

**BUSINESS BOTSWANA**

**WORKING FROM HOME POLICY**

JUNE 2020

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A working from home (WFH) policy is a key element for an effective contingency plan to ensure business continuity, productivity, and job preservation. It is drafted based on applicable national laws and regulations, collective agreement and company's policy or terms and conditions of employment, and subject to change in response to the changing directive and needs of the company.

**(a) Purpose**

This WFH policy is in effect due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Government's directive recommending work from home when feasible. This policy may be reviewed when the directive or business needs change.

**(b) Definition**

In short, WFH is a working arrangement that workers working from their home, using ICT and still fulfil the essential responsibilities.

**(c) Scope and application**

- ▶ WFH does not change or replace the terms and conditions of your employment or the required compliance with the existing company policies, rules, and practices.
- ▶ This policy applies to all workers undertaking remote work from home. All workers should be familiar with the contents of this policy.
- ▶ The implementation of the WFH arrangement is at the sole discretion of the company.
- ▶ The company reserves the right to change, modify, or discontinue the arrangement for any worker at any time as it deems fit, upon which the worker shall resume the normal working arrangement.

**(d) Eligibility**

- ▶ WFH is implemented in response to COVID-19 as a preventive measure to contain the spread of the virus and to ensure the continuity of business and productivity of our workforce.
- ▶ While efforts are being made to accommodate all workers into WFH, there will be some workers who may not be eligible for WFH due to the specific roles or the job function or situation surrounding the home environment that made it not practicable to perform work from home. The departmental head will be in direct contact with the workers regarding eligibility for WFH.

## (e) **Main elements for consideration**

### **1. Compliance to company policies**

All workers on WFH must abide by existing company policies, which include:

- ▶ Occupational safety and health
- ▶ The use of ICT, data protection and confidentiality
- ▶ Intellectual property
- ▶ Use of company's tools and equipment, such as laptop, software, and so on
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Anti-discrimination/ anti-harassment/ equal opportunity

### **2. Compensation and work hours**

- ▶ The working hours, compensation, benefits, and work status and responsibilities of workers shall remain unchanged.
- ▶ Due to the current situation, some flexibility in working hours may be permitted with the approval of the immediate supervisor.
- ▶ Upon application by workers and if feasible, the supervisor may agree on specific work hours, provided the total weekly work hours remain unchanged, and in compliance with the company's existing policies.
- ▶ Any changes to the total weekly work hours shall be approved by the Chief Executive officer.

### **3. Safety and health**

- ▶ All workers must abide by the company's safety and health policy as contained in Business Botswana conditions of service.
- ▶ All workers have the responsibility to take care of their own physical and mental well-being during WFH and ensure they are physically active, eat and sleep well, and exercise regularly.
- ▶ It is important for all workers to maintain work-life balance, stick to the agreed work schedule, and take a necessary break and rest to stay active and healthy.

### **4. Equipment, tools and supplies**

- ▶ The organisation will provide the required tools and equipment for the workers to carry out the job function from home. This includes computer hardware, software, access to the Internet, access to host application, and so on.
- ▶ The use of equipment, software, data supplies, hardware etc, where provided by the organisation are for use by the authorized persons and for purposes relating to organisation business only.
- ▶ Workers have the duty to take good care of such tools and equipment and shall contact the organisation (IT officer) if there is any issue with regards to the equipment, software, or connectivity.

## **5. Technology, data protection and security**

- ▶ It is important that all workers on WFH read, understand, and abide by the organisation policy on, confidentiality.
- ▶ All workers on WFH must take up the ICT online training, which is accessible for all workers.
- ▶ All managers and workers on WFH must do no harm when using work-related communication, including those enabled by ICT.

## **7. Communication**

- ▶ Workers on WFH must be available and accessible to their supervisors and co-workers during the agreed work hours.
- ▶ The Director/Head of department and the worker shall agree on the communication channel and how they would keep in touch with each other, utilising the ICT available.
- ▶ The workers remain obligated to comply with all company rules, practices and instructions.

## **8. Performance standards**

- ▶ Workers must maintain the same level of productivity and work quality during WFH.
- ▶ Professionalism, in terms of job responsibilities, work output, and customer service, should continue to meet the company's high standards.
- ▶ Business Botswana recognise there could be obstacles at workers' homes that might impact the work performance; workers who experience difficulties should contact their supervisors to assess the feasibility of WFH and flexibility required.
- ▶ Any adjustment to outputs and performance is at the sole discretion of the director/HOD, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of the workers and the job requirements.

## **9. Dependent care and other family responsibilities**

- ▶ Workers with dependent care and other family responsibilities at home must address the situation with the respective managers and agree on a more flexible homeworking arrangement, such as different work hours, reduced workday or work hours with reduced work targets or flexible deadlines where possible.
- ▶ While the organisation may permit a certain degree of flexibility, WFH may be incompatible with dependent care and family responsibilities. The worker must make arrangements for family care and ensure the essential duties of the job function are fulfilled.

## **10. Worker's compensation and liability**

- ▶ If the worker is injured while performing work duties during the agreed work hours at the designated work area, the worker is covered under the Worker's Compensation Act. The worker must notify the supervisor immediately and complete the required form.
- ▶ The company assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the worker's home workspace outside of work hours, or for any non-work-related injury that might occur in the home, even if it occurs during the worker's agreed work hours.

## **11. Emergency and illness**

- ▶ The worker on WFH must notify his or her immediate supervisor in the event of any emergency, including illness, injury, power failure, or loss of Internet connectivity.
- ▶ If an office closure or emergency prevents workers from commuting to the office or working in the office, upon consultation with their respective manager or supervisor, workers should commence work remotely from home or at any other suitable location, as approved by the organisation.

## **12. Expenses**

- ▶ Any extra expenses foreseen due to WFH must be first discussed with employer for approval.