

STAFF INFOSHEET

Novel Coronavirus

Working remotely: a guideline for employees

For the foreseeable future, the way in which the state service operates has fundamentally changed; working remotely is the new reality for many of us. Working from home arrangements are not new although for some it may be our first time experiencing it and certainly on such a wide scale.

This guide has been developed to support employees as they transition to working from home arrangements; it should be read in conjunction with other relevant whole of government guidelines and agency specific information.

Setting up a dedicated space

All employees are responsible for ensuring they maintain a safe work environment when working from home. Try to carve out a dedicated work area that's free from distractions and offers a semblance of privacy from your domestic life. Ensure you have discussed your working from home environment with your manager and completed the relevant application, workplace health and safety or ergonomic assessment requirements of your agency.

Work to outputs

Establish with your manager what a reasonable output might look like on a weekly basis and establish regular check-ins to see how pieces of work are progressing. Speak openly with your manager about any barriers or challenges you may be facing and work to address these with them in the first instance.

Staying focused

Be disciplined and turn off all the things that might distract you or draw you in such as social media and television. Create a to-do list or schedule out your day to keep yourself accountable and to give you a sense of accomplishment. And take breaks! Get up, move, walk around and stretch; taking breaks regularly is important for your productivity, motivation and health, even more so when working from home in the current environment.

Mentally prepare yourself

Develop rituals and have a disciplined way of managing the day to establish a rhythm. Try and build as much of your regular routine into your new working arrangements. If you're used to moving physically, make sure you build that into your day or if you're an extrovert and accustomed to a lot of contact and collaboration with others, make sure that still happens.

Embrace flexibility

Flexibility is one of the greatest benefits of remote work and at a time where many of us are balancing multiple demands it will likely be the key to your success. 'Nine to five' may not be the best way for you to work in the current environment and you may move to chunking work and your day to accommodate other responsibilities. Communicate openly and regularly with your manager and accept that standard ways of working won't necessarily apply; in conjunction with your manager, find flexibility to support working in ways that accommodate your needs as well as that of the agency.

Communication

Communicate regularly and openly with your team and key stakeholders. Do not be afraid to ask questions and seek support. Raise what is working well and what isn't directly with your manager or talk to colleagues about how they might be overcoming challenges. Make sure you have clarity on what is expected of you and keep your manager updated on progress and relevant deadlines. At the end of the day, if you don't know or are unsure, ask!

Please also see separate guideline on staying connected.

Expect unpredictability

A sudden change in the way we work can be hard and in the current environment of rapid change and uncertainty it can feel overwhelming. Feeling unsure and overwhelmed in this changing environment is understandable. Do things that make you feel physically and emotionally safe, and be kind and compassionate to yourself.

Please also see separate guideline on health and wellbeing.

Legislation and standards

Whilst working from home you are still governed by the existing industrial framework and relevant legislation which includes the *State Service Act 2000*; *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*; and the *Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1998*.

It is important to remember that the *State Service Act 2000* Code of Conduct and Principles still apply as do Employment and Ministerial Directions. Familiarise yourself with your responsibilities through reviewing the relevant information which can be found on the [SSMO legislation section of www.dpac.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au)

Stay informed

Stay up to date through trusted and credible sources of information. There are a range of resources available to you including your colleagues, manager and agency intranet. For whole of government information you can access www.dpac.tas.gov.au and to get the latest advice on Coronavirus (COVID-19) please visit www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au.

Support

Your Agency's Employee Assistance Program is available to provide confidential counselling and support to employees and managers.