

# Homeworking policy

The main features of a policy for staff working from home are set out below.

| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                 |  |
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| <b>Opening statement</b>            | <p>The employer should set out its commitment to flexibility with the aim of meeting both its and employees' needs. It should also make clear that while homeworking is categorised as a type of flexible working, employees should not assume that other aspects of flexible working (such as amended hours) are automatically part of a homeworking arrangement.</p>   |
| <b>Define homeworking</b>           | <p>The employer should set out types of homeworking that the policy will cover and whether home or the employer's business premises will be the main place of work. For example, the types might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Home as the main place of work.</li><li>• Flexible homeworking with time split between home and the office.</li><li>• Mobile working with a base at home to travel to the employer's different premises and customers.</li><li>• The office as the main place of work with working from home occasionally.</li></ul> |
| <b>How an employee should apply</b> | <p>The employer should ask an employee to apply in writing, outline the process to be followed and factors to be considered in assessing their application (preferably linking to a flexible working policy), say who will make the decision, and the grounds on which the employee can appeal if their request is refused. To find out more, see <a href="#">Acas guide: The</a></p>  |

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|  | <a href="#">right to request flexible working</a>   |
| <b>BUSINESS CASE</b>                         |   |
| <b>Is the role suitable for homeworking?</b> | The employer should set the factors for assessing whether the role can be done just as well away from the business base by someone working on their own.  |
| <b>Is the jobholder eligible?</b>            | <p>The employer should set out who will be eligible. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those requesting it as a reasonable adjustment.</li> <li>• Those making a flexible working request.</li> <li>• Those who have completed a certain length of service or satisfactorily completed their training and achieved satisfactory in their last annual performance review.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Is the jobholder suitable?</b>            | <p>Personal qualities required are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivation and discipline.</li> <li>• Ability to work without direct supervision.</li> <li>• Ability to complete work to deadline.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Is the home suitable?</b>                 | Homeworkers need a safe and reasonable space, security and privacy in which to work, and for office-type tasks an internet connection able to support work systems.   |
| <b>Will homeworking be beneficial?</b>       | An arrangement should meet business needs and the employee's needs so it is favourable for both.  |
| <b>OTHER IMPORTANT PRACTICALITIES</b>        |   |
| <b>Health and safety risk assessments</b>    | <p>The employer has a duty of care to its employees and should carry out a risk assessment before homeworking can be approved.</p> <p>It should set out what will happen if the risk assessment identifies concerns including who will make and pay for</p>   |

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|  | <p>changes to bring the home up to standard, and what timescale will be allowed.</p> <p>It should also set out what will happen if concerns are not addressed and reserve the right to refuse a homeworking application.</p>  |
| <b>Setting up the employee to work from home</b> | <p>The employer should set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the company will provide. For example, furniture, phone, phone line, Broadband, printer, fire extinguisher, paper.</li> <li>• What the employee is expected to provide. For example, heating and lighting.</li> <li>• Who will pay for any installation and other necessary costs, and, if required and agreed, how costs can be claimed back.</li> <li>• Who the equipment belongs to, who is responsible for maintaining/moving it and how this will be done, and whether it can, or cannot, be used for personal matters by the homeworker or their family.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Running costs and expenses</b>                | <p>The employer should state whether it will contribute towards costs in working from home – for example, heating and lighting - and expenses. If so, it should state how much, what can be claimed and how, and what is taxable.</p>   |
| <b>Taxation</b>                                  | <p>The employer should set out the implications of homeworking on tax. To find out more, see <a href="#">HMRC's guidance</a>.</p>   |
| <b>Mortgage, lease and insurance issues</b>      | <p>The employee should tell their mortgage provider or landlord and home insurer of their intention to work from home. They should check that there isn't anything preventing them from working at home - for example, in their mortgage</p>  |

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|   | <p>agreement, lease or insurance.</p> <p>The employee should obtain from their home insurer confirmation of cover should work equipment cause damage and for a claim from a third party. The employer should say if it will pay the extra if the employee's premium rises as a result.</p> <p>Work property and a claim by a third party should be covered by the employer's insurance policy.</p>  |
| <b>The employer's access to the employee's home</b> | <p>The employer should say how frequently and in what circumstances it would require access to the home. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial set-up.</li> <li>• Maintenance of equipment.</li> <li>• Health and safety assessment.</li> <li>• Electrical equipment testing.</li> <li>• One-to-one meetings with managers/colleagues/clients.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>If the employee moves home?</b>                  | <p>The employer should set out what will happen if a homeworker wants to move house.</p>  |
| <b>MANAGING THE HOMEWORKER</b>                      |   |
| <b>Employee performance</b>                         | <p>The employer should set out how employees who work from home will be managed consistently with office staff, and given the same opportunities for training, development and promotion. It should also refer to its policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and safety.</li> <li>• Monitoring and performance.</li> <li>• Team working.</li> <li>• Communication.</li> <li>• Training, development and support.</li> </ul> <p>The employer should ensure that employees who work from home are clear about their hours and the core</p> |

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|  | hours when they should be at work.  |
| <b>The employee's attendance at the main office/base</b> | The employer should set out how frequently, for how long, where and for what reasons the employee's attendance at the organisation's premises will be required. |
| <b>Security including information</b>                    | The employer should set out how staff working from home should store and transmit documents and information.  |