

Working from home or telecommuting involves employees working away from the workplace. The main benefit of a home based work arrangement is the flexible working hours that can help employees who have family or other life commitments to better integrate these with their work commitments. Other benefits include savings in travel costs and commuting times.

Home based work may be attractive to older workers who may be experiencing difficulties starting or finishing work at a particular time because of elder care and/or grandchild care commitments combined with excessive travel times to their place of work. A reduced travel requirement may also assist older workers to better manage the physiological impacts of ageing.

Job characteristics that lend themselves to working from home include a high degree of intellectual work rather than manual work, work performed on an individual basis, or with clearly defined areas of individual work, such as project work; research and report writing, policy analysis, case work; work which has clearly defined objectives and is not subject to sudden changes in priorities; work that has performance measurement indicators; and work that does not require frequent input from other staff members or centrally provided facilities.

Jobs that involve continual interaction with the public; a high degree of interaction with other workers or that require the use of specialised facilities or equipment are most likely to be less suitable to working from home arrangements.

*Source: Department of Employment and Industrial Relations 'A Guide for the Queensland Public Service: Managing an Ageing Workforce'*