Flexible Working Policy

PRN-66: **Flexible Working Policy**
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
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1. Policy Introduction

CAREHOPES, the trading name of AI Auto-Tech Ltd, recognises the importance of flexible working arrangements in supporting staff wellbeing, productivity, and work-life balance. As a companionship service operating across diverse environments, flexible working also strengthens service continuity, reduces burnout, and supports inclusive employment practices.

This policy outlines how flexible working requests are managed, approved, and implemented while ensuring safeguarding, operational stability, and high-quality service delivery.

2. Key Principles

- **Fairness:** All flexible working requests are considered consistently and objectively.
- **Inclusivity:** Flexible working supports diverse personal, cultural, and family needs.
- **Safeguarding:** Flexible arrangements must never compromise service user safety.
- **Operational continuity:** Adjustments must align with service delivery requirements.
- **Transparency:** Decisions are communicated clearly and respectfully.
- **Wellbeing:** Flexible working supports mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing.
- **Compliance:** All decisions align with UK employment law and organisational standards.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES supports flexible working arrangements where they:

- Maintain service quality
- Protect service user safety
- Support staff wellbeing
- Align with operational needs
- Comply with legal requirements

Flexible working is not guaranteed; each request is assessed individually.

4. Purpose

- Provide a clear framework for flexible working requests
- Support staff wellbeing and retention
- Ensure service continuity and safeguarding
- Promote fairness and transparency
- Align with statutory employment rights

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers

It covers flexible working arrangements including:

- Adjusted working hours
- Compressed hours
- Part-time schedules
- Remote administrative work (non-companionship tasks only)
- Temporary adjustments
- Long-term arrangements

6. Related Policies (Selected ONLY from relevant categories)

Human Resources & People Management

- **PRN-065** Recruitment and Selection Policy
- **PRN-125** Induction Policy
- **PRN-081** Supervision and Appraisal Policy
- **PRN-115** Disciplinary Policy
- **PRN-124** Grievance Policy
- **PRN-043** General Leave Policy
- **PRN-079** Sick Leave Policy
- **PRN-132** Probation Policy
- **PRN-032** Employee Wellbeing Policy

Conduct, Ethics & Behaviour

- **PRN-014** Code of Conduct Policy
- **PRN-015** Code of Ethics
- **PRN-099** Professional Boundaries Policy

Safeguarding & Protection

- **PRN-003** Adult Safeguarding Policy
- **PRN-136** Safeguarding Children Policy
- **PRN-144** Child Abuse Policy
- **PRN-070** Safeguarding Reporting and Escalation Procedure

Operational Delivery

- **PRN-006** Booking Policy
- **PRN-067** Rescheduling Policy
- **PRN-083** Terms of Service

Governance & Oversight

- **PRN-123** Governance and Accountability Policy
- **PRN-060** Policy Development Review and Document Control Policy

7. Definitions

Flexible Working: Any arrangement that varies from standard working hours or patterns.

Formal Request: A written application submitted through the organisation's flexible working process.

Temporary Adjustment: Short-term flexibility due to health, family, or emergency circumstances.

Operational Feasibility: The organisation's ability to maintain service quality while accommodating the request.

8. Types of Flexible Working

8.1 Adjusted Hours

- Later start times
- Earlier finish times
- Mid-day breaks for personal needs

8.2 Part-Time Working

- Reduced weekly hours
- Fixed or variable schedules

8.3 Compressed Hours

- Working full hours over fewer days

8.4 Remote Administrative Work

Permitted only for:

- Training modules
- Documentation
- Reporting
- Compliance tasks

Remote companionship is not permitted due to safeguarding and boundary requirements.

8.5 Temporary Adjustments

Examples include:

- Medical recovery

- Family emergencies
- Bereavement
- Short-term disability support

9. Submitting a Flexible Working Request

Requests must include:

- Reason for the request
- Proposed working pattern
- Duration (temporary or permanent)
- Impact on service delivery
- Any safeguarding considerations

Requests must be submitted in writing to:

- Line Manager
- HR Representative
- Senior Management (if required)

10. Assessment Criteria

Requests are evaluated based on:

- Service user needs
- Safeguarding implications
- Operational feasibility
- Team capacity
- Companion safety
- Impact on lone-working arrangements
- Compliance with Working in Pairs Policy
- Health and wellbeing considerations

11. Decision Making

11.1 Approval

Requests may be approved when:

- Service delivery remains safe

- Safeguarding is not compromised
- Operational needs are met
- The arrangement is sustainable

11.2 Partial Approval

Adjustments may be modified to balance:

- Staff needs
- Service requirements

11.3 Decline

Requests may be declined if:

- Safeguarding risks increase
- Service quality is affected
- Operational capacity is insufficient
- The arrangement is not feasible

All decisions are communicated in writing.

12. Safeguarding Considerations

Flexible working must never:

- Reduce supervision or oversight
- Increase lone-working risk
- Conflict with gender-based allocation rules
- Conflict with transgender allocation rules
- Compromise Working in Pairs requirements
- Affect emergency response availability

Safeguarding overrides all flexible working arrangements.

13. Changes to Approved Arrangements

Flexible working arrangements may be:

- Reviewed
- Adjusted
- Suspended

- Terminated

If:

- Safeguarding concerns arise
- Operational needs change
- Service user needs increase
- Performance issues occur

14. Documentation & Record Keeping

All requests and decisions must be:

- Documented
- Stored securely
- Accessible to authorised personnel only
- Reviewed during supervision

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Legislative changes
- Organisational updates
- Safeguarding developments
- Feedback from staff or regulators