



Hybrid Workplace Flexibility Guide

A step-by-step guide to working where and when you work best

Updated: 4 November 2020



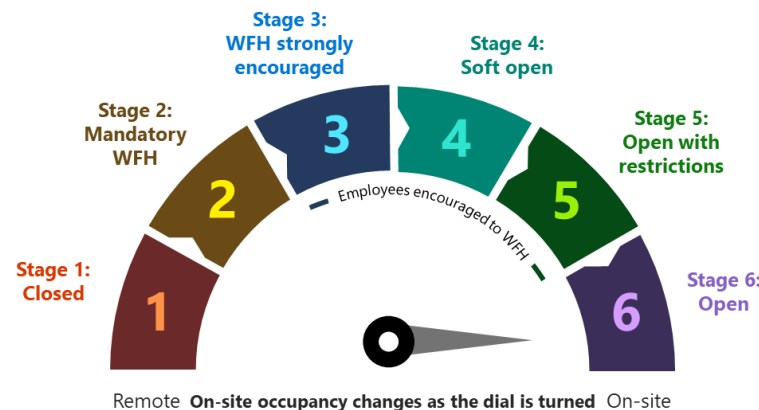
A note on COVID-19



While we collectively work to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, workplace guidance for countries in **Stages 1-5** continues to come from our [centralized COVID-19 response site](#).

The guidance outlined in the following slides is applicable to employee requests for changes to their [work site, work location, and/or work hours](#) in **Stage 6** and beyond COVID-19.

Six stages of the COVID-19 hybrid workplace



Our Approach: Three key takeaways



Evolution,
not revolution



Paradigm shift
on flexibility



Customer zero
on modern work



Flexibility at Microsoft

At Microsoft, there are as many ways of working as there are employees. As a company, we value and support flexibility as part of our hybrid workplace where every employee can do their best work by working the way they work best.

Most of our roles allow for some degree of flexibility in when and where work gets done. We encourage all employees and managers to challenge assumptions around what is possible and offer the most flexibility possible.

Our hybrid workplace is built on a commitment to flexibility that:

- ❑ Welcomes and enables **diverse workstyles**
- ❑ Relies on **new learning and mindset shifts**
- ❑ Considers **business needs and individual needs**
- ❑ Is built on **trust and technology**

A message from Kathleen Hogan



The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to think, live, and work in new ways. As a company, we have proven that we are agile in the face of adversity, rising to meet business and customer needs while caring for loved ones and ourselves. Through all of this, we have learned that—now more than ever—flexibility, trust, and empowerment are key to delivering success.

We are committed to exploring new ways of working that shift paradigms, embrace flexibility, create enduring connections, promote inclusion, and drive innovation. We will offer as much flexibility as possible to support individual workstyles, while balancing business needs, and ensuring we live our culture.

This guide is a starting point to help both employees and managers understand our policies and guidelines and make informed decisions. It's important to keep in mind that options around where and when employees work may differ based on role or region, but my expectation is that we continue to enable a hybrid workplace where individuals, teams, and our business can be successful.

As always, we will learn, grow, and innovate. We will evolve over time with intention, guided by employee input. We will—together, as One Microsoft—build a hybrid workplace that empowers our people to do their best work so we can empower the planet to achieve more.

Kathleen Hogan

Chief People Officer, Microsoft



Three dimensions of a hybrid workplace

All employees have a **work site**, a **work location**, and **work hours**. A hybrid workplace assumes a mix of workstyles across all three dimensions for our employees as well as within our organizations.



work site

physical space where you work



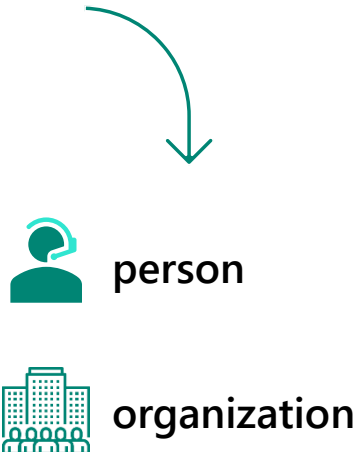
work location

geographic location where you work



work hours

hours and days when you work



An individual change may involve any or all three dimensions so be sure to follow the steps for each scenario, as needed.

The scenarios outlined in this guide assume no change to an employee's current role.

Approved work site, work location, or work hours should not change in the event of a reorganization, new manager, or other circumstance where the nature of the work or role does not change.

Note: If a request is sought based on a medical condition or a family member's medical condition, it must be evaluated under other company guidelines. Each situation is different and must be addressed on its own.

Core Scenarios

This guide outlines the following core flexibility scenarios in a hybrid workplace.



Employee is requesting a change to their work site

- | Work from home **less than 50%** of work time per week
- | Work from home **50% or more** of work time per week



Employee is requesting a change to their work location

- | Relocate **within the same country**
- | Relocate to **a different country**



Employee is requesting a change to their work hours

- | Changing **number of hours worked**
- | Requesting **more schedule flexibility**

Decision-making considerations

Before making any decisions, review these general considerations



Local laws and regulations

Local laws may have **specific regulations around when and where work gets done** and requirements related to approvals and documentation. Visa-dependent employees may have additional considerations when changing location, reducing work hours, or compensation.

Organization-specific guidelines

Each organization has **guidelines and recommendations** to ensure consistency and compliance within the different organizations.

Degrees of flexibility

With each role, work site, work location, and work hour flexibility may differ. Certain types of work are better suited to in-person or onsite while many types of work can be done equally well remotely. We encourage all employees and managers to **challenge assumptions around what is possible and offer the most flexibility possible**.

Compensation and benefits

A change to an employee's primary work location and/or work hours **may impact base pay, benefits, stock, bonus, and/or level**.

Expenses

Most expenses related to work location or work site, like travel or home office equipment, are considered **business expenses** and come from a manager's OPEX budget. Microsoft does not cover personal relocation costs.

Work site type and safety

Every employee has a primary work site which can include an assigned space on a Microsoft campus or a home office. Our expectation is that **all work sites are safe and secure**, and we have provided specific recommendations for [home office health and safety](#).

Tax (corporate and personal)

An employee's work location can have **personal tax implications for the individual** as well as **broader corporate tax considerations** in the event of a cross-border move. Employees are responsible for personal tax reporting and any costs incurred.

Global mobility

When an employee moves to/works from another country, there are several important considerations including **corporate tax, immigration, local law, and restrictions around work conducted in each country/region**.

Documentation

Most changes to an employee's work site, work location, and work hours require an **update to the employee's job profile in our HR system**.



NOTE: For any questions, please reach out to [AskHR](#).

Flexibility Guidelines

At-a-glance overview of guidelines related to core flexibility scenarios



Dimension	Scenario	Approval required?	HR documentation required?	Compensation & Benefits changes?	Expenses	Space
Work site	I want to work from home less than 50% of work time/week (avg)	No. Considered standard for most roles (see Note below).	No documentation required. Alignment with team agreements, as outlined by manager, is expected.	No changes	No additional expenses covered	May be assigned office space
	I want to work from home 50% or more of work time/week (avg)	Yes, manager approval	Yes, manager to update employee profile to 'home office' workspace type. Employee to confirm home address to ensure accurate reporting.	No changes	Home office expenses are subject to manager approval.	No assigned MS office space; option to use touchdown space, as available
Work location	I want to move to a new location that is within the same country where I work today	Yes. Manager approval in alignment with org-specific guidelines.	Yes, manager to update employee profile with new city/state. Additional steps required if compensation and/or benefits change.	Depends on geo-pay scale in work country	Travel expenses are subject to manager approval. Personal relocation costs not covered by MSFT.	Refer to above guidelines for worksite changes.
	I want to move to a new location in a different country from where I work today	Yes, it may be possible however there are significant implications that need to be considered. First, if Manager supports, they should secure appropriate approvals in alignment with org-specific guidelines. With approval, manager can explore the viability of a move by reaching out to AskHR to understand any incremental operating expense, corporate tax considerations, pay or benefits changes, immigration policies, and other policies and parameters related to a cross-country move. Personal relocation costs not covered by MSFT.				
Work hours	I want to work different or more flexible hours	No. Considered standard for most roles (see Note below).	No documentation required. Alignment with team agreements, as outlined by manager, is expected.	No changes	No additional expenses covered	Refer to above guidelines for worksite changes.
	I want to work fewer hours (part-time)	Yes, manager approval	Yes, manager to update employee profile with new weekly work hours. Additional steps will be required to process compensation and benefits change.	Yes, based on weekly work hours	No additional expenses covered	Refer to above guidelines for worksite changes.



Core scenarios: Step-by-Step guide

This guide walks through the decision-making process for core flexibility scenarios within a hybrid workplace.

For all other scenarios not covered in this guide, employee and manager should work together to determine next steps.

You can navigate this guide **using the menu on the right.**



Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

🏠 Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

📍 Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

📅 Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

For all scenarios, managers and employees should take the following key steps:


1 Clarify any local laws or regulations	<p>Examples include restrictions on time spent working from home, home office safety standards, documentation, immigration related restrictions, or certain work that cannot be done outside of the country.</p> <p>Clarify any local laws or regulations by checking with AskHR.</p>
2 Confirm any organization-specific policies or guidelines	<p>Managers can seek clarity on org-specific requirements or expectations by reaching out to the organization's business management team.</p> <p>Examples could include time zone restrictions, proximity to a Microsoft office where the organization operates, proximity to customers, approval processes, travel guidelines, etc.</p>
3 Work as a team to establish team agreements that support the diverse workstyles on the team	<p>Team agreements can help teams communicate and collaborate by discussing and agreeing to some team practices that reflect the diversity of workstyles on the team and at Microsoft.</p> <p>Agree to the events or activities that team members should prioritize and identify if certain events might be better with all members in physical attendance based on the nature of the event.</p> <p>Make sure all meetings have a clear goal/purpose and use technology (Teams, Outlook) to signal availability, offer a virtual option to join all meetings, and plan meetings and events that are inclusive of known schedule or location variability.</p>
4 Be a learn-it-all and build your capability in a hybrid workplace	<p>Leading in a flexible work environment is a skill and a capability and we can all benefit from ongoing investment in learning and development.</p> <p>Learn more about how to navigate and adapt in our hybrid workplace, including a manager quick guide on developing team agreements, and our Flexible Work Learning Resources for all employees.</p>

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

 Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home


 Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

 Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility



Request a change to work site

A request to work from home assumes no change to an employee's address and that their home office is within **commuting distance** of a designated Microsoft site if there are weekly onsite expectations.

If an employee is requesting to work from home in a new location, please refer to the scenario around changing work location.

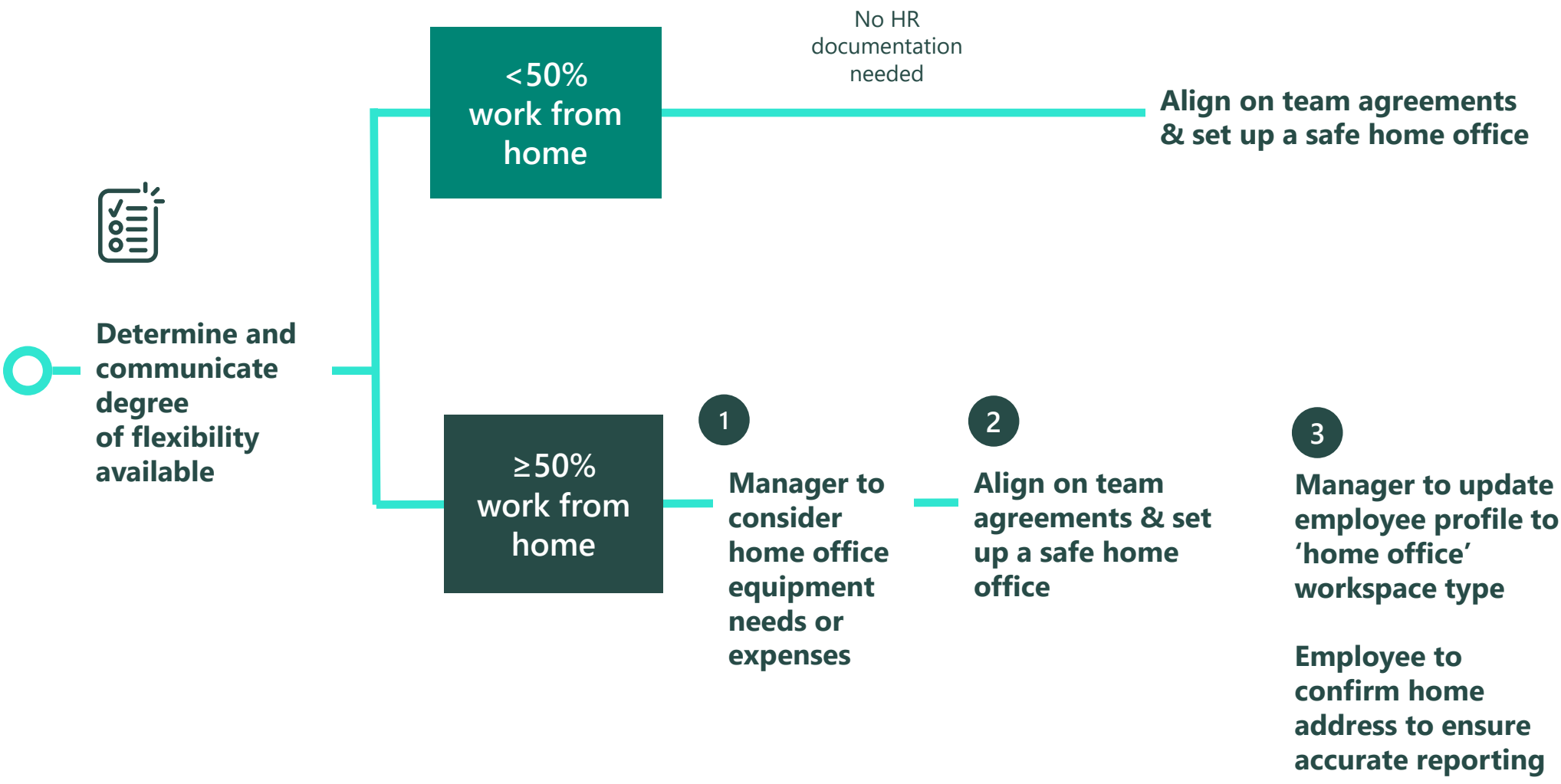


Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Request a change to work site: flow map



Step-by-step guide
Select the buttons below to navigate.

- Main menu
- Key steps
- Work site**
 - Work site flow map**
 - Degrees of flexibility
 - <50% work from home
 - ≥50% work from home
- Work location**
 - Work location flow map
 - Degrees of flexibility
 - Same country
 - Different country
- Work hours**
 - Work hours flow map
 - Hours worked
 - Schedule flexibility

Request a change to work site: Degrees of flexibility



Determine and communicate degree of flexibility

Employees at Microsoft have the option to work from home less than 50% of their work time (on average) and are expected to align on team agreements around in-person expectations. Working from home 50% or more of work time is considered a 'home office' worksite and requires manager approval.

In determining degrees of flexibility, manager should consider the onsite requirements of a role, type of work or interactions (like project kick offs) that might be better suited to in-person or onsite, and team agreements that help align on expectations across the team.

Work with onsite requirements might include:

- Work done in hardware labs, specialty spaces, or data centers
- Use of technology or equipment only available on Microsoft sites
- In-person engagement with customers at a Microsoft site
- In-person product demos
- Certain types of training and learning requiring in-person interaction

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Work from home less than 50% of work time per week



Employees at Microsoft have the option to work from home less than 50% of their work time (on average), depending on role requirements. Certain types of work may require more consistent or regularly scheduled time onsite or in-person.

Alignment with team agreements, as outlined by the manager, is expected. When working from home, it is important to set up a safe home office. Learn more with our [Home Office health and safety recommendations](#).


No documentation is required for working from home less than 50% of work time in the global HR system (check for local documentation requirements). Employee is not eligible to expense home office equipment.

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

 Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home


 Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

 Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

Work from home 50% or more of work time per week



1



2



3

Manager to consider any home office equipment needs or expenses

Home office expenses are subject to manager approval.

Managers should determine how much budget or what specific home office expenses will be covered and be consistent across the team for all employees who have a home office work site.

Align on team agreements & set up a safe home office

Align as a team on in-person and onsite expectations and refer to Microsoft's [Home Office health and safety recommendations](#).

Manager to update employee profile to 'home office' workspace type.

Employee to confirm home address to ensure accurate reporting.

Manager to update employee's workspace type to "home office" in their employee profile. The [Manager Procedure Guide](#) provides details on how to make this change.

Employees with a "home office" workspace are not eligible for assigned office space on any campus but can use 'touch-down' space in any Microsoft site, subject to availability.

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility



Request a change to work location

The geographic distribution of employees is an important element of organizational design. Each organization at Microsoft has unique guidelines related to location flexibility and should be considered prior to making any decisions.

Personal relocation costs are not covered by MSFT.

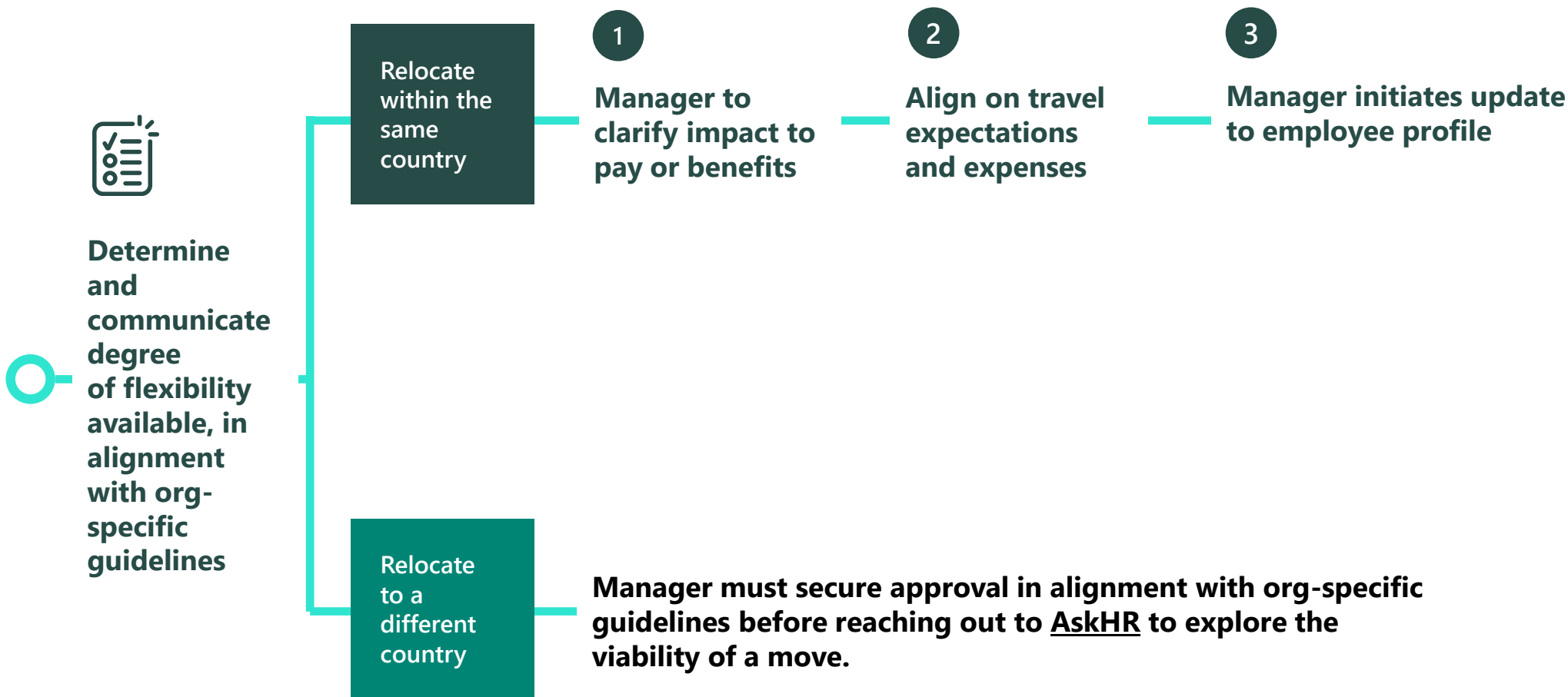


Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Request to change work location: flow map



NOTE: Visa-dependent employees may have additional considerations when changing location, reducing work hours, or compensation.

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

Request to change work location: Degrees of flexibility



Determine and communicate degree of flexibility

Manager determines and communicates the degree of work location flexibility available based on organizational guidelines and the specific requirements of the role.

If relocation is not an option, employee and manager should discuss the criteria applied to the decision and any alternative options. Location options may also vary for visa-dependent employees looking to change location.

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Change to work location: relocate within same country



Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

1

Clarify impact to pay or benefits

For relocation within the same country, there can be compensation and benefits changes to consider. Managers or employees can submit a request to [AskHR](#) to find out if there is a pay or benefits change associated with the new location and all employees can learn more about how compensation works at Microsoft with [these helpful videos](#).

In cases where the pay would increase, it is important for managers to confirm budget availability before approving any relocation. All employees should consult with a tax advisor to ensure they understand any personal tax implications of a possible move.

Note: Salary details are not available until a new offer letter is drafted.

2

Align on travel expectations and expenses

Managers should communicate clear expectations (on a fiscal year basis) for travel onsite to a Microsoft location and determine what portion of that travel will be covered by Microsoft.

Travel expenses are subject to manager approval.

Employee personal relocation costs are not covered by Microsoft.

3

Manager initiates update to employee profile

Manager consults [Manager Procedure Guide](#) if there is an impact to salary.

If there is no salary change required, manager can change the employee's work location directly in the employee profile.

Refer to 'work site' scenario to process any related changes to work site (i.e. shift to 'home office').



NOTE: Visa-dependent employees may have additional considerations when changing location, reducing work hours, or compensation.

Change to work location: relocate to different country



Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

🏠 Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

🌐 Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

📅 Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

Moving to work in another country is complex and creates risks, challenges and expenses for both individual employees and the business.

For personal relocation requests, managers must secure approval in alignment with org-specific guidelines before reaching out to [AskHR](#) to determine if a role can be performed in another country and to understand any incremental operating expense, corporate tax considerations, pay or benefits changes, immigration policies, and other policies and parameters related to a cross-country move.



Request a change to work hours

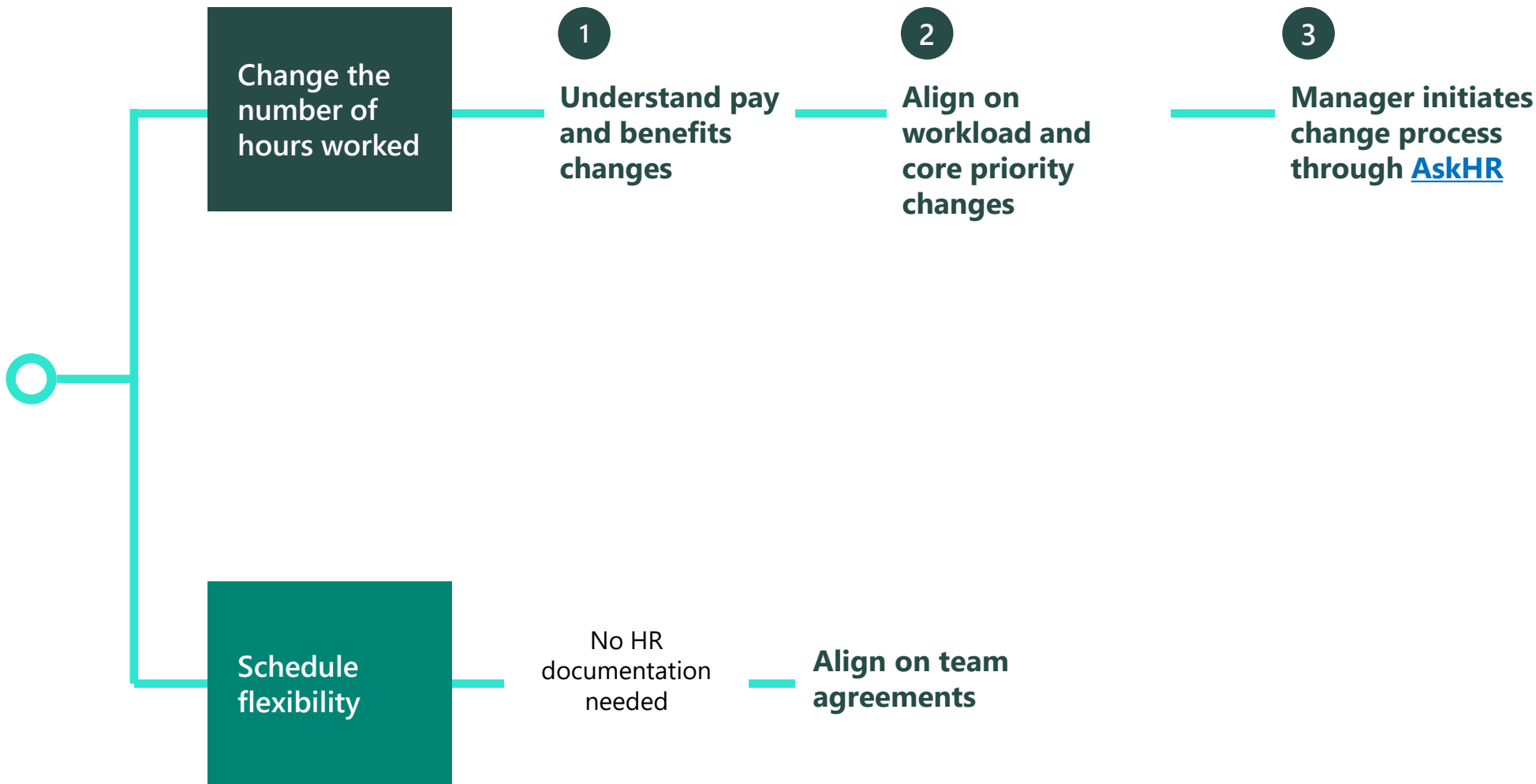


Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[🏠 Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[📍 Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[📅 Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Request to change work hours: flow map



Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

Change to work hours: the number of hours worked



1



2



3

Understand pay and benefits changes

Learn more about changes to pay and [benefits eligibility*](#) associated with a change in work hours or check with [AskHR](#).

Manager should work with their HR partners to ensure full understanding of position management related to a change in work hours.

Align on workload and core priority changes

Ensure shared understanding around what impact looks like with the new work hours.

Manager initiates change process through [AskHR](#)

A new offer letter with the new salary and work hours will be generated, as needed.

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

Main menu

Key steps

🏠 Work site

Work site flow map

Degrees of flexibility

<50% work from home

≥50% work from home

📍 Work location

Work location flow map

Degrees of flexibility

Same country

Different country

📅 Work hours

Work hours flow map

Hours worked

Schedule flexibility

Change to work hours: schedule flexibility



We support employees in working the hours that work for them and that allow them to deliver on expectations. Flexibility is an important part of the employee experience at Microsoft.

Alignment with the team agreements, as outlined by the manager, is expected. Determine any periods of time, meetings, or days during the week when availability (in-person or virtual) is a critical part of the workstream or workflows.

No documentation is required for schedule changes in the global HR system (check for local documentation requirements).

Step-by-step guide

Select the buttons below to navigate.

[Main menu](#)[Key steps](#)[Work site](#)[Work site flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[<50% work from home](#)[≥50% work from home](#)[Work location](#)[Work location flow map](#)[Degrees of flexibility](#)[Same country](#)[Different country](#)[Work hours](#)[Work hours flow map](#)[Hours worked](#)[Schedule flexibility](#)

Resources



FLEXIBLE WORK LEARNING RESOURCES

Guide to working from home during COVID-19
Guide to working from home with children
Employee Quick Guides for adapting to a hybrid workplace



LEARNING CARD



HYBRID WORKPLACE SERIES for Managers

Resources designed for Managers to support their teams by creating space for critical, supportive conversations. Lightweight resources designed for high impact.

Manager Quick Guide: Developing Team Agreements



ACCESS THE
SERIES

Questions? Contact [AskHR](#)



Thank you!

For any questions, please [AskHR](#).