

	<h2>WORKING FROM HOME</h2>	Document No:	WHS-PRO-026
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1. Purpose

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) workers may be given approval to work from home as:

- part of a flexible working arrangement in order to balance family and work obligations
- part of their standard way of working as stated in their Letter of Offer
- a temporary work arrangement

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps to be taken to assess and control the work health and safety risks which may arise from working from home.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all ACBC Agencies.

3. Related Documents

[ACBC Work Health & Safety Policy](#)
[HR-PRO-019: Flexible Work Arrangements](#)

4. Definitions

Supervisor

The Supervisor is a Bishop, an Agency Head, Director, Manager, Coordinator or Team Leader, who is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of workers.

Health and Safety Representative (HSR)

A Health and Safety Representative is a worker who is nominated and elected by employees at a workplace to be their Health and Safety Representative in accordance with the relevant State or Territory legislation.

Worker

A Worker is an employee, independent contractor, clergy, religious or volunteer who is carrying out duties for the ACBC in premises under the control of the ACBC or any of its agencies.

Risk

Risk is the effect of uncertainty on objectives. In the context of workplace health and safety, risk means exposure to the chance of injury or loss.

For example; the possible impact on the well being of workers from failure to provide adequate facilities.

Working from Home

Working from home means working from a nominated residence.

5. Responsibilities

Supervisors

Supervisors must:

- Consult their workers on identification, assessment and control of WHS risks which may arise from working from home.
- Provide workers and HSRs (if they have been elected) with information on WHS issues in a timely manner and in an easy to understand form
- Consult with HSRs and WHS Committee (if they exist).
- Diarise or minute any discussions on WHS issues

Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)

Health and Safety Representatives must:

- Participate in consultation on WHS issues
- Consult on WHS issues with the workers they represent
- Provide feedback to management on WHS issues and processes

Workers

Workers:

- should participate in identification, assessment and control of WHS risks.
- must notify their supervisor if there are any changes to their residence or their place of residence

6. WHS requirements

Compliance with ACBC's WHS policy is required at all times.

The worker must notify their Supervisor of any incident, injury, hazard or near miss which occurs in the course of performing their duties. Incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards must be reported and investigated in accordance with [WHS-PR-018 Reporting and Investigating Incidents and Hazards](#).

7. Working from Home

The ACBC recognises the benefits of flexible work arrangements for workers. Workers benefit from increased flexibility in work schedules which provides greater opportunity to balance work and family life. The ACBC benefits by attracting or retaining skilled workers.

Working from home may also be an option to consider in developing a Return to Work program to assist an injured worker to return to work. For Return to Work arrangements see [WHS-PRO-040: Rehabilitation for Work and Return to Work Program](#).

7.1 Approval for home based work

Subject to approval by their Supervisor, a worker may undertake the duties of his or her position at home provided that the inherent requirements of the position allow the work to be done at home. Such arrangements are to be documented as per standard HR procedures.

Note: Approval to work from home should be sought again if there are changes to the work area or if the worker changes their place of residence.

7.2 Risk assessment and control

Working from home can only commence after the work area to be used at home has been assessed for WHS risks and appropriate controls have been put into place to address the risks identified.

The worker must conduct a risk assessment of the work area using the “Home-Based Work Risk Assessment and Control” form ([WHS017](#)). A HSR or the Office for Employment Relations may be consulted in determining appropriate control measures.

Supervisors must ensure that any control measures required are implemented by the agreed date prior to the commencement of the working from home arrangement.

If a worker is required by an Agency to work from home, then the Agency must provide any equipment that is required for that worker to work safely from home.

If a request to work from home is made by a worker, then it is the worker’s responsibility to ensure that they obtain any equipment required and make any modifications required as stated in their “Home-Based Work Risk Assessment and Control” form, to enable them to work safely from home.

The working from home arrangement is not to commence until the “Working from Home” agreement has been finalised (as per HR procedures).

The form must be signed by the supervisor and the worker, and a copy is to be retained in the worker’s personnel file.

Working from home arrangements are to be offered initially for a trial period of six (6) months. At the end of the trial period they are to be assessed by the Supervisor and the worker for suitability for continuation of the arrangement.

A risk assessment of the work area must be repeated if there is a change to the work area (modifications) or if the employee changes their place of residence.

8. Worker’s Compensation

Workers who work from home with prior approval of their Supervisor, whether this approval is stated in a letter of offer, a flexible work arrangement agreement or a verbal temporary agreement are covered by their Agency’s Worker’s Compensation Insurance.

9. Records

- Home-Based Work Risk Assessment and Control form ([WHS017](#))