

Employees suggest working from home to be a new norm

By **DIYANA PFORDTEN**
and **R. SEKARAN**
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Some employees who have been working from home following the conditional movement control order (MCO) believe it is a much needed approach to keep families safe and suggest that it becomes a new norm in a post-Covid-19 era.

Since Wednesday, the government has encouraged work from home as businesses continue to operate.

Bank executive Mastura Shahrin

said she appreciated her company's move to follow the new SOP as it meant reducing the risk of bringing home the virus to her family.

"What you have to get used to is rearranging your schedule and priorities, especially when you have a toddler. My husband and I will take turns to care for our three-year-old son," she said.

The 36-year-old said she was thankful to have understanding colleagues and superiors if she needed a bit more time to respond to messages or emails, as well as needing short breaks during meetings.

Business controller Mohd

Zulhilmi Abd Aziz is enjoying the time saved from commuting to work to spend more quality time with his two daughters.

"I feel that my time now is fully utilised since I don't have to get ready for work and be stuck in traffic, so the extra time I have is spent on myself or my family," he said.

Zulhilmi, who works in Kuala Lumpur, said he was also able to save more when working from home as he spent less on petrol, lunch and other extra expenses when working at the office.

"In this current situation, I think working from home should be the

first option for everyone who is able to do so," he said.

An executive at an insurance company Shaheera Adila Mohd Noor said the location of where she worked remotely played an important part in her productivity.

"I was working from my family home during the MCO in March but now that I'm working from my rented house, it feels much easier to concentrate," said the 29-year-old.

Shaheera said she was on a one-month rotational basis, where half of the employees work from home and the other half from their office in Kuala Lumpur.

In George Town, Salmiah Abdul Aziz said this was the second time this year she was advised to work from home.

The 35-year-old production planner with a multinational company in Bayan Lepas said her company instructed those in non-essential sections to do so.

"Now, I need to stop the maid service that I recently engaged since I can take care of my one-year-old at home," she said.

She is, however, concerned about childcare services if she is told to return to office by the end of the year.