



What to consider including when drawing up a homeworking policy

Definition of what ‘home’ working means to your organisation (include other sites/locations). Does this policy refer to ad-hoc/occasional home working as well as permanent home working?

Organisational statement on why it encourages flexible working including homeworking.

Eligibility criteria – if any, e.g. would you impose the 26 weeks service criteria that the statutory Right to Request requires? Or is it open to anyone who has a role where at least some activities lend themselves to being carried out from home?

Criteria for assessing a request for homeworking. There could be something here about employees identifying which activities suit working from home and which activities are better suited to the workplace. If planning to spend some days at home and some days at the workplace, encourage them to plan their time/activities accordingly.

Reasonable adjustment. Ensure that this is taken into account for those employees with a disability or impairment.

Approval process for getting sign off on the arrangement e.g. line manager only, line manager and HR etc. Length of process – ensure that line managers deal with requests promptly and that the employee and line manager have an open conversation about the arrangement at an early stage.

Trial periods and/or regular reviews should be agreed to ensure the arrangement is still working or whether it needs to be changed.

Obligations of employees (e.g. guidance on what is expected in terms of contactability, reporting, communications, attendance at key meetings in the

workplace, compliance with health and safety, wellbeing). You could put these instead into a set of homeworking protocols/guidelines for teams to tailor to their specific situation. Whether an employee is able to attend regular in-person meetings may also depend on how far away from the office they live and how much advance notice is given, so this could be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Boundaries and wellbeing – statement/guidance about importance of maintaining wellbeing, boundaries and not being ‘always on’. This could alternatively be in your separate homeworking protocols/guidelines.

Health and safety and risk assessments, including DSE homeworking space set-up to be completed.

Sickness absence reporting – clear guidelines on your expectations.

Security, data protection and confidentiality – clear requirements given for this.

Caring responsibilities e.g. working from home not a substitute for childcare or eldercare, unless in exceptional circumstances (e.g. lockdown) in which case employees should discuss their situation with their manager.

Equipment and IT. What will/will not be provided by the employer, access to systems, use of corporate systems for personal use.

Insurance, tax and mortgage implications – be clear about employee responsibilities for these.

Requirement to work from home

Employers should provide guidance for employees and managers for situations where **they** require their employees to work from home. Line managers should have open and honest conversations with their team members and be prepared to find alternative arrangements, on a case by case basis, for employees who do not have a suitable home environment to work in, or those who in working from home would suffer detriment to their physical and mental health, safety, or wellbeing. Alternatives could be another workplace, an out of town ‘hub’ location or priority for a workstation in the workplace.

For further information, please contact employers@workingfamilies.org.uk