

14 October 2021

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 9 October to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *A copy of your flexible working policy.*
2. *A copy of any policy/processes specifically regarding applications for remote working.*
3. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 received by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*
4. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*
5. *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021;*
6. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., the recorded reason for the refusal, and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*

7. *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021;*
8. *The number of people working in your agency as at 8 October 2021, and a breakdown of your employees by gender.*

Please see our response to your request below. I will respond to each question in turn.

1. *A copy of your flexible working policy.*

In Appendix One of this letter, you can view Oranga Tamriki Flexible Working Policy.

2. *A copy of any policy/processes specifically regarding applications for remote working*

In Appendix Two, Three and Four of this letter, you can view Flexible Work Arrangements and Definitions, Flexible Work Employee Guide and Managers' Guide to Flexible Working.

3. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 received by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications e.g. compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*
4. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*
5. *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 approved by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021;*
6. *The number of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021, the type of flexibility sought in these applications eg compressed hours, remote working, reduced hours etc., the recorded reason for the refusal, and whether each applicant was a manager or a non-manager;*
7. *The percentage of applications for flexible working arrangements under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 refused by this agency between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2021;*

The details of *applications* for flexible working arrangements in the Human Resources Information System are not centrally recorded. As such, we are refusing these aspects of your request under section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be provided without substantial collation and research.

8. *The number of people working in your agency as at 8 October 2021, and a breakdown of your employees by gender.*

Please find a table below outlining the number of Permanent, Fixed Term and Permanent Variable Hire employee types. This excludes Casual and Contractor employee type along with employees taking Leave Without Pay (this covers Parental Leave).

Gender	Total Employees
Diverse	S
Female	3739
Male	1292
Other	7
Undeclared	S
Grand Total	5046

Where the number of employees is low or can be calculated, demographic information provided may result in identification. This data has been withheld – represented in the table with an ‘S’ – in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the Act, in order to protect the privacy of the individual.

Oranga Tamariki intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. We will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and we will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@ot.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

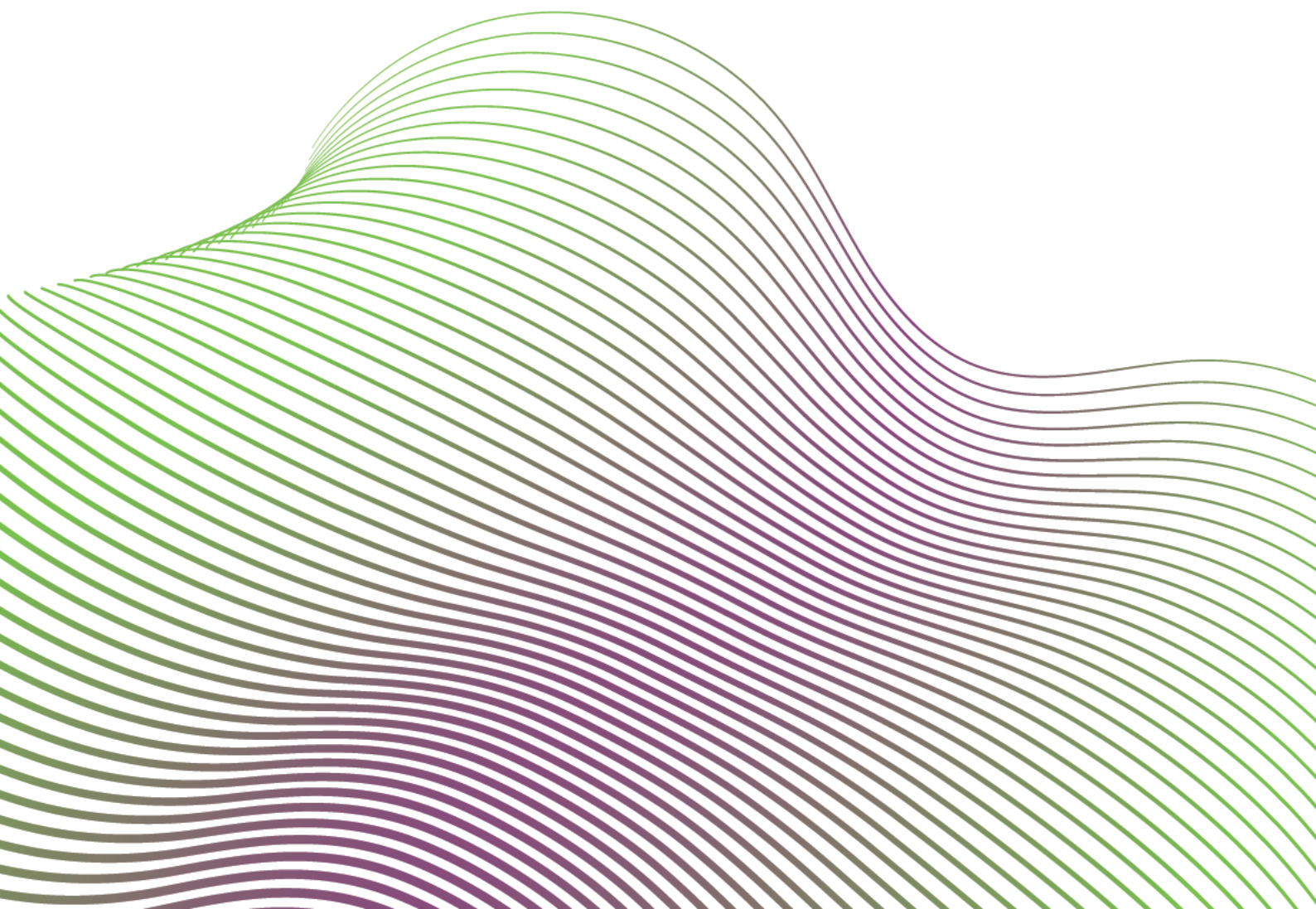


Steve Groom

General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services

Flexible working

Policy



Flexible working policy

At Oranga Tamariki we're committed to recognising, and where we can, adapting to the different circumstances of our people; flexible working is one way we do this.

Key Definitions

Formal requests

This policy covers formal requests for flexible working arrangements, as such Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000 applied to such requests. These requests may include changes to hours of work, days of work or places of work.

Informal requests

Informal, ad hoc requests for short term flexibility (e.g. needing to leave early to attend a family commitment with the intent of making up the time over the course of the working week) are best discussed and agreed as a team, between staff and their reporting manager.

Reasonable accommodation

Oranga Tamariki is required to make reasonable accommodations to the work environment to meet the needs of employees, often those with disabilities, religious or ethical beliefs, and/or family commitments.

These changes should be made to ensure a person can do their work effectively and can include changes to the job practice, work environment, facilities, or equipment. We are not required to make accommodations that are 'unreasonable'. Unreasonable accommodations would impose a "disproportionate or undue burden" on the organisation. Contact myHR for advice and more information.

Policy Statements

This policy must be read in conjunction with the provisions of your employment agreement.

The policy statements or must do requirements related to formal flexible working at Oranga Tamariki are:

- All requests for flexible working arrangements need to be made in writing to your manager. Requests need to include:
 - The date on which the request is made,
 - That the request is being made under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations Act 2000,
 - The variation of the working arrangements requested and whether the variation is permanent or for a period of time,
 - The date that the variation is proposed to take effect and, if the variation is for a period of time, the date on which the variation is proposed to end, and
- An explanation from your perspective of what changes, if any, Oranga Tamariki may need to make to organisational arrangements if the request is approved.
- On receipt, flexible working requests will be acknowledged in writing. Managers will formally respond in writing as soon as possible, but not later than one month after receiving the request.
- When deciding whether to approve a request for flexible working arrangements, a manager will take the following factors into consideration:
 - the ability to reorganise work among existing staff
 - the ability to recruit additional staff
 - the risk of any detrimental impact on quality
 - the risk of any detrimental impact on performance
 - the sufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
 - any planned structural changes
 - any burden of additional costs
 - any risk of detrimental effect on ability to meet the expectations of role or service



- Requests for flexible working arrangements that conflict or are inconsistent with the provisions of an employee's collective employment agreement must be refused under the Employment Relations Act, unless a suitable compromise is able to be found.
- All paperwork associated with a request and response to flexible working arrangements will be uploaded into the online HR system (myHR).
- When a request is approved, your manager needs to contact HR Help who will generate an employment agreement variation letter. This then needs to be offered, accepted and filed in the online HR system.
- When a request is declined your manager will write to you and tell them the ground the request is refused under the Employment Relations Act and the reasons why the request has been refused under that ground, and file this in the HR system.
- In the event that you are unhappy with the outcome of the flexible work request, and this is unable to be resolved through discussions with your manager, a formal external complaint process may be available depending on the nature of the complaint. More information is available on the Employment NZ website.

Guidance and Templates

- Refer to Flexible Working approach and guides
- Formal flexible working request -employee letter template
- Formal flexible Working request -managers acknowledgement letter template
- Formal flexible Working request -managers approval letter template
- Formal flexible Working request -managers decline letter template



Flexible working arrangements and definitions

Flexible working includes a broad range of arrangements and can include: flexibility of role, place, work schedule and flexibility of leave.

Flexibility of role

Part-time/reduced hours:

Employees work less than full-time levels; the job is often redesigned and responsibilities are split between employees.

Reduced hours - return:

Hours of work are progressively increased until a full complement of full-or part-time hours is reached at a specified date (often used when returning from parental leave).

Reduced hours - retirement:

Hours of work are progressively reduced until full retirement is reached at a specified date.

Job/role rotation:

Employees move between two or more jobs so they can cross-train and develop a wider variety of skill.

Work transition:

Provides opportunities for employees to make changes in their work hours, location, or job responsibilities. For example, moving to a less demanding job when approaching retirement.

Job sharing:

Two people work part-time schedules to complete the work normally fulfilled by one person working full-time.

Flexibility of place

Activity-based work:

Employees choose to work in an alternate workspace that best suits the task at hand; this may include several workspaces throughout the day including breakout rooms, kitchen area and hot desking.

Hot desking:

Employees have unassigned desks and are able to choose their workstation or may choose to use several workstations throughout the day.

Working from alternate location:

Employees work from alternative office locations or other agreed destinations (i.e. Alternative site locations, partner organisations or other community organisations).

Home/remote working:

These options involve working from home or another chosen location outside of the primary workplace on a full, part-time or casual basis.



Flexibility of leave

Leave without pay:

When an employer allows an employee time off work when they would otherwise be working but doesn't pay them for this time. If the lwoop period is greater than 1 month but less than 3 months, it will be regarded as discretionary leave – this means the position will be held open and service will be interrupted but not broke. [\(Please see Oranga Tamariki 'Leave policy' for more information\).](#)

Term-time working (school holiday leave):

Working during the school terms and taking paid or unpaid time off during school holidays.

Other types of leave:

This includes parental leave, dependent leave, special leave, bereavement leave etc. [\(Please refer to the Oranga Tamariki leave policy and/or your collective agreement for more information\)](#)

Flexibility of schedule

Flexible start and finish times:

Employees work for an agreed total number of 'core hours' and choose when their working day begins and ends.

Adjust work hours:

Employees may choose when their working day begins and ends in combination with the number of hours worked each day/week. Employees should still work their required total hours over the pay period.

Time off in lieu:

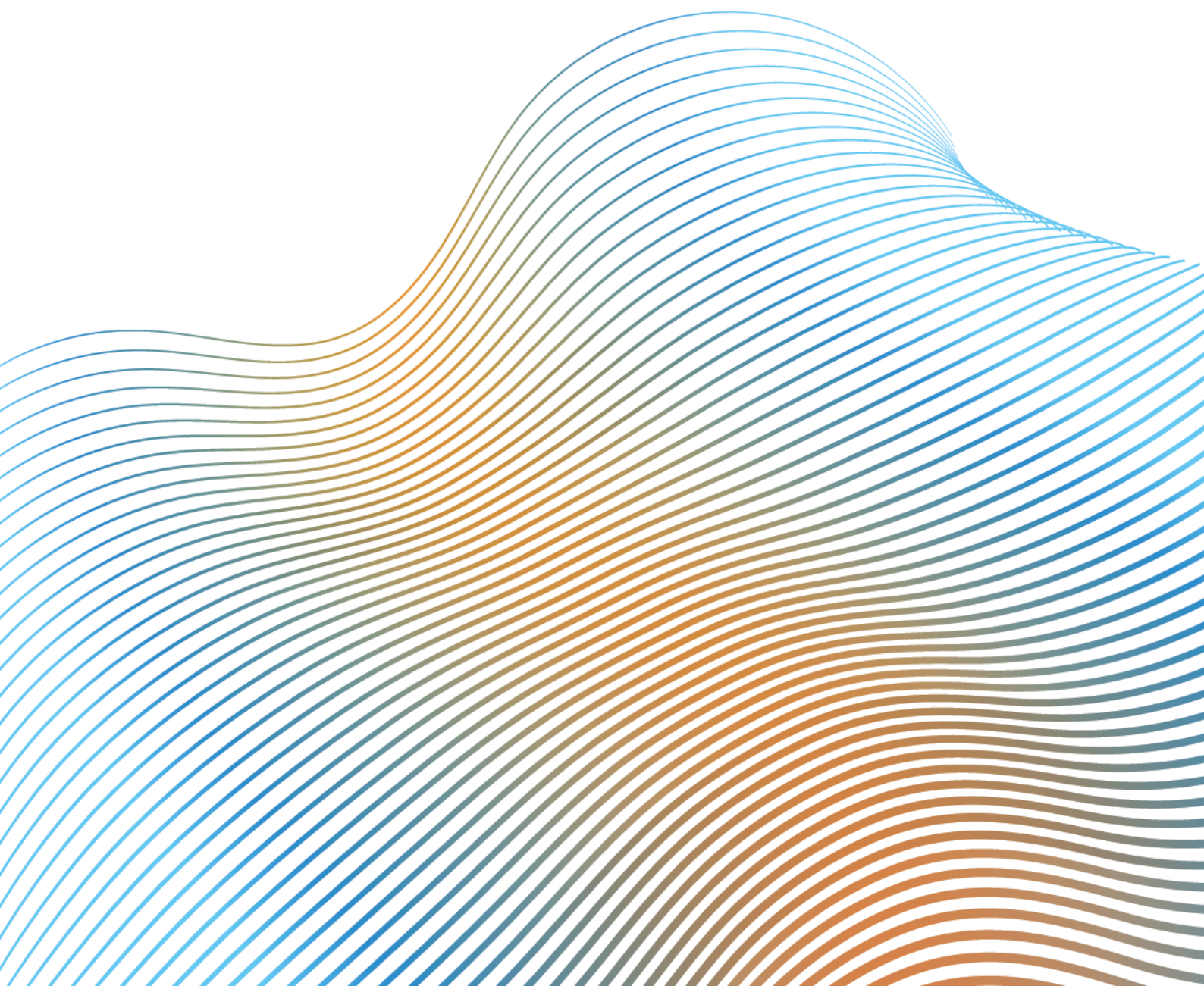
Any extra hours worked are compensated for by paid time off on other days.

Compressed week:

Weekly full-time hours are worked over a shorter time period (i.e. 80 Hours in 9 days). If a compressed week requires a regular arrangement, change of days or reduced hours (i.e. 72 Hours in 9 days) it will require a formal arrangement and change to employee contract. Kaimahi ora is a priority and our work is complex. It is generally not suited to trying to squeeze a full working week into less than 5 days.

Flexible working

Employee guide



What does flexible working mean at Oranga Tamariki?

Flexible working empowers our people to be their best at both work and home, and ultimately better meet the needs of our tamariki and rangatahi.



Flexible working is about more than working from home.

It's about being able to tailor when and how we work to meet the needs of tamariki, whānau and caregivers, our organisation, and our team alongside personal responsibilities and interests.

Flexibility is about finding a balance that can work for all.

Flexible working will look different for each team; there is no "one-size fits all".



Principles of flexible working

These principles underline our approach to flexible working and should be used to support conversations when establishing flexible working as a team.

We are flexible by default:

We will be solutions focused and treat all roles as flexible unless there is a good business reason for a role not to be. Flexibility is equally available to women, men and gender diverse employees, irrespective of the reason for wanting it. Working flexibly does not undermine career progression or pay.

Tamariki centred:

When considering flexible working arrangements, we will ask ourselves 'is this the right thing to do for tamariki in our care?' Flexible working arrangements enable continued support of tamariki and whānau and their wellbeing.

Works for the role:

Every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility but not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons may mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles, but we will be solutions focused and see what types of

Works for teams:

Flexible working needs to work for the team and should not be viewed as something which is just agreed between an employee and manager. This means that the impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams, and Oranga Tamariki as a whole.

Requires give and take:

Flexibility requires give and take between the employee, manager and team. It also places collective obligations on employees, managers and teams to be open and adaptable so that it works for everyone.

Mutually beneficial:

Flexible working needs to benefit employees, teams and agencies. Key consideration should be given to how flexible work arrangements can maintain or enhance the performance and delivery of these different groups. It should not result in increased workloads for employees working flexibly, or for other team members who are not.

Actively championed by leaders:

Leaders support, champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves.



What does flexible working mean for you and your team?

When considering flexible working arrangements, teams need to work together to understand the many needs they are balancing and agree ways of working as a team to achieve this balance.

Flexible Working arrangements should effectively meet the needs of:

Our tamariki, whānau and caregivers
Our community and partners
Our organisation and team
Our people

Flexible working options

When considering the arrangements below, consider your role and your team. How will it impact your colleagues? What parts of the role might be suited to flexibility?
Remember, not every type of flexibility will work for every role.

Note: These are some examples of flexible work arrangements at Oranga Tamariki. This is not an exhaustive list and flexible work arrangements are not limited to these options. All requests will be considered, and decisions will be based on business needs.

<p>Informal arrangements don't involve any changes to pay or employee agreements. These involve a conversation with your manager and team and any agreements should be captured in a Team Charter.</p> <p>Discuss with your manager and team about what options work best. These arrangements should be reviewed every 3 - 6 months.</p>	Informal arrangements						
	Flexi-time	Flexible start and finish times	Compressed week (ad-hoc arrangement e.g. 9 day/ fortnight for a one-off event)	Time off in lieu (TOIL)			
	Flexi-time	Leave without pay (LWOP for less than 1 month)	Swapping rostered - days off				
	Flexi-location	Home/remote working - casual/ part-time	Activity-based working – casual/ part-time				
<p>Formal arrangements require a regular change of hours/location or change your employee contract. These may have pay, holidays act, tax and/or business implications.</p> <p>These arrangements are outside of the established informal team arrangements and are recorded using the formal templates.</p> <p>Discuss with your manager, what options work best for you and your team. These options may require further discussion and HR support.</p>	Formal arrangements						
	Flexi-time	Compressed week (regular arrangement; e.g. 9 day fortnight)	Reduced hours				
	Flexi-time	Term time working (school holiday leave)	Leave without pay (for more than 1 month)	Other types of leave			
	Flexi-location	Home/remote working - full time	Activity-based working – full time (e.g. working home another site full time)				
	Flexi-role/ career	Reduced hours - return (e.g. parental leave)	Reduced hours - retirement	Job/ role rotation	Work transition	Part time work	Job sharing



When making a flexible working request

What flexible working arrangement you would ideally like?

- Is it a formal or informal arrangement?
- How you will make this work with your team?
- How will it impact the business and outcomes for tamariki?
- If you are reliant on the arrangement (i.e. arrangement cannot flex easily as team and organisation needs change) a formal request should be requested.
- Refer to the principles of flexible working for further information

Consider your role and what parts of the role might be suited to flexibility (i.e. when do you need to engage face-to-face and when do you require quiet focused time). Remember, not all types of flexibility will work for your role.

How it will impact your team (availability for team meetings, other team members' flexible working arrangements etc)? What alternatives could also work?

How it will impact on your work/workload and what you can do to help manage this?

If you wish to work remotely, consider how you will continue to work safely and protect the privacy and security of information you're trusted with. Refer to the [Working from home](#) guide.

Keep in mind it takes about two weeks to formally change your work schedule with payroll and HR systems. Please consider what your options are in the meantime.

If there are possible tax and Holidays Act implications associated with working different/non-standard hours, it is your responsibility to understand these implications – check the Inland Revenue website to see if you will have a new tax code and ask HR Help about the Holidays Act implications.

Scenario:

You have a dentist appointment at 2pm on Thursday. This will require you to leave work early.

You would like to use flexible start and finish times to make this work.

Consider an **informal arrangement**. Discuss this with your manager and team and refer to the team charter.

Your team charter should include how your team will manage all ad-hoc arrangements and informal team flexible working arrangements.

Communicate your availability to your team and any others who might need to get in touch.

Scenario:

You volunteer at the local community centre and you have been asked to teach a weekly cooking class to young rangatahi after school. This will require you to leave work every Thursday at 2pm.

To make this work, you would like to **reduce your hours** to 36 hours per week.

Once you've done your research - you should talk to your manager and team to explore options. Then you need to submit a **formal request** (template)

You should consider all implications including possible pay, tax and business/team impact before talking to your manager.

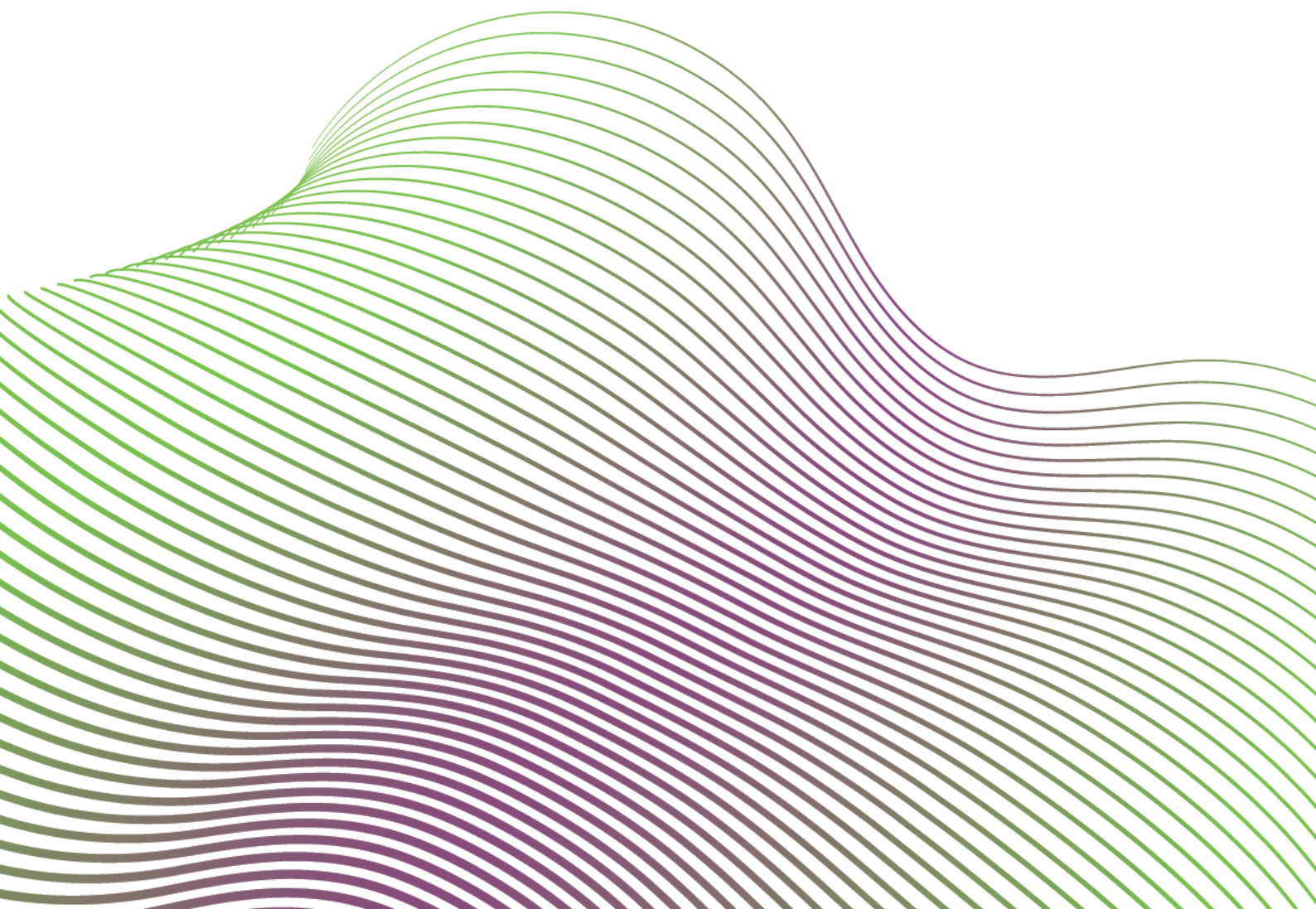
Once your manager receives & discusses the request including all **implications**, they should respond formally in writing. Your manager should try to respond as soon as possible, but you can expect a written response within 30 days. If your request is declined, you can expect a written response.

If approved - review the arrangement (3 months post agreement and every 12 months thereafter) with your manager and team to ensure the arrangement continues to work for everyone.



Flexible working

Manager's how – to guide



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What is flexible working?

Flexible working empowers our people to be their best at both work and home, and ultimately better meet the needs of our tamariki.

Flexible working is about more than working from home. It's about trusting our staff to tailor their hours, location or breaks to suit business needs, alongside their personal responsibilities and interests.

There is no "one-size fits all" - flexible working will look different for each role and team

It's about finding balance

For true flexibility to occur, teams and functions need to work together to understand the many needs they are balancing and agree ways of working as a team to achieve these.

We trust our leaders and staff to discuss and set parameters, as a team, to safeguard these needs and work within them.

Flexible working arrangements should effectively meet the needs of:

- Our tamariki, whānau and caregivers
- Our community and partners
- Our organisation and team
- Our people

Principles of flexible working

These principles underline our approach to flexible working and should be used to support conversations when establishing flexible working as a team.

We are flexible by default:

We will be solutions focused and treat all roles as flexible unless there is a good business reason for a role not to be. Flexibility is equally available to women, men and gender diverse employees, irrespective of the reason for wanting it. Working flexibly does not undermine career progression or pay.

Tamariki centred:

When considering flexible working arrangements, we will ask ourselves 'is this the right thing to do for tamariki in our care?' Flexible working arrangements enable continued support of tamariki and whānau and their wellbeing.

Works for the role:

Every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility but not every type of flexibility will work for every role. Genuine business reasons may mean that some types of flexibility cannot be implemented for some roles, but we will be solutions focused and see what types of flexibility might be possible.

Works for teams:

Flexible working needs to work for the team and should not be viewed as something which is just agreed between an employee and manager. This means that the impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams, and Oranga Tamariki as a whole.

Requires give and take:

Flexibility requires give and take between the employee, manager and team. It also places collective obligations on employees, managers and teams to be open and adaptable so that it works for everyone.

Mutually beneficial:

Flexible working needs to benefit employees, teams and agencies. Key consideration should be given to how flexible work arrangements can maintain or enhance the performance and delivery of these different groups. It should not result in increased workloads for employees working flexibly, or for other team members who are not.

Actively championed by leaders:

Leaders support, champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves.



Flexible working at Oranga Tamariki

Oranga Tamariki is committed to supporting flexible working to support our staff to deliver on their work goals, while supporting kaimahi ora and embracing an environment that empowers our teams to achieve work-life balance.



...for where we work

- We will always provide an equipped workplace for everyone when required.
- Where people complete work from outside of the workplace, they must check to ensure appropriate privacy and information security can be maintained.
- Where people choose to complete some of their work from home, they must first take time to ensure their home environment is appropriately setup to meet health and safety, privacy and information security needs. Please see the Working from home guide and assessment for more information.

...for when we work

- For 24/7 environments, and "on call" coverage, rostering or work-windows will be required.
- For other environments, different days and times can be agreed where community, organisation and team needs are able to be met or enhanced.
- Kaimahi ora is a priority and our work is complex. Please keep this in mind when considering certain types of flexible working arrangements.

...additional practice considerations

- Flexible ways of working in practice roles must enable quality practice in line with professional obligations and standards. Consider how the ways of working:
 - Promote responsive, timely and safe engagement with tamariki, whānau and caregivers;
 - Enable greater protection of the privacy and sensitivity of tamariki, whānau and caregiver information;
 - Promote consultative practice and prevents decisions being made in isolation;
 - Enable effective supervision arrangements and professionally accountable practice.
 - Foster kaimahi ora and practitioner safety.



Types of flexible working arrangements

Informal arrangements:

These arrangements do not affect employee pay, number of hours worked or the employee contract.

These types of arrangements should be discussed and agreed as a team. You should record any regular arrangements and expectations in the team charter and keep it on file. It's important to set regular times to review (3-6 months) how the arrangements are working and if any changes need to be made.

Note: These are the most common types of informal work arrangements at Oranga Tamariki. This is not an exhaustive list and flexible work arrangements are not limited to these options

Flexi-time	Flexible start and finish times	Compressed week (ad-hoc arrangement e.g. 9 day/fortnight for a one-off event)	Time off in lieu (TOIL)
Flexi-time	Leave without pay (LWOP for less than 1 month)	Swapping rostered days off	
Flexi-location	Home/remote working - casual/part-time	Activity-based working - casual/part-time	

How to respond to an informal flexible working request

Your staff member volunteers at the local community centre and has been asked to teach a weekly cooking class to young rangatahi after school. This will require them to leave work every Thursday at 2pm.

They would like to use a combination of arrangements both, flexible start and finish times and a compressed week to make this work (e.g. 7am - 3:30pm Monday - Wednesday, 6:30am - 2pm Thursday and 7am - 4:30pm Friday)

Consider an informal arrangement and discuss the request as a team.

Discuss what informal flexible working looks like as a team. Consider the approach "If not, why not" when thinking about any implications. Are there other employee flexible working requests to consider?

Discuss any expectations regarding contactability, resourcing constraints, alternative options etc

You and your team agree on what flexible working looks like for your team, including any individual arrangements.

If any arrangement includes working from home, please refer to the working from home guide and risk assessment.

As a team, make a plan to make this work. Discuss how your team will connect and collaborate with these new arrangements.

Record this in the team charter template and keep it on file.

Schedule a regular period to review the charter (3-6 months) and check-in regularly as a team, to ensure the arrangement continues to work for everyone.



Types of flexible working arrangements

Formal arrangements: These arrangements require a change of hours/location or a change to the employee's contract and can have pay, holidays act, tax and/or business implications.

These arrangements are outside of the established informal team arrangements and should be recorded using the formal templates. These require HR involvement so they can update their HR records, employee's contract and adjust any payroll/leave implications. Don't forget to discuss as a team to understand any implications, resource constraints and to update your team charter.

Note: These are examples of types of formal work arrangements at Oranga Tamariki. This is not an exhaustive list and flexible work arrangements are not limited to these options

Flexi-time	Compressed week (regular arrangement; e.g. 9 day fortnight)	Reduced hours				
Flexi-time	Term time working (school holiday leave)	Leave without pay (for more than 1 month)	Other types of leave			
Flexi-location	Home/Remote working - full time	Activity-based working – full time (e.g working home another site full time)				
Flexi-role/career	Reduced hours - return (e.g. parental leave)	Reduced hours - retirement	Job/role rotation	Work transition	Part time work	Job sharing

How to respond to a formal flexible working request

Your staff member volunteers at the local community centre and has been asked to teach a weekly cooking class to young rangatahi after school. This will require them to leave work every Thursday at 2pm. They would like to **reduce their hours** to 36 hours per week.

Consider a formal arrangement - employee submits **formal request** (link to template)

You should have an open and honest conversation with your staff member about their request and explore all options. If the arrangement includes working from home, please refer to the WFH guide and risk assessment.

You should review the request with advice from your HR advisor, make a plan to reorganise the role responsibilities. Consider the approach "If not, why not" when considering any implications.

You and the employee agree on a formal arrangement.

You should respond to the request (in writing) as soon as possible but are obligated to respond within 30 days.

As a team, make a plan to make this work. Discuss how your team will connect and collaborate with these new arrangements. Consider creating or updating your team charter.

Inform HR Help to generate an employment agreement variation letter.

The new variation letter is offered, accepted and filed in the online HR system.

Review (3 months post agreement and every 12 months thereafter) with the employee and check-in regularly as a team, to ensure the arrangement continues to work for everyone.



What to do when flexible working doesn't work

Flexible working is a different way of working and it takes time to shift our mindset. When implementing flexible working as a team, it's important we remain focused on creating solutions. Success and productivity can be measured based on collective outputs and overall outcomes rather than presenteeism (i.e. hours in the office).

If you have concerns about the increase of flexible working and the impact on quality and performance there are tools and resources available, such as performance and development conversations, to understand employee productivity and outcomes.

If there are underlying performance issues, you should deal with these the same way you would with any employee, regardless of their working arrangement.

Despite your best efforts, there may be instances when a flexible work arrangement might not work for the business or team. These arrangements can be declined but only for reasons under the Employee Relations Act s69AAF.

A request may be declined under the **Employee Relations Act s69AAF** as follows:

- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes
- Burden of additional costs
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand

How to decline a formal flexible working request

You are encouraged to explore all options that may work for you, your employee, team and Oranga Tamariki before declining a request. Consider the Flexible Working principles when making your decision.

If you and the employee fail to come to an agreement.

Consult your manager and/or HR advisor to consider any options or solutions that may not be obvious.

If you still don't think it will be possible to approve the request, you should receive approval from your manager to decline the request.

Provide a written response (e-mail) explaining why the request has been declined (in reference to the Employment Relations Act 2000, section 69AAF). This should be signed off by HR and your manager.

It is beneficial to sit down and discuss your decision with the employee.

Revisit the request in a few months to explore any new changes or options

Establishing flexibility as a team: Team charter

Leaders are encouraged to start the conversation as a team to understand what flexible working looks like in your team. Discuss and agree your own operating approach or 'ways of working' for when and where work is completed and capture it in a team charter.

We encourage teams to co-create their charter – the charter should be signed off at the Senior Manager level (e.g. Site Manager, Residence Manager, Caregiver manager).

The following diagram outlines the conversation leaders and teams should talk through when implementing flexible working aligned with the principles.

These conversations should be continuous every 3 – 6 months and can be an informal part of your team meetings.

Step 1. Thinking and engagement

Where are we now and where do we want to be?

- Proactively start the conversation regarding flexible working within your team
- Understand current views, experiences or concerns with your team.
- Identify employees needs and business service demands? When are those we work with available and where are they located?
- Challenge your own views and biases around flexible working

Consider the principles:

- **We are flexible by default:** We will be solutions focused and treat all roles as flexible unless there is a good business reason for a role not to be
- **Works for the role:** Every role should be suitable for some form of flexibility but not every type of flexibility will work for every role.

Step 2. Building culture and capability

How do we get there?

- Develop a vision and plan
- How will working flexibly impact your team? Focus on solutions
- What type of physical presence is needed in the office, community or on site?
- Do you have a team culture that supports being able to respond to service demands when required? Do you share responsibilities and work as a team?
- Be open to the ideas of others. Employees will know their own needs better than you, so give them permission to lead the conversation

Consider the principles

- **Tamariki centred:** When considering flexible working arrangements, we will ask ourselves 'Is this the right thing to do for tamariki in our care?'
- **Works for teams:** The impact of flexible arrangements should be considered on teams, and Oranga Tamariki as a whole.
- **Requires give and take:** Flexibility requires give and take between the employee, manager and team.

Step 3. Engaging culture and reviewing progress

How do we start? How do we keep moving?

- Set expectations as a team and create a team charter.
- Consider how will the team meet and collaborate.
- Be committed to making it happen – instead of thinking "this can't work" try asking "how can we make this work?"
- Monitor progress overtime.

Consider the principles:

- **Mutually beneficial:** Flexible working needs to benefit employees, teams and agencies.
- **Actively championed by leaders:** Leaders support, champion and role model flexible working for their teams and themselves.

