



## Cayman Islands Government PERSONNEL CIRCULAR 15 OF 2020

---

### **Subject: Remote Working as Part of Flexible Working Arrangements (Non-Emergency Conditions)**

---

#### **1. Introduction**

To ensure business continuity at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Civil Service adopted Personnel Circular 5 of 2020 "COVID-19 Flexible Working Arrangement Policy". Those flexible working provisions were introduced within the context of strict shelter-in-place and social distancing requirements, and were underpinned by the assumption that wherever possible, work would be conducted remotely to address health and safety concerns.

Given recent successes in containing the transmission of COVID-19, the Government has moved to COVID Suppression Level 2 - Phase 3, which further eliminates requirements for social distancing and the wearing of masks, and expands public gatherings to a maximum of 250 persons. The fact that children have returned to the classroom this academic year is a further indication of the return to normality.

After six long months, the Civil Service is once again able to cater to normal volumes of customers who wish to undertake business face-to-face, and to accommodate our full staff complement whenever they return to the workplace. We are able to operate more comfortably in the workplace without the requirements of wearing masks and physically distancing. All employees will also enjoy the ability to be able to once again collaborate in real time in the same space.

Consequently:

- Under the current, non-emergency conditions the default position is that Civil Servants will deliver services working from their assigned workplace.
- However, Remote Working is retained as one of the ways civil servants may work, provided they satisfy the necessary criteria.
- The use of remote working must be assessed against how well it optimizes customer outcomes.
- In applying for and approving remote working in the future, it will be important to strike a balance between the need for face-to-face collaboration for effective teamwork and delivery of customer services, with the productivity gains and social benefits (e.g. reduced traffic) achieved by allowing employees to work remotely.
- Remote working is not expected to be the exclusive way our teams work; rather, a healthy mix should exist for work produced within the office and from outside the office.

#### **2. Implementation and Eligibility**

This policy is applicable to all Civil Servants with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and will remain in effect until further notice. It replaces Personnel Circular 5 of 2020 "COVID-19 Flexible Working Arrangement Policy".

This policy may also be specifically adopted or adapted as necessary by the Statutory Authorities and Government Owned Companies.

#### **3. Definition of Remote Working**

Remote working is where an employee carries out their duties from home or other agreed location rather than the employee's primary work location. Remote working is a variation of location, not a variation of working hours and it does not change the expectation of availability or responsiveness of staff during regular working hours.



## Cayman Islands Government PERSONNEL CIRCULAR 15 OF 2020

Both remote working and flexible working hours form part of the Government's Flexible Working Arrangements. The provisions for flexible working hours are outlined in Personnel Circular 16 of 2020 "Flexible Working Hours as Part of Flexible Working Arrangements" and may be considered in conjunction with this policy.

#### **4. Authorisation for Remote Working**

A Civil Servant wishing to apply for or to retain the remote working arrangement introduced as a result of COVID-19 should make their request in writing to their manager. The Flexible Working Application Form (including remote working and flexible working hours) is included in Appendix A of this circular. Appointing Officers should make decisions in relation to remote working in line with the considerations outlined in Section 5 below.

#### **5. Determining if it is Appropriate for a Civil Servant to Work Remotely**

Working remotely will not be appropriate for all roles or situations, and any decision on remote working arrangements must first and foremost recognise the priority to efficiently and effectively deliver Government services.

Except in exceptional circumstances, remote working is not appropriate for uniform shift workers, including officers from the RCIPS, Fire, Prison, CBC, Coast Guard, CI Regiment, the Cadet Corps, individuals on Teacher's Terms and Conditions, persons who deliver face-to-face services (such as receptionists, counter staff and tellers) and those individuals whose roles are tied to a physical location (such as landfill workers, PWD trades persons or waste collectors).

Except in exceptional circumstances, remote working arrangements will not involve 100% remote working, but rather a hybrid arrangement that enables the benefits of face-to-face team interactions and service delivery.

In making a determination as to whether an employee can work from home or an alternate location the manager should consider:

- The preferences of clients/customers (i.e. is face-to-face service preferred over e-service);
- Where the individual is a supervisor, the needs of the individual's direct reports;
- Whether the duties can be adequately performed at the designated remote location, or whether appropriate modifications to the process or procedure can be made to allow services to be delivered remotely;
- Whether the additional resources necessary to facilitate remote working (Citrix, laptops, mobile phones) represent an appropriate use of government resources;
- Whether the employee has the sufficient experience and skill level to take control of when and how he/she gets the work/job done without the need of a manager providing in-person direction, support and monitoring activities;
- Whether there are any health and safety issues that would prohibit the employee working remotely;
- Whether the proposed remote work location is suitable as a workplace as attested to by the employee;
- Whether there are any issues with the remote working location that would prevent cyber-security and data protection requirements being met to a satisfactory level;
- Whether there are any personal factors at the remote work location that would impact the employees ability to deliver services (e.g. unsupervised children);



## Cayman Islands Government PERSONNEL CIRCULAR 15 OF 2020

- Employee preferences/needs; and
- Whether the employee has demonstrated high performance in working remotely in the past. A trial period may be considered where individuals have not previously undertaken remote working.

Civil Servants who work remotely are expected to fulfill their official responsibilities and to comply with applicable policies, regardless of their location. Employees can work remotely when they:

- Consistently produce the required outputs to the required standard;
- Maintain satisfactory performance levels;
- Hold jobs that are suitable to be performed away from the workplace;
- Consistently satisfy agreed working hours;
- Meet all eligibility requirements; and
- Have the approval of their managers.

Approval for remote working arrangements shall be granted only when the Appointing Officer believes that the change in location will not negatively impact the effective and efficient operation of the entity, and the employee's work performance will not be adversely affected. The decision to approve a request for remote working arrangements is at the sole discretion of the Appointing Officer.

### 6. Procedures for Remote Working

This circular is supported by the following attached protocols:

- Protocols for Remote Working (Appendix B)
- Protocols for Video Conferencing (Appendix C)

### 7. Failure to Comply with Protocols

Employees who fail to comply with the protocols outlined may have their remote working arrangement withdrawn. Breaches may also constitute a disciplinary matter and be considered under the relevant section of the Public Service Management Law and Personnel Regulations.

### 8. Further Advice on this Circular

Questions on this Policy should be directed to your HR Manager or the dedicated mailbox for HR queries on COVID-19 at [CIGHRConnect@gov.ky](mailto:CIGHRConnect@gov.ky)

Issued by:

**Gloria McField-Nixon**  
**Chief Officer**  
**Portfolio of the Civil Service**



**Cayman Islands Government**  
**Appendix A to Personnel Circulars 15 & 16 of 2020**

**Application Form for Remote Working and/or Flexible Working Hours**

Reference is made to Personnel Circular 15 (Remote Working) and 16 (Flexible Work Hours). This form should be used by employees to submit requests for consideration of variations to standard working arrangements. Please complete the application and submit to your line manager or Appointing Officer (as specified within your entity) for consideration.

<b>Section A: Details of Request [To be Completed by Employee]</b>			
<b>Employee Name:</b>		<b>Dept:</b>	
<b>Position Title:</b>		<b>Manager Name:</b>	
<b>Remote Working</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    If yes, requested dates of arrangement: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please specify remote location:		
<b>Flexible Work Hours</b> [Tick all that apply]	<input type="checkbox"/> Staggered Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Split Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Compressed Work Week (limited application) Requested dates of arrangement:		
<b>Describe the flexible working arrangements you are requesting [i.e. the proposed hours, days of the week, work location etc.]</b>			
<b>Reason for Request:</b>			
<b>Employee Signature:</b>		<b>Date Submitted:</b>	

<b>Section B: Decision [To be completed by Manager/Appointing Officer]</b>			
<b>Manager Name:</b>		<b>Manager Position Title:</b>	
<b>Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Modified Arrangement Agreed with Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Request Declined Rationale for Decision:		
<b>Manager Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Appointing Officer Signature<sup>1</sup>:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Dual signatures (line manager and Appointing Officer) are only required where line managers **do not** have delegated HR authority or this is the agreed practice within the entity.



## Cayman Islands Government

### Appendix A to Personnel Circulars 15 & 16 of 2020

Section C: Final Arrangement [To be completed by Employee and Appointing Officer - FOR APPROVED REQUESTS ONLY]			
<b>Type of Flexible Arrangement Approved</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Staggered Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Split Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Compressed Work Week (limited application) <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Working      Agreed Dates of Arrangement:		
<b>Duration of trial period:</b> [if applicable]		<b>Next Review Date:</b> [if applicable]	
<b>Description of flexible working arrangement approved</b>	[Enter details of flexible working arrangement approved if different from Section A]		
<b>Expectations for Employee</b>	[Enter any specific expectations for the employee not outlined in the relevant policies e.g. Core hours that must be worked, required office notifications, timely deliverables as agreed etc.]		
<b>Review/renewal date:</b> [date to review arrangement to determine whether to continue/discontinue]			

<b>Agreement of Manager:</b>			
In making this decision, I have considered and applied the criteria outlined in Personnel Circulars 15 and 16 of 2020. I am approving this arrangement on the condition that it must maintain or enhance the effective and efficient operation of the entity, and the employee's work performance will not be adversely affected. I have discussed the contents of this document with the employee.			
<b>Manager Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Appointing Officer Signature<sup>2</sup>:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

<b>Agreement of Employee:</b>			
I have read, understood and agree to abide by the requirements of Personnel Circulars 15 and 16 of 2020 (as may be revised from time to time), which outline the provisions for flexible working hours and remote working under the Civil Service's discretionary flexible working arrangements. I understand and agree that my approved remote working location does not alter my normal place of work as stipulated in my Employment Agreement. I attest that where remote working has been agreed, the remote location constitutes a suitable workplace. When/if I am authorized to work remotely, I attest that I have read, understood and agree to adhere to Appendices A and B of Personnel Circular 15 of 2020 (i.e. Protocols for Remote Working and Video Conferencing). I acknowledge that I am obligated to abide by the working arrangements that are agreed between me and my manager as outlined above, and as otherwise stipulated in the relevant Personnel Circulars. I understand that flexible working arrangements are not a right and that my manager may require me at any time and for any reason to return to the regular work schedule. I agree to do so immediately upon request.			
<b>Employee Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

<sup>2</sup> Refer to footnote 1 above.



## Cayman Islands Government Appendix B to Personnel Circular 15 of 2020

### Appendix B: Protocols for Remote Working

#### 1. Terms of Remote Work Participation

The following terms govern remote working:

- Remote work will not change your terms and conditions – e.g. compensation, vacation or other benefits.
- Civil Servants working remotely must still account for their hours of work.
- Normal employment policies apply when working remotely (e.g. policy requiring pre-approval for compensatory time and overtime).
- Online remote working must be conducted using government issued computers. By exception, and subject to seeking written approval from your Appointing Officer, Civil Servants may use their own computer equipment, however there will be guidance provided as part of the approval process (said guidance is to be obtained from the office of the Chief Information Security Officer).
- Civil Servants who are usually accessible by phone should continue to be accessible by work phone if working remotely. This may be through government-issued mobiles or the use of soft-phones (as channeled/directed to a government-issued mobile).
- Messages on desk phones should indicate how to contact the employee when working remotely.

#### 2. Availability and Communications Requirements

Civil servants who work remotely must:

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner.
- Provide updates in the format and at the frequency agreed with the manager.
- Be available to customers and co-workers by telephone, email and any other agreed upon communications mode within the hours agreed with their manager.
- Respond to phone, voicemail and text messages within the time window agreed with their manager.
- Attend all scheduled team or customer meetings by phone, video conference or in person, as required.

#### 3. Use of and Responsibility for Remote Work Equipment and Resources

- It is preferred for remote working to be performed using CIG-owned and configured laptops/desktops. By exception, and subject to seeking written approval from your Appointing Officer, Civil Servants may use their own computer equipment, however there will be guidance provided as part of the approval process (said guidance is to be obtained from the office of the Chief Information Security Officer).
- Civil Servants **approved** to use their own computer equipment will need to save all work on the government servers and use Citrix with an RSA token via <https://rs.gov.ky>.
- Existing internet bandwidth at the remote working location must be adequate to accommodate work connections. Citrix/VDI will need approximately 75 kbps and Zoom calls around 200 kbps at a minimum.
- Where persons have questions, they should contact the Computer Services Department via email at [CSHelpdesk@gov.ky](mailto:CSHelpdesk@gov.ky) or via phone at 244-2000.

#### 4. User Responsibility for Remote Work Equipment and Resources

- CIG's equipment and resources may be used only for business and exclusively by Civil Servants who are authorized to access the equipment/resources. It is the Civil Servant's responsibility to ensure that all items are properly used.



## Cayman Islands Government

### Appendix B to Personnel Circular 15 of 2020

- If employee-owned computers, phones and smart devices are approved for use, the Civil Servant who works remotely must follow all CIG policies.

#### 5. Asset Protection

- The Civil Servant who works remotely must take reasonable precautions to protect CIG's information, equipment and resources from loss, theft or damage, applying the same standards of care in the home office or alternative workspace as when regularly working at a Government office. This includes a responsibility to preserve data protection by avoiding leaving equipment that holds sensitive data in unsecure places or leaving computer screens unlocked where others may be able to observe and record the content on the screen.
- Civil Servants who work remotely are responsible for their personally owned equipment used to conduct official business.
- In the event of loss or theft of any equipment and/or information, the Civil Servant who works remotely must report the incident to their line manager as soon as they are aware of the loss, in order to trigger the appropriate security, incident and/or breach response procedures.

#### 6. Establishing and Maintaining a Suitable Workspace

- The Civil Servant who works remotely must provide a suitable work environment that allows them to perform all job requirements.
- The designated work area should provide:
  - Ergonomically sound seating, lighting and writing or typing surfaces.
  - Adequate noise control to ensure clear telephone and video conference calls with colleagues and customers.
  - Adequate privacy provisions to ensure conversations are not audible to other members of the household or visitors to the household.
  - Adequate security provisions to prevent access to confidential CIG information or materials, including, where appropriate, locking doors and windows.
  - Freedom from distractions and interruptions that might affect workplace performance.
- CIG's confidential documents or materials taken from Government offices must be kept in a designated work area and handled with the same level of security as within the CIG office:
  - If documents or materials are required to be in a locked drawer in the CIG office, then the same is required at the Civil Servant's designated remote work area.
  - Documents and /or data which contains personal and sensitive materials, should not be physically taken to remote workplaces. Rather, it is preferred that such data be accessed remotely through secure access to the Government's network.
  - CIG's disposal policies equally apply to the disposal of records handled remotely at a Civil Servant's remote workspace.
- Civil Servants who work remotely must:
  - take precautions to ensure that monitor screens and/or printed materials with sensitive data (such as health records, customer personal information or financial data) are not visible to others;
  - ensure that the physical attributes of their remote office conform to basic safety standards; and
  - maintain compliance with Data Protection requirements and all other relevant laws, policies and processes.



## **Cayman Islands Government**

### **Appendix B to Personnel Circular 15 of 2020**

#### **7. Security and Confidentiality**

- Civil Servants who work remotely must:
  - Preserve a high-level of security when accessing the Government network and physically handling confidential documents.
  - Adhere to CIG's security and remote-access policies, including accessing the CIG network on trusted and secure network connection rather than relying upon a public, non-secure wifi connection.
  - Follow policy regarding the storage location of electronic data.
  - Ensure that remote-access communications and stored data cannot be read by unauthorized parties, including their family members or visitors.
  - Guard against sensitive data being viewed on monitor screens — in the home office or while traveling.





## Cayman Islands Government Appendix C to Personnel Circular 15 of 2020

### Appendix C: Protocols for Video Conferencing

#### 1. Prior to the start of the Video Conferencing

- Ensure that you have a camera, microphone, and headphones or speakers available. Earbuds or headphones are preferable to avoid audio feedback and echo. Go to the video conferencing site to test your audio and video connection. Place speakers away from Microphones.
- When possible, establish online video conferencing connections several minutes before the meeting start time. Sit in line of sight of your camera.
- If connecting from a laptop, plug in the laptop wall power. Battery use can adversely affect video quality.
- Create a backup communication plan in case you have trouble connecting with remote participants. A backup plan can include asking any onsite participants to connect to the meeting through their laptops, using a mobile or speakerphone, telephone, and/or collaborating through a share screen feature (Zoom feature).
- Follow all instructions in the video conferencing invitation and note important supplemental information, such as a backup phone number in case you are disconnected.
- Be aware of your surroundings and how you appear visually:
  - Call from a quiet location with no background noise.
  - Close blinds on windows so that you are easier to see on video.
  - Wear neutral, solid-colored clothing. Avoid black, white, or striped clothing.

#### 2. During Video Conferencing

- Be aware that you are visible during a call. Because you are on a video conference, people can see what you are doing at all times.
- Ensure participants can see and hear all other participants, as appropriate.
- Have participants mute their microphones if their location has excessive background noise or they will not be speaking.
- Have a meeting facilitator — often, but not always, the person who called the meeting. The facilitator is responsible for:
  - providing an agenda to participants — ahead of the meeting is preferred, but minimally at the start of the meeting — that includes an overview of topics to be covered and the planned outcome;
  - establishing the visual or verbal cues, such as raising a hand, to indicate when someone wants to actively contribute verbally to the meeting;
  - engaging participants at all locations to ensure discussion, understanding and alignment;
  - limiting “side conversations” and multitasking or, where that is unavoidable, inform participants of the situation;
- Make sure all participants have equal access to all content within the video conferencing by sharing the screen.
- Avoid tapping fingers, typing, crumpling paper etc.
- Be yourself: Act natural. Look and speak into the camera as you would normally do.

#### 3. Video Conferencing Facilities

Various video conference facilities exist. In order to facilitate corporate business needs, the Computer Services Department has obtained a number of corporate ZOOM video conferencing accounts. For more information, contact the Computer Services Department at [CSHelpdesk@gov.ky](mailto:CSHelpdesk@gov.ky) or 244-2000.