

Home working policy

Board library reference	Document author	Assured by	Review cycle
P119	Head of HR	Quality & standards	3 years

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1. Introduction

The Trust provides services across a wide geographical area and from a dispersed range of sites and facilities. Many of these services require staff to be based in one place but in some circumstances home working is a viable option for both the organisation and the individual member of staff. This may be on a permanent basis or as part of a flexible approach to undertaking an identified role.

Home working should not be treated as a benefit. There must be a clear business need based on a formal assessment process based relating to the work activity that needs to be undertaken.

2. Purpose or aim

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria and arrangements for home working and to provide a framework for a consistent approach.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Trust employees.

Two types of home working are provided for: "Major Home Working" and "Minor Home Working". They are defined in section 4 and specifically discussed in sections 5.6 and 5.7 below.

Occasionally, it can be agreed for staff to work from specific locations other than their home on a 'major' or 'minor' home work basis. If this is agreed, the provisions of this policy apply it is their responsibility to ensure that the location is safe and enables confidential working practices.

4. Definitions

Major home working: This is when an employee spends a regular and substantial proportion or all of her/his working week working from home. The employee uses part of her/his home as a workstation; with no need for the Trust to provide a dedicated workstation. It is envisaged that this would normally amount to no less than 80% of weekly normal working time. It is not expected that many AWP staff will be employed on this basis.

Minor home working: This is when an employee uses part of her/his home as a workstation on an ad-hoc basis to complete a specific task or on a regular basis but for a minor part of her/his working time. In this case the Trust needs to continue to provide access to a workstation within its premises.

5. Policy description

5.1 Home environment and facilities

When staff are working from home or any other non-trust location, they must act in a professional way at all times during working hours. This includes satisfying all AWP policies and reasonable management instructions. The focus of their attention should be on working matters and they should be available to attend an AWP place of work without notice. Staff must not have the role of principal carer while working from home.

Material may not be saved to the hard drive of a personally owned PC (or other electronic device) or circulated electronically outside of the AWP or NHS.net email framework.

All staff permitted to work from home must attend to their own health and safety and should complete the Display Screen Equipment Trust's E-Learning package every 3 years. Staff should assess their home working arrangements annually as part of the Statutory Risk assessment Schedule (under the Section for display screen equipment) Guidance provided on Ourspace concerning Health and Safety for Home Workers, including risk assessment processes, should

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also be considered. A specific safety risk assessment should be completed in line with the Statutory Risk Assessment Schedule by the employee, and endorsed by the employee's line manager (See Appendix B). This should be reviewed on an annual basis during employee appraisals. A copy of the risk assessment form should be retained by the employee and their manager.

The requirements of the Trust Lone Working Policy should be followed.

If, whilst working at home, an employee's IT system goes down and is expected to be down for an extended period, the employee may be expected to come into the office to work.

5.2 Meetings at home

Meetings should not normally take place at home.

Service users should never meet with staff at homes.

5.3 Agreements for homeworking

The line manager must confirmed details of the regular homeworking arrangements to the employee in writing. The manager and individual will sign this home working agreement with a copy kept on their personnel file.

Approved regular home working arrangements will be subject to an agreed 3-month trial period before final agreement. If thought necessary, the trial period may be extended or curtailed

5.4 Monitoring and review

The Trust reserves the right to visit the homes of those who work from home to inspect health and safety arrangements or the provisions for the management of confidential material. An inspection may be carried out at any time an employee is expected to be working at home. This may be as part of annual audit of "health and safety for home workers".

5.5 Associated costs and liabilities for home working

An employee who chooses to work from home would not be entitled to tax relief on additional outgoings. As there is no requirement to work from home there would be no tax relief on any proportion of the costs for heating, lighting and rent on rooms used for home working.

The Trust does not accept any liability for costs or other issues relating to home working except where these are specifically identified in this policy. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm their own tax and insurance provisions are appropriate to their needs.

Employees planning to work from home under any circumstances are responsible for informing their own insurance company as this may affect their domestic insurance. The use of equipment owned by the Trust must be identified. Similarly, a mortgage provider may need to be advised. Staff living in council or private rented accommodation may need to notify their landlord and examine the terms of their lease.

The Trust accepts that it is liable for accidents caused by the authorised use of Trust equipment when used at home in accordance with any instructions.

If the area being used for home working is also used by other occupants of the property there may be no implications for Council Tax. If the area is solely used for business and not available to other occupants at other times, then this may be a change of definition and the employee should check their individual circumstances with their local council.

5.6 Provisions for minor home working

Employees are not permitted to work from home routinely without the permission of their managers.

Staff may request minor home working access using the form provided as Appendix C.

Any permission may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Permissions will be reviewed during employee appraisals.

Service and Corporate Directors will review all Minor Home Working arrangements annually

5.7 Provisions concerning major home working

A business case (provided as Appendix E) must be completed before any post can be designated as a Major Home Working Post.

An account of what materials will be provided, and costs funded by the Trust, is set out in Appendix A. Associated costs must be considered when making decisions about home working.

Managers must reflect on the importance of team working, before determining that a post is suitable for Major Home Working.

Only an Executive or LDU Director may authorise an agreement to provide or remove a Major Home Working provision.

The employee's manager should undertake a risk assessment before any Major Home Working arrangement starts. This should address the employee's health and safety (using the template form provided as Appendix B) and also provisions for professional working including confidentiality.

A major home working arrangement may be ended with the agreement of the Trust and the employee at any time.

The Trust may end an agreement where the reason for change relates to:

- "Organisational change", processes set out in the [Organisational Change Policy](#) will be followed.
- conduct of the employee: An arrangement may be ended as an alternative to dismissal following a process set out in the [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#) or [Conduct and Capability Policy](#) as appropriate.
- general capability of the employee. An arrangement may be ended as an alternative to dismissal following a process set out in the [Capability Policy and Procedure](#) or [Conduct and Capability Policy](#) as appropriate.
- The ill health of the employee. The arrangement may be ended as an alternative to dismissal following a process set out in the [Managing Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
- Some other matter the general provisions of employment law will be considered

Where an employee temporarily cannot work from home, they must contact their manager immediately and agree a temporary alternative place of work. Where an employee moves home, the line manager and employee should review manager all agreed arrangements, risk assessments and conditions. Advice should be sought from Health & Safety, IT and HR where applicable.

When staff are based at home sufficient arrangements must be put in place for supervision and to ensure that they do not become isolated from the team.

Where a candidate applies for a post that requires major home working, and it subsequently becomes clear that they cannot accommodate home working, any offer of employment may be

withdrawn. Employment being conditional on home working as provided in this policy will be stated in offer letters.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The HR Department will:

Provide consistent advice and support about home working.

6.2 Employees must:

Ensure that their property is insured for any work at home and that their insurers are notified of this work.

Provide and maintain any equipment, to an appropriate standard to facilitate working from home.

Be familiar with any personal tax issues relating to working from home and to alert the tax authorities when required to do so.

Consult with local authorities about any council tax liabilities arising from working from home.

Undertake and maintain up to date risk assessments of facilities utilising the form attached at Appendix B.

Report any to their manager. damage or significant “wear and tear” to equipment provided by the Trust at the earliest opportunity

Deliver to a Trust office, determined and requested by the IMT department, any computer equipment for repair, modification or PAT testing.

6.3 Line managers must:

Give reasonable consideration to all requests for minor home working based on valid business reasons.

Ensure that home working arrangements are in line with this policy and regular conversations takes place to review the home working arrangements.

Ensure that sufficient management arrangements are in place to support staff working from home. This will include ensuring staff are not isolated, and that regular supervision and team meeting arrangements are in place.

Ensure that inspections take place, as required, in relation to occupational health, health and safety and confidentiality.

Ensure a regular conversation takes place to review the home working arrangements.

6.4 Service and Corporate Directors will:

Ensure that home working is only approved and supported when an acceptable business case has been made for it.

Agree for the provision or removal of major home working

Review home working arrangements annually.

7. Training

Advice and support on managing change in accordance with this policy will be available from HR representatives and where required, for example, for major change projects. Training may be provided to managers as appropriate.

Further information and advice is available via Ourspace.

8. Monitoring or audit

This policy will be measured against the requirements of employment legislation and best practice for a modern health organisation.

This policy will be reviewed after three years or earlier at the request of either party.

Managers are required to monitor the application of home working and to provide exception reports to the Strategic Workforce Group, if needed.

Representatives from trades unions formally recognised by the Trust and management representatives have drawn up this policy. Management as part of the review will provide meaningful statistics.

9. References

This policy has been drawn up with reference to current UK and European employment legislation and relevant national terms and conditions.

- [General Security Policy](#)
- [The Display Screen Equipment Policy](#)
- [The Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [The Acceptable Use \(of IT\) Policy](#)
- [The Data Protection Policy](#)
- [The Information Security Policy](#)
- [The Lone Working Policy](#)

10. Appendices

- Appendix A: [Material to Be Provided in Case of Major Home Working](#)
- Appendix B: [Homeworking Risk Assessment](#)
- Appendix C - [Minor Home Working Application Form](#)
- Appendix D - [Application Process for Minor Home Working](#)
- Appendix E - [Report Concerning Proposal to Designate a Post for Major Home Working](#)

Version History				
Version	Date	Revision description	Editor	Status
1.0	28 Mar 2007	Version approved by the Board on 2007-03-28	JT	Approved
2.0	21/06/2016	Approved by Quality and Standards Committee	Head of HR	Approved
2.1	24 July 2019	Extended until March 2020	HRD	Approved