**Introduction**

COMPANY XXX is committed to promoting flexible working in order to facilitate effective and efficient working, as well as to assist employees with achieving work life balance. This policy outlines the circumstances under which COMPANY XXX will consider working from home arrangements.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of COMPANY XXX – permanent, fixed term, full time or part time.

***Only those employees who have been at the company for XXX months/years can apply for remote working.*** Employees who are in their probation period or have a disciplinary warning active, will not be eligible for home-working.

**What is Working from Home**

Working from Home means, that whilst an employees base for work is still the company office , for the agreed times and days they will be permitted to work from their home, rather than their normal place of work which is located at XXX.

**Types of Home Working**

There are various ways that home working may operate, ranging from occasional needs that arise and do not form a routine, to formal, more regular arrangements.

* Occasional Home Working - Taking work home occasionally, on an ad hoc basis, to concentrate on a particular project or task.
* Regular Home Working - Working from home on a regular basis, where employee would come into the office for the balance of time.
* Permanent Home Working - Working from home 100% of the time, or spending a percentage of time working from home and making outside visits for the balance of time.

**Suitability for Working from Home**

Many jobs within COMPANY XXX may be considered for working from home.

Consideration will be given to the impact on and inter-relationship with other jobs, access by the public, access to/by colleagues, access to required information, technology etc.

***Unfortunately, due to the nature of the tasks and responsibilities, the roles within XXX and XXX departments will not normally be considered for working from home arrangements.***

Application for Working from Home Process

Employees wishing to be considered for home working should complete the Application for Working from Home (Appendix 1). Secondly, employees need to conduct a Working from Home - Health and Safety Risk Assessment (Appendix 2) and submit both documents to their manager for consideration. The relevant manager will be responsible for considering applications to work from home in a fair and consistent manner, and will consider it within XX days. Where a request is denied, the manager will outline, in writing the reasons for rejecting the request.

Please note that a number of factors will be taken into account when deciding on the request including specific tasks and responsibilities of the role, impact on the team and the department, communication level required from the role, employee’s performance and more.

For home working to take place on a permanent or regular basis it must be established that the work to be done at home can be satisfactorily completed without regular / frequent face-to-face contact or direct supervision.

**Working Space & Health and Safety**

An employee who works from home is afforded the same protection under health and safety legislation as an employee who is office based. It is therefore vital to ensure the home working environment is suitable before any home working agreement is reached.

You must take care of your equipment and report any problems immediately to your manager and/or IT department.

Please note that in a situation where you are unable to carry out work from home due to issues with i.e. broadband, or any others, you will be required to report to the office, which is your normal place of work to carry out your duties, unless otherwise agreed with your Manager.

Workstation

In order to be able to work from home, you should have a set up that allows you to operate in the same way that you would at work – including the correct IT equipment, suitable desk and chair, and a space that allows you to work uninterrupted.

Health and Safety

By working from home, you are responsible for your own health and safety and so must ensure that the following are met:

* Having suitable office space, ideally a separate room
* maintaining a good posture whilst working
* taking regular breaks from the screen
* having the correct temperature and light settings
* keeping your space well ventilated and with fresh air
* working free from interruptions and distractions
* being able to obey security and confidentiality procedures and requirements.

The home environment must be deemed to be safe to work in before working from home request has been approved. Therefore, the company will take reasonable steps to minimise or eliminate any risks that did occurred on the Risk Assessment (Appendix 2).

Any injuries need to be reported immediately to your manager.

Please note that it is not considered appropriate to combine working from home with care for dependants. Employees will be required to demonstrate that they do not have dependant care responsibilities within their contracted working hours.

Cost

The costs to the employee of supporting home working will vary. The baseline costs consist of the reasonable equipment that may be required at the employee’s home. If you require anything, within reason, that can make remote working more comfortable for you or you are missing equipment that you require to conduct your job, please do not hesitate to ask and we will try our best to accommodate you. The costs of setting up a work station should be considered before a manager agrees to home working.

The company contribution to the costs will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

The COMPANY XXX will not pay to install a broadband connection or a contribution to

the monthly cost of this.

**COMPANY XXX Policies & Procedures**

You must adhere to all the same COMPANY XXX policies and contractual requirements when working from home – including, but not limited to, our data privacy and compliance policies. You must have your home workspace set up to allow you to operate in a secure and confidential way. Please flag any potential security or data-sharing issues with your line manager. Remember to keep all login procedures and documents safe and password protected in your home. Please refer to your Terms and Conditions and Employee Handbook documents for more details on company policies and procedures.

**Availability**
You must remain contactable whilst working from home – so please ensure your phone is charged and that you are regularly checking your email and chat facilities.

Employees who are working from home need to ensure that they keep their Outlook Calendar up to date. This will allow the rest of the team check the availability of colleagues.

**Working hours**

You will be required to work your usual office working hours so that your colleagues know when you are available. Lunchtime should, where possible, be at your usual time.

If your children will be with you at home during the day, make sure to plan ahead. Create a regular schedule to help minimise distractions during your workday. You can find suggested schedules online to help keep older children busy with schoolwork or learning and other activities throughout the day.

***The flexible working hours scheme will apply to home-based staff in the same way that it does to office-based staff.***

The hours worked, rests period and breaks entitlement will not change from those in the contract of employment in any case.

**Employee Illness**

If you are ill it is important that you inform your manager and follow the normal procedure regarding the sickness absence which details can be found in Employee Handbook.

**Time Recording**

You will be required to keep records of your hours of work and breaks taken in a form that will be prescribed by the company.

Please note that any person found tampering time recording will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are taking appropriate rest periods and breaks. If there is an issue with such, you must contact your manager immediately.

**Suspending Working from Home Arrangement**

COMPANY XXX reserves the right to suspend previously agreed working arrangement, at its discretion.

Additionally, the agreement will be reviewed periodically to assess whether the arrangement is still appropriate and may be modified if necessary.

Team members whose application for working from home has been approved, are expected to maintain normal productivity and performance. They must not carry out work for anyone other than COMPANY XXX nor, without prior permission, undertake non-work related activities during their working hours.

Working from home arrangement is not an opportunity to perform household duties, care for children or other dependents, or attend to other personal business.

Employees will be responsible for keeping their manager and team informed about the status of their work. Additionally, employees must work with manager to accommodate themselves for on-site, remote meetings or trainings as required by their role.

Please note that working from home is voluntary and is not intended to create a situation where staff feel obliged to work excessive hours. Also, is not a contractual right through either express or implied terms and will not alter an employee’s terms and conditions of employment nor create any entitlement to work from home.

**Employee responsibilities**

When working from home has been granted, employee’s responsibility are as follows:

* To abide by the requirements of this document
* To give details of a mobile and/or home telephone number and to facilitate

communication with the company as appropriate

* To deliver the expected work outcomes
* Understand and consider all the information within these guidelines, in particular their own responsibilities regarding health and safety, data security and confidentiality.
* To record the actual time worked