

## Wellbeing when working from home

### Health, safety and wellbeing

Employers are responsible for their employees' health, safety and wellbeing – both when they are in the workplace and when they work remotely (including working from home).

Employees also have responsibilities.

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

### Employer responsibilities

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has advice for employers.

[Find advice for employers from the Health and Safety Executive](#)

### Employee responsibilities

Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety at work.

Anyone who works from home should keep in regular contact with their manager. They should also tell their manager about:

- any physical or mental health and safety risks
- any working arrangements that need to change – for example, because of caring responsibilities

Employees and managers should communicate regularly and work together to find solutions.

### Mental and physical health

Employers should pay attention to the mental and physical health of their employees. Everyone should be encouraged to look after their health – for example, by getting support and doing regular exercise.

Employers should not make assumptions. They should speak with their staff and agree on what support may be needed – for example, if an employee with a disability needs reasonable adjustments.

## Disability

Mental and physical health issues can be considered disabilities under the law (Equality Act 2010). Employers must make reasonable adjustments for workers who are disabled.

Find out more about:

- [disability at work](#)
- [reasonable adjustments](#)
- [supporting disabled workers with hybrid working on the Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#)

## Mental health

Employers should think about how to support their employees' mental health and wellbeing. They should talk to them about any problems they might be having.

[Find out more about supporting mental health at work](#)

## Stress from changes at work

Employees can find change stressful – including changes in working from home and hybrid working.

Employers can help to reduce stress by helping an employee:

- agree regular contact
- avoid feeling left out and lonely
- feel trusted and supported
- know how to get help with their mental health
- know how to report IT issues
- know what is expected of them – for example, when working from home

## Physical health

Employers should make sure their employees have the necessary equipment and information to work safely. Employees might experience pain if they do not have the right working equipment – for example, they might have back problems caused by an unsuitable chair and desk.

Employers must protect staff from any health risks from using 'display screen equipment' (for example, computers, laptops or smartphones).

[Find out about working safely with display screen equipment from the Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#)

## Work-life balance

When someone works from home, they can struggle with:

- finding it harder to switch off from work
- working longer hours

Employers must follow the law on working hours. Employees have a right to rest breaks and should make sure they take them.

Employees might find it helpful to:

- have clear start and finish times
- switch off their work equipment at the end of the working day
- take regular rest breaks away from a screen

Find out more about:

- [working hours](#)
- [rest breaks](#)

## Sickness

Employees who work from home can feel pressure to work while ill – this is sometimes called 'presenteeism'. Employers should encourage them to take sick leave when they're ill.

Employees should make sure they:

- know what sick pay and leave they're entitled to
- take sick leave if they're not well enough to work

[Find out more about sick pay](#)

## Advice from the NHS

The NHS offers advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing.

[Visit the NHS Live Well website](#)

## Bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment can still happen when employees are working from home. For example, through social media, emails, phone calls or online chat.

Examples of bullying and harassment that can happen remotely include:

- inappropriately stopping someone from coming to meetings or activities
- putting humiliating, offensive or threatening comments or photos on social media
- putting someone down in meetings
- revealing sensitive personal information
- spreading false rumours

Employers should include guidance on use of different communication methods, including social media, in bullying or disciplinary policies. This should clearly set out what behaviour is unacceptable.

Find out more about:

- [bullying](#)
- [harassment](#)