

WFH to be the new norm

Govt to amend law to implement practice in the long run

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PETALING JAYA: Work from home (WFH) culture in Malaysia is set to stay even after the Covid-19 pandemic, with the government proposing changes to employment law to support it.

The Public Service Department said WFH will be a long-term policy for civil servants beyond the current health crisis.

Workers in the private sector will also be allowed to practise this in the long run, as the Human Resources Ministry is proposing to amend the Employment Act 1955 to facilitate WFH for that sector.

“WFH will become a new norm for employees, and it should not be considered an option or temporary

solution due to the pandemic but a new practice in the workplace.

“With regard to this, there is a new proposed provision to the Employment Act 1955 that will benefit the private sector – a provision for flexible working arrangements.

“This new provision is aimed at supporting WFH culture and also to increase employee productivity while promoting work-life balance,” the ministry told *Sunday Star* exclusively.

The ministry said the practice will also help optimise the use of human resources and costs borne by the employer.

In implementing WFH, the ministry said employees will be given more flexibility, especially for people who have to take care of family members, including

newborn babies.

The proposed provision will allow employees to apply to do their tasks according to working hours, working days or place of employment as appropriate, subject to consent from their employer, the ministry said.

“Every employee will have an option to decide how they want to work, whether in the office or at home, as this will depend very much on personal circumstances, subject to the employer’s approval,” it said.

However, it added that employers have highlighted that WFH may not suit everyone’s personality or ability.

“Also, employers found it difficult to monitor performance and workers don’t always have a suitable,

dedicated and quiet work space at home.

“Therefore, they may get easily distracted by household noises or other people at home,” it said.

As such, the ministry has advised employers to make it clear to their staff through internal policies on exactly what is suitable and acceptable when implementing WFH.

“In this case, employers must develop and introduce their own policy or standard operating procedure based on their working culture, environment and also the job description of each employee,” the ministry said.

It added that the pandemic has dramatically changed how individuals work.

“The WFH phenomenon will become a new style of working that