This includes establishment costs, or OSH recommended equipment to support the employee's safety.
- The working from home agreement must consider;
  - the proposed work location;

- the time period the arrangement will apply including proposed work schedule;
- availability, communication and response expectations and requirements;
- an outline of the performance requirements, deliverables and expectations;
- issues that may impact duties, with a risk mitigation approach applied;
- a review period (or trial) no longer than twelve (12) months, or earlier if the circumstances change for the employee or employer.
  - It is recommended that another OSH Self-Assessment be completed at the same time if the arrangement continues.
- a process to ensure the employee can return to the workplace as required or considered appropriate (for example where the arrangement has not worked, or business requirements change).

### ICT options for working remotely

- There are different options for working remotely. WA Health has responsibility for managing the demand and allocating remote user access based on capacity of the IT system across all health service providers.
- For more information visit the HSS ICT Services page on [HealthPoint](#) or contact HSS on 13 44 77.

### Applying, assessing and approving a request

- Flexible work arrangements are available subject to a mutual agreement between an employee and their manager.
- Employees are encouraged to discuss with their manager prior to submitting their request.
- Before assessing and responding to a flexible work application, managers should be informed about the options for flexible work within the relevant industrial instruments.
  - Refer to **Appendix 3** for more detail on the recommended steps involved in a general flexible work arrangement.
  - Refer to **Appendix 4** for detail on the process for working from home arrangements.


### Denying a flexible work arrangement request

- If a formal request for flexible work is refused or modified, the manager is required to provide justification for the decision in the form of a written response.
- Requests may be reasonably refused on the grounds of operational requirements such as;
  - requirement and availability of suitable leave cover;
  - cost implications;
  - impact on service requirements;
  - impact on the work of other employees; or

- the employee's existing and/or excess leave liability.
- Managers may complete a *Manager Response Form – FWA Denied* in providing their written response to the employee. This is available under 'Resources' on [HealthPoint](#).

<b>Related internal policies, procedures and guidelines</b>
<a href="#">Flexible Work</a>
<a href="#">Leave Without Pay</a>
<a href="#">Employee Breastfeeding</a>
<a href="#">Corporate Records Management</a>
<b>References</b>
<a href="#">Australian Bureau of Statistics – Mature Age Workers</a>
<a href="#">Workplace Gender Equality Agency</a>
<b>Useful resources (including related forms)</b>
<a href="#">CAHS Authorisation Schedule</a>
<a href="#">Agreements Library</a>
<a href="#">Sample Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement</a>
<a href="#">Working from Home Agreement</a>
<a href="#">OSH Self Assessment – Working from Home</a>
<a href="#">Manager Response Form – Flexible Work Arrangement Denied</a>
<a href="#">M6 Contract Variation Form</a>
<a href="#">Purchased leave application form</a>
<a href="#">Deferred salary scheme application form</a>

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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## Healthy kids, healthy communities

Compassion

Excellence

Collaboration

Accountability

Equity

Respect

Neonatology | Community Health | Mental Health | Perth Children's Hospital



## Appendix 1: Summary of flexible work options

Flexible Work Arrangement	Additional Information
Part time	Available on a temporary or permanent basis. Completion of a <a href="#">M6 Contract Variation Form</a> is required for changes to employment status (ie. FT to PT) and/or changes in contracted hours.
Compressed hours	Includes 9 day fortnight or 19 day month for full time employees. Refer to the relevant <a href="#">industrial instrument</a> .
Flexible start and finish times	Including flexi time, ADO's and TOIL. Refer to the relevant <a href="#">industrial instrument</a> .
Purchased leave	In addition to annual leave, an agreement whereby the employee can take a reduced salary spread over the 52 weeks of the year and receive purchased leave. Completion of a HSS <a href="#">Purchased Leave Application</a> is required.
Deferred salary scheme	An employee is paid 80% of their base salary over a four year period with the unpaid component accrued over the four years and paid out in equal instalments during the fifth year. Completion of a HSS <a href="#">Deferred Salary Scheme Application</a> is required.
Study leave	An employee may be granted time off with pay for study purposes. Refer to the relevant <a href="#">industrial instrument</a> .
Annual leave/Long service leave entitlements	Leave entitlements can be used as part of a phased retirement arrangement or for cultural/ceremonial reasons. Refer to the relevant <a href="#">industrial instrument</a> .
Leave Without Pay (LWOP)	LWOP may be granted to employees for a variety of reasons provided all other paid leave entitlements have been exhausted. Refer to the relevant <a href="#">industrial instrument</a> and the CAHS Leave Without Pay Guideline.
Breastfeeding arrangements	The CAHS Employee Breastfeeding Policy provides for paid breaks negotiated between the employer and employee for the sole purpose of enabling an employee to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant or young child offsite or at the workplace.

## Appendix 2: Case Studies

### **Job share**

*Job sharing occurs within Department X with mutual agreement between the two employees filling the position, establishing work hours that suit both employees and the employer. There is a strong emphasis on communication between the employees and arranging mutual times where employees can meet if necessary. Employees reported enjoying the benefits of working closely with another individual within the same role and being exposed to different viewpoints and ways of working. The organisation reported the benefits from having two skill sets working within the role.*

### **Phased retirement**

*Employee A is of retirement age and approached her manager about reducing her work days and changing from full time to part time. As part of the arrangement, Employee A works with a junior colleague as a mentor, helping to train and upskill them to take on the other aspects of his role. Employee A has used her additional days off during the week to undertake work in the community and volunteer in not-for-profit organisations. The arrangement has benefitted the employee, her team and the organisation.*

### **Working from home**

*Employee B has recently moved to a new house on a property further away from his workplace. He is now commuting an additional hour and a half every day. Employee B recently had a conversation with his manager regarding the extra travelling and the negative impact this is having on his work/life balance. His manager suggested that he trial working from home two days a week. Both the employee and his manager have now reported an increase in productivity and motivation.*

### Appendix 3: Process for requesting, assessing and approving a Flexible Work Arrangement (other than Working from Home)

	Step	Action	Who
<b>Request</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	Identify your personal and work needs, goals and commitments.	Employee
	<b>Step 2</b>	Familiarise yourself with the CAHS Flexible Work Policy and the options within the relevant industrial instrument.	
	<b>Step 3</b>	Consider what type of arrangement you wish to negotiate with your manager.	
	<b>Step 4</b>	Seek independent financial advice if required.	
	<b>Step 5</b>	Prepare to discuss your proposal with your manager including putting your proposal in writing or by using one of the sample templates or application forms provided in the appendix of this document.	
<b>Assess</b>	<b>Step 6</b>	Understand the nature and reasons for the flexible work request including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the employee's personal circumstances;</li> <li>whether the request is for a short term (under 6 months) or long term (over 6 months) arrangement; and</li> <li>whether there are direct cost implications or identifiable risks.</li> </ul>	Manager
	<b>Step 7</b>	Assess the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position and what options exist for the work unit to accommodate the request with minimal impact on the team or service delivery. Consider workload management in the context of current and projected workforce needs.	
	<b>Step 8</b>	Consider how the request can be practically implemented and discuss this with the employee.	
	<b>Step 9</b>	Make a transparent and fair decision that is capable of review ensuring justification for the decision is provided. Ensure the appropriate approvals are given in line with the CAHS Authorisations Schedule.	
<b>Implement</b>	<b>Step 10</b>	Complete and/or approve the appropriate documentation. This may include the Flexible Work Arrangement, Working From Home Agreement, or a relevant HSS Form.	
	<b>Step 11</b>	Store all documents that are NOT transactional (HSS) in the official CAHS record management system.	

## Appendix 4: Process for implementing a Working from Home Arrangement

The following process outlines the steps and linked resources to assist managers and employees where working from home is considered the most appropriate strategy. All working from home agreements will be based on a negotiation between the manager and employee.

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Complete the ‘Working from Home Agreement’</b>
	<p>Before completing the agreement employees should discuss with their manager whether their request meets the criteria for approval.</p> <p>If the criteria are met, the employee should complete the appropriate <a href="#">OSH Self-Assessment</a> form and part A of the <a href="#">Working from Home Agreement</a>. These documents should be completed in full and submitted to the line manager.</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Approving working from home arrangements</b>
	<p>The Working from Home Agreement provides guidance on general workforce expectations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Tools, resources and ICT access</li> <li>• Information management access and storage</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Once the employee and manager have negotiated the agreement is to be signed by the employee, manager, and authorised officer (See <a href="#">Authorisation Schedule</a>).</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Setting up working remotely</b>
	<p>All employees are set up to use Windows Virtual Desktop, however required <a href="#">Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) via HSS forms</a>.</p> <p>Please refer to the <a href="#">Working from home</a> HealthPoint page for more information and advice.</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Review the working from home arrangements periodically</b>
	<p>It is important to review working from home arrangements periodically. This may vary depending on the situation and the proportion of time worked at home but should be done every 12 months at a minimum.</p>