

Home Working Policy

Quick Reference Guide

- This policy applies to all employees engaged on a contract of employment including fixed-term contracts who undertake any home working. It excludes bank, agency, contractor and volunteer colleagues.
- It sets out the policy principles and requirements for all home workers in respect of Security and Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Insurance and Declarations and Reimbursement of Costs.
- Guidance for People Managers in approving home working.

1 Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 Applications for home working are considered under the Flexible Working Policy and the purpose of this policy is to set out the **requirements** for all employees who undertake any form of home working including occasional homeworking.
- 1.2 Employees working from home are required to comply with this policy and the Trust's policies in respect Confidentiality and Security, Information Technology and Health and Safety.
- 1.3 Compliance with this policy ensures that you can work effectively from home and that we meet our health and safety duty of care to you by providing a safe working environment.
- 1.4 Where your home working application is approved you will be provided with standard information technology equipment to do your job. Where necessary we will also supply standard ergonomic equipment such as a chair and desk. Where specific equipment is required to support a disability under the Equality Act 2010 we will reasonably consider your requirements.
- 1.5 Our policy seeks to encourage positive inclusion for all our people including the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010. It also meets the requirements of the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Flexible Working Regulations 2014 and the NHS Terms and Conditions of Employment on Flexible Working.

Version Information			
Version No.	Updated by	Updated On	Description of Changes
1.1	Nick Child	09/09/2011	Minor changes to reflect new IT policies
1.2	Bank HR Advisor	13/03/2013	Changes to sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 13. Addition of new Equality Analysis, Implementation Plan and Privacy Impact Assessment.
1.3	HR Advisor/ H & S Manager	01/04/2016	Rewrite, change of definitions, assessment criteria & amalgamation of appendices
1.4	People Business Partner	24/07/19	Re-ordering of sections to aid flow. General grammatical update to reflect directorate name change. Refresh of application forms.
1.5	Senior Employee Relations Business Partner	09/01/2023	Redrafting of policy in line with OD & P Review and to support introduction of Trust Hybrid Model of flexible working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of Trust Hybrid flexible working model, permanent and occasional home workers • Removes the option for Trust employees to meet at colleagues homes to carry out work • Removed 1 million insurance level for employees working exclusively from home • Removed the option for the Trust to visit employees' home to check Health and Safety and Security and replaced with a simplified Health and Safety and Security Self-

			assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of reimbursement of business calls from landlines as Trust approved communication platform is Microsoft Teams • Inclusion of process for ordering IT and ergonomic equipment • Removal of Home working agreement as the information is contained in this policy
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2 Eligibility

This policy and procedure applies to all employees engaged on a contract of employment including fixed term contracts who undertake any home working. It excludes bank, agency, contractor and volunteer colleagues.

3 Scope and Definitions

3.1 **Permanent Homeworkers** – Your contract of employment specifies that all of your hours of work are undertaken at home unless you are required to attend on-site or alternative locations for example: for meetings or training.

3.2 **Trust Hybrid Model of Home Working** - This is where you spend a regular and substantial proportion of your contracted hours working remotely from the Trust. This would typically be from your home using standard Trust information technology equipment. This enables you to alternate between your site base (contractual base) that you attend for meetings/supervision and when required by your manager etc and home. Your exact working pattern must be agreed by your manager. In such situations you will 'hot desk' using a shared desk or a team space will be provided when working on site.

3.3 **Occasional Home Working:** This is where you work from home on an 'ad hoc' basis In such cases you would retain a permanent Trust desk space whether this be a personal workspace or under a desk sharing arrangement. 'Ad hoc' working from home must be agreed by your manager in advance.

The nature of occasional homeworking will not require personal Information Technology equipment to be supplied as loaned equipment is available from each division for this purpose. Additionally, a Health and Safety and Security assessment or a Home Working Agreement is not generally required for occasional home working as this is one-off irregular activity, however your manager should discuss your environment with you to ensure you can perform your work effectively and safely. Should your home working become more regular a formal flexible working application is required.

4 Policy Principles

4.1 The Trust will facilitate and support home working in situations where both interests of Trust and your interests in performing your job effectively are met and in circumstances where the work to be undertaken is suitable to be done from a home location. Other considerations include: suitability of your home environment both physically and environmentally to successfully complete your job.

4.2 Home working is at the discretion of the Trust. You do not have a definitive right to work at home unless this is specified in your contract of employment and any such requests for hybrid or occasional home working are voluntary and subject to service needs. This will require flexibility on your part as there will be occasions where you are required to be on-site to attend meetings, for training and as your manager requires. Any pattern of homeworking must be either part of your contract, agreed via a flexible working application for hybrid working (see section 4.3 below) or for occasional home working agreed with your manager in advance.

- 4.3 Your contract of employment will specify your location of work and working pattern. If you wish to voluntarily change this location or pattern of working e.g to hybrid, permanent home working, or other form of flexible working this is a contractual change which must be requested under our Flexible Working Policy.
- 4.4 Where the Trust wishes to change this, reasonable notice will apply to change your contract. Usually this will be at least one month's written notice unless agreed otherwise or it is withdrawn due to a breach of trust and this will be immediate.
- 4.5 If you wish to terminate your homeworking agreement you may do so in writing to your manager providing at least 1 months' notice unless agree otherwise.
- 4.6 Home working may not support all situations and where there are performance and capability concerns the Trust reserves the right to change the home working arrangement to enable you to be better supported and supervised.
- 4.7 You are expected to act in a professional manner at all times when working from home or any other non-trust location.

All home workers will be expected to be familiar with this policy and also comply with all other Trust policies and procedures when working from home failure to do so may result in action under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

- 4.8 Under no circumstances should you arrange to meet with clients, staff, or external representatives within your own home. All such meetings should be held on Trust property in order to maintain the appropriate level of professionalism.
- 4.9 You must be contactable by your manager and colleagues at any time of the agreed working day, which in some situations may differ from 'usual' working hours.
- 4.10 If you are unable to undertake work due to sickness you must comply with the notification procedure in the Attendance Management Policy.
- 4.11 You must inform your manager immediately if you (for any reason) are unable to work from home for either a temporary or prolonged period of time. Your manager will need to agree alternative arrangements with you which could include working from the Trust site.
- 4.12 All employees are required to complete a Home Working Agreement once they receive the required equipment detailed in the following sections. [Appendix A Home Working Agreement](#)

5 Trust Information Technology (IT) and Ergonomic Equipment

- 5.1 IT equipment is ordered via the IT Department and costs are met by the IT Department and monitored regularly.
- 5.2 Following approval to work from home you will be issued with standard Information Technology equipment for use at home. This will include a laptop with power cable and docking station, camera, keyboard, one screen, laptop bag, headset, mouse and lap top document holder. Please complete the IT Equipment Form which identifies standard issue equipment and submit to your manager for approval. [Appendix B IT Equipment Request Form](#)
- 5.4 Where you are issued with personal Trust IT equipment, your on-site IT equipment will be replaced by a docking station and 2 screens which will become shared equipment.

You are required to bring your personal Trust IT equipment on-site for your use in a 'hot desk' environment which will either be a shared desk or a team space.

- 5.5 You are required to transport your IT equipment (laptop and power cable) safely and securely in the laptop bag provided or similar bag for use when you are on-site.
- 5.6 You are expected to bring your IT equipment into the Trust base for regular maintenance and support. This would include for the updating of software programmes etc. Where you are unable to work from home due to IT issues which cannot be resolved remotely you will be required to work on Trust premises until the matters can be successfully resolved.
- 5.7 The Trust does not provide printers, nor does it support access to home printers any printing required to undertake roles should be printed at work prior to working from home. This should not include employee sensitive or patient identifiable information. Any paper must be disposed of securely in adherence to Trust policy.
- 5.8 All equipment provided by the Trust will remain the property of the Trust and must be returned when it is no longer required or when you leave the organisation.

You will be held responsible for the loss or damage to equipment where requirements of the Trust's Security Policy have not been observed. Such issues may also be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy if you have been held irresponsible or negligent with Trust equipment.

6 Confidentiality and Security

- 6.1 You must ensure that the home working environment provides an appropriate level of privacy for Trust work to be undertaken and has appropriate security measures to protect Trust property.
- 6.2 Computers and other electronic equipment must be used solely for Trust business and in accordance with the following Trust Policies/guidance:
 - The Trust's Information Governance Framework.
 - Information Technology Policy including IT Acceptable Use Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy including Display Screen Equipment
- 6.3 In relation to the above, patient data, or documents relating to identifiable data subjects must not be processed on personal IT equipment.
- 6.4 The majority of information is held on IT systems which can be accessed remotely. Employees must not print and take-home paper documents of sensitive patient or employee data.

7 Health and Safety

- 7.1 The Trust has a responsibility to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees and workers, wherever they work.
- 7.2 However, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires all employees to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by their actions. This extends to co-operating with the Trust to support the organisation to fulfil its legal duty.
- 7.3 You must comply with the Trusts Health and Safety Policy whilst working from home. Your manager needs to be satisfied as to the suitability of your home working

environment prior to the commencement of any home working. Therefore, the following must be completed:

- a) You must complete the Health and Safety and Security Assessment and submit to your manager for approval. This must be reviewed at least annually and when you move home by you and your manager. [APPENDIX C Health and Safety and Security Self Assessment](#) Where your Display Screen Equipment Assessment indicates you may need ergonomic equipment such as a desk, chair, lamp or footrest to enable you to work safely at home the Trust will reimburse up to £100 of this cost with the relevant receipts detailed in section 8.1 below.
- b) You must complete the interactive assessment available in the Trust's Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- c) Your manager will investigate any concerns that arise from the Health and Safety and Security Assessment and or DSE Assessment and where necessary seek advice from Health and Safety Representatives.

7.4 If a work-related accident or injury occurs while working at home you must inform your manager immediately. The incident must then be recorded on the Trust's DATIX system and investigated accordingly.

8 Insurance and Declarations

8.1 IT equipment must be unplugged and stored in a safe place whilst not in use. Any damage or loss to equipment which is not in the normal course of work will be your responsibility and you will be liable for reimbursement of costs for damage to Trust property.

8.2 If you work exclusively from home and therefore are declaring your home as a workplace, the following points may apply:

- a) The Trust's Employer's Liability insurance will give cover if the Trust is held to be legally liable in respect of injury arising out of and in the course of employment at home, provided the work has been authorised by your manager. However, when working at home you would still remain primarily responsible for your own working environment.
- b) It is your responsibility not the Trust's if you wish to make the following declarations:
 - Declaration of arrangement to HMRC
 - Declaration of arrangement to home insurers
 - Declaration to Mortgage Provider/Landlord in relation to mortgage/tenancy agreement.
 - Declaration to local council for council tax purposes.

9 Reimbursement of Costs

9.1 Following review of your DSE Assessment (contained in the Health and Safety and Security Checklist) you manager can authorise reimbursement of up to £100 towards the cost of ergonomic equipment needed to enable you to work safely from home. This is typically considered to be a suitable chair, desk, lamp or footrest. To do so please follow the Expenses process on the intranet [How to Claim Expenses](#).

Payment will only be made with the relevant receipts for the equipment. There is no benefit in kind tax on this payment.

- 8.2 The Trust does not routinely reimburse household costs incurred as a result of home working i.e. gas and electricity.
- 8.3 The Trusts' voice communication platform is via Microsoft Teams which is installed on your laptop. You may also install this on your personal phone for Trust use. Mobile phones are not issued as standard Trust equipment and any request would require a business case from your manager and approval from your DMT.
- 8.4 Journeys made to the Trust base will not be reimbursed when working from home. However, if home working employees are required to undertake other work-related journeys then travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with Trust policy.
- 8.5 Any stationery should be met from office stocks and only in approved cases will staff be reimbursed for the purchase of such items.

9 Line Manager Guidance

- 9.1 Prior to an employee commencing homeworking you are responsible for ensuring that:
- 9.2 A Flexible working request has been approved.
- A request for IT equipment has been authorised
 - The employee has completed a Health and Safety and Security Checklist which has been approved.
 - The employee is familiar with this homeworking policy.
- 9.3 You must ensure that employees who regularly working from home do not become isolated from their site-based work team. The following methods can be used to achieve this;
- Providing the home working employee with regular contact and support, which may include, meetings within the Trust or meetings at other agreed venues.
 - Ensuring the employee is informed of all relevant section, departmental and corporate developments which may impact on their role, or them as a Trust employee.
 - Providing formal supervision where appropriate i.e. through Staff Development Reviews.
 - Ensuring the employee has the same access to training, personal development and any other opportunities as are available to the office-based team.

10 Monitoring compliance and effectiveness of this policy




The OD and People Directorate are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and our people managers are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

11 Equality Impact Assessment

This document has been assessed against the Trust's Equality Impact Assessment Tool which was presented to the ratifying committee.

Post Holder /Author Responsible for Policy:	Senior Business Partner Employee Relations
Date Written:	September 2022
Approved By:	January 2023
Ratified by:	OD&P Management Board <i>date</i>
Next Due for Review:	January 2026
Date Policy Effective From	1 May 2023

Appendices

Appendix	Description	File
A	Home Working Agreement	 Appendix A Home_Working Agree
B	IT Equipment Form	 Appendix B It equipment request fo
C	Home Working Health and Safety and Security Self Assessment	 APPENDIX DHealth and Safety and Securi