

3 in 10 employers have seen an increase in staff working from home over the past year

29 January 2024

A new survey from Acas has found that 3 in 10 (30%) employers have seen an increase in staff working from home in the last 12 months.

1 in 5 bosses (20%) have also reported a reduction in physical workspace as the reason to implement home working over the past year.

Home working is a type of flexible working. All employees who have worked for their employer for 26 weeks or more currently have the right to ask if they can work flexibly. New changes to the law in April will make this right apply from the first day of employment.

Acas has published a new draft Code of Practice on requests for flexible working to provide guidance and help everyone understand the changes.

Acas Chief Executive, Susan Clews, said:

"There has been a global shift to flexible working following the pandemic and it is clear from our poll that there's a continued appetite among staff and employers.

"Some businesses have benefitted by reducing office costs as well as attracting the best talent. Staff can find flexible working valuable to better balance their working lives.

"Home or hybrid working are just some examples of an array of flexible working arrangements that are available. Our new draft Code encourages employers to take a positive approach to flexible working and covers the new law changes."

Acas's advice is that a business's flexible working policy should explain:

- how someone can request a different way of working
- how requests will be assessed
- how decisions will be made

These decisions should be fair and transparent.

Home or hybrid working are some examples of the wide array of flexible working arrangements that can work for many businesses and working people. Other types of flexible working can include working part-time, job-sharing, working hours over fewer days or compressed hours or changing start and finish times.

Acas's draft statutory Code of Practice on requests for flexible working includes information on:

- who should be allowed to accompany an employee at meetings to discuss a flexible working request
- the need for transparency about reasons for rejecting a request

- making it clear that employers should proactively offer an appeal where a request has been rejected

The updated Code was drafted following a public consultation by Acas in 2023 and is currently awaiting parliamentary approval.

[Read the draft Code on requests for flexible working](#)

Media enquiries

[Contact the Acas press office](#)

Background notes

1. Acas is holding an [online training event on 16 April 2024](#) that will cover the new changes and Acas's new Code of Practice on requests for flexible working.

2. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1088 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 8 to 15 January 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of British business size and region.

3. Participants were asked: "To what extent has the proportion of employees working from home in your business increased or decreased in the last 12 months (since January 2023)?"

The results were:

- Significantly increased: 10%
- Slightly increased: 20%
- No change: 54%
- Slightly decreased: 9%
- Significantly decreased: 4%
- Don't know: 3%
- Net increased: 30%
- Net decreased: 13%

4. Participants were asked: "Over the past 12 months (since January 2023), has your business implemented a change to home working policies due to reduction in physical workspace?"

The results were:

- Yes: 20%
- No: 77%
- Don't know: 4%

The [Acas consultation on the draft Code of Practice on handling requests for flexible working](#) ran for 8 weeks from 12 July 2023 until 6 September 2023.