

## Flexible working arrangements on the cards for some

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Sunday, 10 Apr 2022

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PETALING JAYA: Working from home (WFH) may not be a new normal for everyone, but employers are now more open to allow flexible work arrangements when suitable, says the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF).

Its president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the latest poll MEF conducted on WFH from March 11 to 20 this year revealed that almost half of the respondents or 47% said that WFH arrangements were allowed on a case-to-case basis.

“Only 6.1% of the poll respondents indicated that WFH remains a new work arrangement permanently for certain employees,” he said.

Syed Hussain said with the transition to endemic phase, some employers have implemented flexible work arrangements to maintain a healthy work-life balance for their employees.

This includes flexible working hours, shift work, staggered work and hybrid arrangement of working from home and working from the office, he said.

“The changes and lessons learnt from the Covid-19 health crisis will continue to shape the future of work and the workplace during the transition to endemicity,” he said.

He said for companies that require employees to be on site such as in manufacturing, plantation operations, construction, hotels and services sectors, work would return to pre-Covid-19 arrangements.

Syed Hussain said flexible work arrangements would continue to be the future of work as new talents look to work for companies that offer these opportunities in addition to attractive compensation packages.

“This is augmented by the rapid pace of technology and automation of business processes and operations,” he said.

“The change in mindset of both employers and employees going forward would dictate this trend.”

Syed Hussain added that an estimated two million Malaysians were living and working abroad in search of better quality of life and work-life balance, in addition to better compensation and career prospects.

“The current work culture gives the impression that Malaysians work too much,” he said.

He added that to retain local talent, the country needs to create more opportunities that integrate recent technology and global business players to give Malaysians exposure to global standards and experience.