

## Home and hybrid working policies

### 1 . Creating or updating policies

As an employer, you should create a policy for working from home or hybrid working. A policy can help you to consider requests and explain the process to your employees.

The statutory right to request flexible working applies to anyone with the [legal status of employee](#).

Someone is not likely to be an employee if they're:

- an agency worker
- a casual worker
- on a zero-hours contract

### What a policy is

A policy is a document that:

- outlines how things work
- sets flexible limits

This allows managers and employees to discuss and agree specific arrangements.

### Outlining how things work

You should explain how someone can request working from home or hybrid working, and how you will respond.

You should include in your policy how you will set up home or hybrid working, and how you will support these employees.

### Setting flexible limits

A policy should say what types of working from home or hybrid working are available in your organisation.

It should also say how:

- roles will be assessed
- you will consider employee needs
- decisions will be made

For example, an employer has a policy that says staff can work remotely. It allows flexibility – they can work from home or from a coworking space agreed with the employer. It says staff are not allowed to work in public places, and explains this is for security reasons.

## Review and consultation

You might need to review things because of changes to the needs of:

- the organisation
- individual employees

You might also be reviewing the outcome of a trial period.

For example, an employer agrees with their staff to try working from home for a trial period of 6 months. It works better than expected, so they agree to offer it more widely.

You should:

- update any related policies or procedures
- regularly review your policies and check if they can be improved
- consult your employees and their representatives
- discuss how things are going and if any changes could be made
- check whether you need to make changes to employment contracts

[Find out about consulting employees and their representatives](#)

## Making changes to employment contracts

When you're creating or updating a policy, you should check whether you'll need to make a change to employment contracts.

Things to check in a contract include:

- where it says employees work
- what hours employees work
- how employees will be managed

For example, you might not need to change an employee's contract if it says that you can decide where they work. You might need to change the contract if it says their workplace is a specific address.

[Find out more about making changes to employment contracts](#)

## If you do not need to change an employment contract

If you do not need to change a contract, you should:

- agree any arrangements with staff
- put in writing what's been agreed, for example in an email or letter

For example, an employee asks their manager about working from home. This is so they can support an elderly relative in the time they would usually spend commuting. The employee agrees to a temporary change that will allow them to work from home 2 days a week for a period of 3 months. The manager confirms this in an email.

## 2. Things to consider

You could have different arrangements depending on the role and the needs of your employees. You could talk about:

- which roles can and cannot be done from home
- who may or may not want to work from home
- any concerns and how best to handle them

For example, you might need some roles based full-time in the workplace. Some might work 3 days in the workplace and 2 days remotely. Others might work from home most of the time, coming into the workplace only occasionally.

Think about how employment contracts might be affected and consult with your employees and their representatives.

## Considering employees

Discuss your employee's needs, and consider how you can support them.

For example, consider:

- any [reasonable adjustments](#)
- their home working environment
- any caring responsibilities
- other flexible working needs

Avoid generalising or making assumptions.

For example, Sam is a wheelchair user. Their manager thought they might prefer to work from home to avoid public transport. But Sam is worried about being isolated and would prefer to come into the workplace.

## Considering roles

Consider whether work in your organisation could be done remotely or if it needs to be done in the workplace. Think about:

- if technology could help
- how teams communicate
- if there are any concerns about health and safety, and how to address them
- why a task might need to be carried out in the workplace

Consider how important it is for work to be done at a specific time. Think about:

- if there are core times that employees need to work together
- how often teams should meet in person
- if a client or stakeholder expects meetings or work to be done at specific times
- how you manage the maximum number of hours an employee can work
- how you encourage employees to take rest breaks

Find out more about:

- [the maximum hours an employee can work](#)
- [rest breaks](#)

## Considering practicalities

As you consider where and when work could be done, you should think about how that affects other practical issues – and ensure you cover these in your policy.

## Example of another practical issue

Most of an organisation's customers are happy to deal with them over the phone or by video call. However, some customers prefer to come into the office and speak to someone face to face. Their policy allows employees to work from home most of the time, but states they must come into the office to meet customers when needed.

## 3. What to include in a policy

Create a policy that explains how working from home or hybrid working is addressed in your organisation. Outline how things work and set limits, but allow flexibility.

### Policy introduction

The first section of your policy should explain the basics.

#### Opening statement

Set out your commitment to flexible working, with the aim of meeting the needs of both the organisation and your employees.

Explain that other types of flexible working (such as amended hours) are not automatically part of an agreement on working from home or hybrid working.

Say who the policy has been agreed with – for example, in consultation with a trade union or group of employee representatives.

[Find out more about requesting flexible working](#)

#### Review

You should regularly review your policy. You should decide:

- when or how often it will happen
- who will be involved
- what it will consider
- what the outcomes might be
- how it will be communicated

#### Definitions

Define the words or expressions you will be using. Explain what they mean for your organisation.

For example, define:

- working from home, or homeworking
- hybrid working

#### What's available

Explain what types of working from home or hybrid working are available in your organisation.

These could include:

- home as the main place of work
- splitting work between home and office
- a base at home to travel to customers or different premises
- the office as the main place of work, with occasional working from home
- working in a co-working space

Make it clear:

- where an employee can work
- where they might need to attend – how frequently, for how long, and for what reasons

Explain that these are limits that you will generally follow, but you will consider requests outside of these limits depending on an employee's circumstances.

## Requests

Explain how employees can request to work from home or change where they work.

Ask them to apply in writing and to explain why they are making the request – for example, if they are a disabled person asking for a [reasonable adjustment](#).

If you want them to submit a statutory flexible working request, refer to your flexible working policy.

## How decisions will be made

You should explain how you will assess things and how you will respond to requests.

### Suitability of the role

Explain how you will assess:

- whether the role is suitable for working from home or hybrid working
- when, where and how work can be done

### Eligibility

Explain which employees are eligible. Be careful that you do not directly or indirectly discriminate.

Examples of eligible employees could include those who:

- request it as a [reasonable adjustment](#)
- make a statutory flexible working request
- have worked for you for a minimum amount of time
- complete their probation period
- pass their performance review

### Working environment

You should assess whether the home (or other location) is suitable for work.

Explain that you will be considering things like:

- health and safety
- security and privacy
- a suitable internet connection

Explain how the assessment will be done, for example:

- who will do it
- how it will be done
- if or when access will be needed

## Decision making and communication

You should set out a transparent and fair process covering:

- who will make the decision
- what steps they will follow
- how to appeal (if you have an appeals process)

Explain how you will communicate the decision and any next steps.

## Other important practicalities

In your policy, explain things that are specific to working from home or hybrid working, and refer to other policies where appropriate.

## Health and safety risk assessments

You should carry out a risk assessment before approving any request for working from home or hybrid working.

Explain:

- how this will be done
- what will happen if it identifies concerns – including who will make and pay for changes, and how quickly those changes will need to be made
- what will happen if concerns are not addressed – reserve the right to refuse the request

## Set-up, costs and expenses

Explain the process for setting up working from home or hybrid working, including:

- what you will provide – for example, furniture, phone, broadband, printer, fire extinguisher, paper
- what you expect the employee to provide – for example, heating and lighting
- who will pay for any installation and other necessary costs – and, if required and agreed, how to claim for these costs

State whether you will contribute towards costs – for example, heating and lighting or any other expenses. If you will, explain:

- how much
- what can be claimed and how
- what is taxable

For any necessary equipment, explain:

- who it belongs to

- who is responsible for maintaining or moving it – and how this will be done
- whether it can or cannot be used for personal use

## Tax

Explain how working from home might affect your employees' tax. They might be able to claim tax relief for working from home.

[Find out more about claiming tax relief on GOV.UK](#)

## Mortgage, lease and insurance

Explain what your employer's insurance covers – it should cover work property and a claim by a third party.

Ask the employee to:

- tell their mortgage provider or landlord, and home insurer, that they intend to work from home
- check there isn't anything in their mortgage agreement, lease or home insurance that prevents them from working from home
- check with their home insurer that they are covered if work equipment causes damage, and for a claim from a third party – as their employer, you should say you will pay the extra cost if they have to pay more for this

## Employer access

Explain how frequently and for which reasons you might need someone to enter the home. These could include:

- initial set-up
- equipment maintenance
- health and safety risk assessment
- electrical equipment testing

## Moving home

Explain what will happen if someone who is working from home wants to move.

## Performance management

Explain how employees who work from home will be managed consistently with office staff, and given the same opportunities for training, development and promotion.

Refer to relevant policies, such as:

- communication
- health and safety
- monitoring and performance
- sickness and absence
- team working
- training, development and support

Make sure that employees are clear about their hours and the core hours when they should be at work.

[Find out more about managing staff who work from home](#)

## Security

Explain how staff working from home should store and transmit documents and information.

## More about working from home and hybrid working

You can get further detailed advice on:

- [requesting home and hybrid working](#)
- [wellbeing when working from home](#)
- [managing staff who work from home](#)