

HOME WORKING POLICY 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Home working is a type of employment arrangement where staff members can work at home (or other non-office setting). It is an increasingly popular arrangement in the UK and realising the potential benefits from it, many employers operate it on various conditions.

There are two types of home working:

Contractual

Contractual home workers are employees whose terms and conditions of employment stipulate that home working is a contractual right (***For the avoidance of doubt this policy does NOT relate to CONTRACTUAL home working***)

Occasional

Occasional home workers spend the majority of their time at their workplace (usually an office) but who may work from home for part of the working week to balance work and caring responsibilities, to perform a specific task that requires a high level of concentration with minimum interruptions or when an employee cannot get to their workplace, for instance due to an injury or bad weather,..... but are still able to work.

The above parameters are not exhaustive but rather provide an illustration or guide to the circumstances where a request for home working may be made. Each request will be determined on its own merits, but it will be important that a high level of consistency is applied to ensure that the process works in a fair and transparent manner.

This policy relates to occasional situations where employees may work out with the office and therefore its introduction does not require any changes to terms and conditions of employment and can be withdrawn at any time.

Occasional home working is a much more common arrangement within British organisations with many employers recognising the flexibility and benefits it can bring to both the employer and the employee.

2.0 POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Association's Home Working Policy aims to:

- ✓ Benefit the business from creative solutions, ideas and projects by giving staff the opportunity to do these at home;
- ✓ Not to compromise the usual level of service offered to our customers;
- ✓ Set out the parameters to ensure the above conditions are met.

3.0 POLICY CONDITIONS

Homeworking Parameters

Experience of a global pandemic which resulted in staff working from home for many months has highlighted the benefits associated with home working more than previously expected and as a result the Association intends to facilitate a greater level of home working than it currently does.

There will still require to be balance and all home working will continue to be non-contractual but rather than been regarded as the exception will going forward become an integral part of the work / life balance of employees.

3.1 Roles Suitable for Homeworking

All roles have been deemed as suitable for home working as it has been shown that all staff can work effectively from home irrespective of the role that they perform.

It may be, however, that front line or customer facing roles will require a higher level of office working simply as a result of the need to be available to provide a service to service users but all requests for home working will be assessed in the same way as all other requests.

3.2 Authorisation

Each request for home working must be individually discussed with the employee's line manager and who will assess each request against the rules set out in this policy. Any authorisation must be "signed off by the relevant departmental manager (or in their absence the Deputy Chief Executive or Chief Executive).

Business pressures will be a critical aspect of the assessment process when consideration is being given to an employee's request to work from home.

As a result there may be occasions when circumstances change which result in permission previously granted, being withdrawn or for a requirement for an employee to attend the office at short notice during a period of home working in order to provide cover in the office.

4.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Working from home presents a particular challenge to normal management controls due to the risk of potential abuse.

However, as the existing daily timesheet process is largely based on trust the same situation will apply for any home working.

Breaches of the policy will lead to the home working arrangement being withdrawn from the employee and potential formal disciplinary action. A review of the policy may also be carried out.

5.0 HEALTH & SAFETY

The health and safety assessment will be carried out according to the health and safety checklist (**Appendix 1**), which covers VDU risks and general precautions for householder electrical safety.

Domestic electrical supply configurations are out with the control of the employer and are the responsibility of the staff member as home-owner/tenant.

Staff will be asked to perform their own assessment and results will then be validated by their line manager during a discussion or home visit.

The employees will be expected to report any changes that may affect the arrangements in the future (in which case another assessment may be necessary).

6.0 TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The Association's IT infrastructure (hardware, security etc) is capable of supporting this concept and gives employees remote access to calendars, mails and documents.

The Association will provide all necessary equipment (laptop, monitor, keyboard etc.) to allow any member of staff to work from home.

7.0 COSTS/ALLOWANCES

The Association will not pay for any additional domestic running costs resulting from an employee choosing to work from home nor will pay any allowance towards such costs. The employee is expected to have access to a reliable broadband connection (at their own cost) with which to access email, shared files, video conferencing etc.

Staff should manage their external visits when working from home in order to minimise costs to the Association and minimise time associated with travelling.

For example, staff working from home should not arrange meetings or visits which require travelling to and from premises close to the office. These visits or meetings should be arranged for a day when the staff member is working from the office.

The basic principle, which will require close monitoring as part of any review into the success or otherwise of the arrangements, is that it should not cost the Association more to facilitate home working than it does for office working.

8.0 RECORDING THE DAYS WORKING FROM HOME

Completing a daily timesheet will enable a record to be maintained of all days worked from home for monitoring purposes.

9.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

The Association reserves the right to withdraw the home working arrangement for business reasons at any time, with immediate effect.

George Tainsh
Chief Executive

24th February 2021

Policy Review Consultation Process

Considered by the Senior Management Team	24 th February 2021
Draft Recommended by the HSEHR Committee	3 rd March 2021
APPROVED BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	25th MARCH 2021
Date of Next Review	February 2024

Approved

Health & Safety Checklist for Working from Home

The Association's health & safety checklist for employees working from home.

This list is not exhaustive and should be used in conjunction with section 3.20 of the Health and Safety Manual.

Electrical Equipment

The safety and maintenance of the domestic electrical supply/installation is the responsibility of the householder. The Association will only take maintenance responsibility for any equipment it directly supplies.

Householder checklist:

- ✓ Ensure electrical equipment is turned off when not in use and before performing any checks
- ✓ Check plugs are not damaged
- ✓ Check domestic electrical supply is suitable for the equipment in use
- ✓ Check plugs are properly wired and that the outer cable covering is gripped at the point it enters the plug or equipment.
- ✓ Check outer covers of equipment are sound and have no loose parts or missing screws
- ✓ Check all leads and cables routinely against damage to the outer covers
- ✓ Check for burn marks or other signs of overheating
- ✓ Repair any electrical equipment with potential to harm
- ✓ Check and secure all trailing wires – the best way is to use power outlets nearest to the equipment. Where this is not possible tuck trailing wires securely under desks etc and out of normal walkways
- ✓ Do not have young children unsupervised in any area where you are using electrical equipment

Working with VDU's

Standard Self-Assessment form from the Health & Safety Manual.

Eligible Home Working Costs

Appropriate Business Mileage (subject to conditions outlined in section 7.0)

Approved