## **Guidance Note 1: Supporting Victoria’s recovery** **Default remote working position for office-based employees**

**Version 1.1 - 23 March 2021**

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| **What is a Guidance Note?**  A Guidance Note provides further detail to the Flexible Work Policy and supports consistent implementation across departments and relevant agencies, in alignment with the Flexible Work Policy.  As such, the primary foundation of all Guidance Notes is that information contained is to be read as in addition to compliance with the Flexible Work Policy.  **All guidance notes will be reviewed quarterly.** |

## **Purpose**

This document sets out the whole of Victorian government position on the return from remote working for Victorian Public Service (VPS) office-based employees.

## **Guidance**

The default starting point for application of this policy is three days a week in the office for full-time office-based VPS employees, **subject to relevant Chief Health Officer workplace directions.**

It is then up to employees and managers to discuss and agree to individual working arrangements, based on the principle that we start from a position of flexibility. The following should be considered:

* Employee health and safety, including existing reasonable adjustments
* Public health advice, including any constraints on office capacity due to physical distancing requirements
* Operational requirements for the role
* Working arrangements for the team
* Employee legal rights to request flexible work
* Employee preference.

For some parts of government, staff will be required to be in the office more than three days a week, and flexibility will be possible through other means.

## **Rationale**

The Victorian Public Service is both an employer and a policy delivery arm for the Government. There are nearly 50,000 employees employed by the Victorian Public Service – with approximately 60% employed in the CBD, and the remainder split equally between Metro Melbourne / Suburbs and Regional Victoria.

As a public service, it has a dual role to play in the social and economic recovery of Victoria:

* The design and delivery of policy
* The deployment of its workforce to support that policy impact.

The 3-day default position is intended to improve the VPS contribution to Victoria’s social and economic recovery by:

* setting a default starting point that full-time office workers to return three days per week to their previous work premises across CBD, suburbs and regional Victoria, which are strong contributors to the local community and economy
* respecting the extent to which remote working has supported diversity, inclusion and a more equitable workplace, all of which create both social and economic improvements not only for the VPS but for the state as a whole
* acknowledging the intrinsic value of engaging face to face with teams and colleagues within and across organisations.