

Flexible Work Procedure

1. Purpose

Inala Community House recognises the importance of having flexibility in the workplace for staff. This flexibility allows staff to accommodate personal circumstances.

This procedure operates subject to the Flexible Work Policy. It outlines the process for the right of certain staff to request flexible work arrangements in specific circumstances under Section 65 of the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

This procedure does not address ICH flexible work hours which are offered by ICH to all staff dependent upon Service needs and requirements. For additional advice on ICH flexible work hours, staff should consult the Chief Operating Officer who will provide advice in consultation with the relevant senior manager.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Inala Community House staff.

3. Procedure

3.1 Eligibility

Staff who have been employed at ICH for at least 12 months can request flexible working arrangements such as changes to hours, patterns or locations of work. Casual employees can also make a request if they have been employed with ICH regularly and systematically for at least 12 months and there is a reasonable expectation of continuing work on a regular and systematic basis.

Staff can request flexible work arrangements if they:

- Are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is school aged or younger
- Are a carer (under the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*)
- Have a disability
- Are 55 or older
- Are experiencing family or domestic violence, or
- Provide care or support to a member of their household or immediate family who requires care and support because of family or domestic violence.

A staff member can make an application for flexible work arrangements based on the criteria above and if the changes relate to those circumstances.

Staff should not assume that eligibility will guarantee approval. Applications will be considered against operational needs of the position held by staff and are not automatically granted. Staff should therefore not make arrangements until applications are approved.

3.2 Application

To make a flexible work arrangement request, staff must make their application in writing, explaining the changes being requested and the reasons for the change. A template application letter will be available on the ICH Staff Portal (this is not required to be used, but it may assist staff making an application).

Applications should be addressed to:

Institutional Support	Chief Operating Officer
Community Engagement	Manager (Community Engagement)
Family Day Care	Nominated Supervisor or Senior Coordinator
Family Services	Operations Advisor or Manager (Family Services)

For flexible work arrangements expected to last two weeks or less the relevant management member (listed above) is responsible for determining the outcome of an application. For any application made in excess of two weeks, the relevant leadership team member (as listed in the table above) will make a recommendation to the Managing Director, who will then be responsible for determining the outcome of the application.

Staff should not make arrangements based on the request until the application is approved and they are advised of the outcome in writing.

3.3 Determination

The relevant leadership team member who receives a request shall consult with the employee to genuinely try and reach an agreement regarding changes to the work arrangements. This shall take into consideration:

- The needs of the employee
- Consequences for the employee if changes in working arrangements aren't made
- Any reasonable business grounds for refusing the employee's request

The relevant leadership team member must provide a written response within 21 days which outlines whether the request has been approved or refused. ICH can only refuse on reasonable business grounds and this shall be detailed in writing when refusing the request. Reasonable business grounds may include (but are not limited to):

- The requested arrangements are too costly
- Other employees' working arrangements can't be changed to accommodate the request
- It is impractical to change other employees' working arrangements or hire new employees to accommodate the request
- The request would result in a significant loss in productivity or have a significant negative impact on customer service
- The proposed arrangements are not consistent with the staff member's role or position (i.e. a request to work from home or work outside of hours required by the position may be incompatible with a staff member working on Reception or at a specific neighbourhood centre where services must be provided under contract)

- The lack of suitable and work-safe alternate premises, including proposed areas for working from home

If an application is refused, the relevant leadership team member will consider feasible alternative work arrangements which may assist the employee. ICH will outline in the refusal, whether any alternative work arrangements are available and outline any proposed changes.

If after consultation with the employee, a different working arrangement is agreed, ICH will provide to the employee in writing any agreed changes to work arrangements.

When considering any flexible work requests, the relevant leadership team member, in consultation with ICH's HR/WHS Officer, must consider any workplace health and safety concerns and ensure any appropriate risk management strategies are in place. Any strategies should be discussed with the employee before a decision on the application is finalised and must be documented with copies being provided to the HR/WHS Officer, the leadership team member and the staff member.

3.4 Documentation

A copy of the request, records of consultation (e.g. email), any other documents supplied, and the response should be forwarded to HR for filing.

4. Related Documents

Policies

ICH Flexible Work Policy

ICH Work from Home Policy

Forms

Flexible Work Request Letter (Template)

Work from Home/Other Location Checklist

References

Fair Work Act 2009

Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010