



THE PROMISE FOUNDATION

For mental health, education and potential realisation

POLICY FOR WORKING FROM A REMOTE LOCATION

1. What working from a remote location means

A remote location means a place that is not located within the physical spaces of the Foundation's main office in Sompura Gate. There are three reasons for working in a remote location. These are:

- A. The nature of a given task is such that you are in the field, away from your office. You may for example working in a school, village, community, settlement, or training center for long periods of time.
- B. The project may be such that field offices are set up away from the Foundation's main office. You may for example work from a temporary field office in another district or State for the duration of an extension project.
- C. The nature of work today is such that it is also possible to work regularly away from the Foundation's main office. An example is the "work from home" format.

These are examples of discharging the duties of your job role away from your office. In all these cases, a clear and definite protocol must be followed to ensure that work tasks are accomplished at the expected level of quality, in a client and beneficiary-centered manner. This policy is designed to ensure that flexibility in work locations is beneficial to the employee without compromising the Foundation's charitable objectives.

For ease of reading, "work from home or a remote location" is referred in this document as "work from home".

2. Scope

All employees of the Foundation, who have received written pre-approval to work from home or a remote location fall under the purview of this policy. Employees can work from home only if your job duties are such that the work from home format is viable and you have prior approval from your project manager to work from home.

3. Conditions defining work from home or remote location

As defined above, employees work from home when they complete their work duties at a place located outside of the Foundation's premises in Sompura Gate. This may occur for various reasons or combinations of reasons. Work from home arrangements temporary and can be:

- once only, or multiple times at short or widely spaced intervals.
- on pre-arranged days (e.g., 2 days a week, 15 days at home and 15 days at office).

Reasons for working from home or a remote location include but are not limited to:

- Work related reasons like conferences, meetings and consultations.
- Work at the client/beneficiary/project site or field work.
- Lockdown or similar restrictions imposed by the Government.
- Bad weather conditions, political unrest, other safety concerns.



- Personal emergencies.
- Parenting or family-care responsibilities.
- Medical or health reasons.
- Long commute times.

3. How to determine whether an employee can work from home

The following points are to be kept in mind by both employees and project managers before asking for / approving the provision to work from home:

- Is the employee's job such that work from home is a viable option?
- Have cyber security and data privacy concerns been addressed?
- Will day-to-day interactions with colleagues and collaborators become difficult?
- Does the employee have the necessary hardware, software, internet access and telephone access installed at home?
- Are the conditions of employees' home or substitute work place work-friendly (e.g., noise, space, privacy, distractions)?

4. Procedure for requesting work from home

When employees plan to work from home, the following procedure must be followed:

A. Pre-arrangements:

- Keeping the above guidelines in mind, the project manager and employee are (a) to discuss the work from home requirements and (b) agree to the fixed period for which the work from home arrangement will be in place.
- The manager can use his/her discretion to extend, shorten or withdraw the pre-agreed work from home arrangements based on changes in work requirements. For example, if the job requirements change, or if the employee is delegated to new project activities or home conditions change, or the employee is not able to perform his/her duties under the arrangement.
- Pre-agreed work from home arrangements does not preclude the possibility that the manager may require the employee to attend to work in the office location, every day, for a period. For example, if the employee is presently working from home 2 days a week, and there is an unexpected project/client/beneficiary requirement for the employee to be present in the office every day of the week for a period of time then the project/client/beneficiary need overrides the pre-agreed arrangements.
- The pre-arrangement will include agreeing start and finish time as well as midday breaks. The below is a guideline for managers to use in these discussions:
 - Time of starting work.
 - Mid-morning break of 15 to 30 minutes.
 - Lunch break of 30 - 60 minutes.
 - After-noon break of 15 to 30 minutes.
 - Time of closing the work day.

All efforts will be made by the Manager to ensure that all staff who are on the work from home format, will follow the agreed upon timings, so as to ensure compatibility across the different work from home locations.

B. Unplanned requests:

If an employee needs permission to work from home as a result of unforeseen reasons or unplanned events or situations, the employee should email a request to work from home to his/her manager at least two working days in advance giving reasons for the request to work from home. Managers are to consider the application keeping in mind the guidelines listed above. In case the manager is of the opinion that the employee will not be able to discharge work duties as per the employee's application



or the request is not justified, and the employee still needs to be away from office, the application will be shifted to being considered as leave, rather than permission to work from home. In this case the Foundation's Leave Policy will be applied.

5. What is expected of you if you are working from home?

A. Your availability must not be affected

This means:

- Logging in to your IT system promptly by 9:00 am.
- Being available on email and or phone continuously during the agreed upon work periods, which means being logged into your means being logged into your emails, checking for emails and acting on them promptly and appropriately. The only exception to this expectation is if you are in meetings or in a task that requires no interruption (e.g. a training/teaching/counselling session). In this situation you will check your email and phone during natural breaks in the task.
- Not being engaged in non-work-related responsibilities during working hours (except in emergencies). In such a situation you will inform your manager immediately.
- Managing your calendar efficiently and being on time for all meetings.

B. You must be contactable

You must ensure that you are:

Available on email to respond promptly when they arrive in your inbox. This means you are checking your emails at reasonable intervals and have set up a system for notification of incoming emails.

- You are available to answer ad-hoc questions from your project manager or project colleagues. This means you are close to or at your computer or mobile device and can respond to requests in real time.
- You are available on the phone to answer project-related calls. This means:
 - ensuring that your phone is always with you.
 - that your phone is not on silent.
 - that if you are not able to take the call because you are in a meeting, you will message the caller to let them know you are in a meeting and will call back.

The only exception to this expectation is if you are in meetings or in a task that requires no interruption (e.g. a training/teaching/counselling session). In this situation you will check your email and phone during natural breaks in the task.

C. You need to ensure you are not disturbed during working hours

- During working hours, you are expected to be "on duty". This means that you need to ensure domestic chores and childcare responsibilities are being taken care of responsibly by someone else and not you. It is understandable that domestic chores can be a matter to be concerned about and hence it is your responsibility to make sure you have a domestic arrangement that allows you to concentrate on your work roles while working at home. Examples of activities not permitted during working hours are:
 - Cooking / preparing food.
 - Supervising house staff.
 - Entertaining guests.
 - Shopping.
 - Being the primary childcare giver.



- Washing clothes, ironing, putting the clothes out to dry.
- Nursing mothers who are working from home may take time out of their workday to nurse their children as often as required.

D. You must put in place regular check-in mechanisms with your team members and your project manager.

- Check in with your team members and project manager daily.
- Ensure you attend virtual meetings as per pre-arranged schedules to provide regular verbal updates.
- Provide regular written updates on your work progress to your line manager by email, as per pre-arranged schedules.

If you are a project manager:

- Use the agreed upon media channel (e.g., WhatsApp groups) to keep the team connected and encourage ongoing informal communication as it would be in the regular workplace.
- Communicate frequently as you do not have the opportunity for the informal communication and information sharing that you have when you are working together in the office.

E. You need to ensure that your workspace is uncluttered and that you comply with the Foundation's dress code

- Treat your workspace at home as you treat your workspace in the office. This means:
 - keeping your desk uncluttered.
 - ensuring that your work equipment is safe.
 - maintaining security protocols over your passwords.
 - keeping your computer screen locked when you are away from your desk.
- Ensure members of your family are aware that you are at work and not to be disturbed.
- When using video conferencing services such as Google Meet, Zoom, Skype, be aware of clutter behind you, or things in your room that you would not want your colleagues to see. Check what is in your background before logging into a video call. Dress code for working from home is the same as the dress code when you are in the office. This is important in order to ensure that you present a professional image when on video calls and also that family members can see that you are in work mode.

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