

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for homeworking - checklist

This checklist is designed to be used in conjunction with the homeworking guidance. Please ensure you read this guidance.

Actions to take

Employee wellbeing

- Consider support mechanisms to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workforce, supporting employees who may be anxious for many reasons relating to the changes resulting from COVID-19
- Ensure that explicit consideration of wellbeing forms part of regular support and supervision discussions
- Ensure staff are taking regular breaks and continue to work their usual hours, in accordance with the working time directives
- Consider individual circumstances of staff and where appropriate offer additional flexible working options such as reduced hours, compressed hours and flexible start and finish times

Health and safety

- Signpost staff to appropriate Health and Safety advice
- Support staff to complete a risk assessment of their home workspace
- A risk assessment should be carried out on an employer's homeworking policy as a whole, with consideration given for workers with protected characteristics
- Consider and action any reasonable adjustments that need to be put in place depending on individual staff members' needs, paying due regard to equalities and protected characteristics
- Establish an emergency point of contact

Caring responsibilities

- Consider and support the individual circumstances and needs of staff who have caring responsibilities while recognising women are more likely to be disproportionately affected by this
- Discuss appropriate workload with those with caring responsibilities and ensure they feel supported
- Consider making use of additional flexible working options such as reduced or flexible working hours

Communication and engagement

- Employers and staff should work together to agree the method and frequency of communication
- Employers should ensure the workforce is using fully accessible communication channels

Expectations

- Ensure staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them, and that they will be subject to conduct, safeguarding and performance management procedures within the organisation
- Ensure current work priorities and expectations are achievable given the current restraints
- Employers should consider providing support and training for managers to help them successfully manage remote workers

Equipment and IT systems

- Discuss with staff any digital issues they may need to be supported with to work from home, such as broadband connectivity, or any reasonable adjustments they may need
- Discuss, agree, and provide staff with the relevant equipment necessary to carry out their regular duties, such as a laptop and work phone
- Ensure the IT network has capacity to support the number of staff who will be working from home
- Employers should consider ways to protect themselves and employees from cyber-attacks. Such things could include securing accounts, utilising VPN and cyber training

Pay, expenses and finances

- Inform staff that while they are working from home the usual contractual terms and conditions should apply, and pay will remain the same if they are working the same hours
- Consider your organisation's policy on expenses incurred from working from home and signpost this to staff
- Ensure insurance covers the organisation for home workers if they are using business equipment
- Inform staff they should ensure there are no issues with them working from home with their home insurer, mortgage provider or landlord

Employers should keep a record of the decisions they have made in reference to homeworking and track their impact. This checklist and guidance can be used multiple times to continually evaluate homeworking policies.