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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN

DZONGKHAG ADMINISTRATION, PARO



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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

Work-from-Home / Remote Working and Online Service Delivery

(For Eligible Employees to Minimize Fossil Fuel-Based Commuting)

1. Purpose

This SOP establishes procedures and modalities for implementing Work-from-Home (WFH), remote working, and online service delivery arrangements to:

- Reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based transportation;
- Support employee wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable groups; and
- Ensure uninterrupted, efficient, and accountable public service delivery.

2. Scope

This SOP shall apply to civil servants under the Dzongkhag Administration and Gewog Administrations who meet the eligibility criteria specified under Section 3.

3. Eligibility Criteria

The following categories of employees shall be eligible for WFH/remote working arrangements, subject to approval:

3.1 Lactating Mothers

- Female employees with breastfeeding responsibilities (generally up to 12 months post-delivery or as justified).

3.2 Pregnant Employees

- Employees certified by a medical practitioner, particularly those in advanced stages of pregnancy or with health advisories limiting mobility.



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3.3 Employees with Medical Conditions

- Employees diagnosed with medical conditions requiring reduced travel or physical strain, supported by valid medical certification.

3.4 Other Justified Cases (if applicable)

- Any employee recommended by a competent authority based on humanitarian or health grounds.

4. General Principles

- Remote working shall be **privilege-based, not an entitlement**, and subject to operational feasibility.
- Service delivery shall **not be compromised** under any circumstances.
- Digital/virtual platforms shall be the **default mode of communication and service delivery** where feasible.
- Accountability, productivity, and discipline shall be maintained at all times.

5. Modalities of Remote Working

5.1 Work Arrangement Options

Eligible employees may be placed under:

- **Full Work-from-Home:** For critical health or caregiving cases;
- **Partial/Hybrid Work:** Combination of office presence and remote working;
- **Flexible Hours:** Adjusted reporting time with remote output-based work.

5.2 Approval Process

- Employees shall submit a formal request to their **Sector Head** with:
 - Justification;
 - Supporting documents (medical certificate, etc.); and
 - Proposed work plan.
- Sector Heads shall:
 - Assess feasibility;
 - Define clear deliverables; and
 - Forward for approval by the Dzongkhag Administration (if require



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6. Work Planning and Deliverables

- Each approved employee shall prepare a **Weekly Work Plan**, including:
 - Tasks and outputs;
 - Timelines; and
 - Reporting mechanisms.
- Deliverables shall be:
 - Measurable;
 - Time-bound; and
 - Aligned with sector objectives.

7. Online Service Delivery Mechanism

To minimize physical movement and fossil fuel usage:

- Sectors shall:
 - Digitize services where feasible;
 - Provide services through phone, email, and online platforms;
 - Introduce appointment-based physical visits where necessary.
- Officials on WFH shall:
 - Handle calls, emails, and online submissions;
 - Process documentation remotely (where possible); and
 - Coordinate with in-office staff for service completion.

8. Monitoring and Supervision

8.1 Sector Heads

- Monitor daily/weekly outputs of remote employees;
- Ensure responsiveness during official hours;
- Address performance or coordination issues promptly.

8.2 Reporting Mechanism

- Employees shall:



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- Submit weekly progress reports; and
- Remain reachable during working hours via phone/online platforms.

9. Compliance and Accountability

- Remote working employees shall be:
 - Accountable for assigned tasks and outputs;
 - Subject to the same service standards as in-office staff.
- Non-compliance, misuse, or underperformance may result in:
 - Withdrawal of WFH privileges; and
 - Administrative action as per rules.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

10.1 Dzongkhag Administration

- Provide policy direction and oversight;
- Review implementation and resolve cross-sector issues.

10.2 Sector Heads

- Approve and manage WFH arrangements;
- Ensure service continuity and productivity.

10.3 Employees

- Adhere to approved work plans;
- Maintain discipline, availability, and output quality.

11. Duration and Review

- WFH arrangements shall be:
 - Granted for a **specified period**; and
 - Subject to periodic review and renewal.



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12. Effective Date

This SOP shall come into effect immediately upon issuance and remain in force until further notice.

13. Review and Adjustment

The Dzongkhag Administration may revise this SOP based on implementation experience, service demands, and emerging requirements.