**Homeworking – Line Manager Guide**

While homeworking is categorised as a type of flexible working, employees should not assume that other aspects of flexible working (such as amended hours) are automatically part of a homeworking arrangement. For the purpose of this guide, ‘Homeworking’ is when an employee will spend 100% of their contracted hours working at home or very occasionally visiting sites for team meetings or training. It does not cover occasional working from home on an ad hoc basis as agreed with a line manager. Nor does it cover remote or field-based working where home is the employees’ start point.

Homeworkers are required, on request, to attend the workplace for purposes such as training, performance assessment and team briefings and the dates and times of such visits will be agreed in advance.

As a line manageryou can reserve the right to visit an employee at home at agreed times for work-related purposes, including health and safety matters. It is a condition of any homeworking agreement that you agree to such visits, which will be for the purposes of:

• delivering and collecting work;

• performance monitoring and feedback;

• general discussions about work related matters;

• ensuring health, safety and security; and/or

• any other work related purposes that you consider appropriate.

**Contact Whilst Homeworking**

You should ensure that there is a regular dialogue with any individuals Homeworking to ensure the individual feels included and part of the team. The employee should be regularly contactable by the Line Manager during business hours. Communication is strongly encouraged to safeguard the wellbeing of all employees.

**Equipment and Materials/Mobiles**

Typically, a company would provide and maintain all equipment and materials necessary to enable employees to work from home. It is the duty of the employee to ensure that proper care is taken of such equipment and materials.

Companies will normally pay all charges on any mobile phone provided with the proviso that it must be used only for work related purposes.

**Security**

Employees must not allow members of their family or third parties to access or use company equipment. Employees who work from home are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with their employer’s business secure at all times. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

• keep filing cabinets and drawers locked when they are not being used;

• keep all documentation under lock and key at all times except when in use; and

• use a unique password for the computer and any other digital devices.

Further, the computer and any other equipment provided, must be used for work related purposes only and must not be used by any other member of the employees’ family or third party at any time or for any purpose.

**Health and Safety Issues**

Companies are legally obliged to ensure the health and safety of homeworkers in the same way as office based staff and therefore required to ensure that:

• all equipment is safe;

• all articles and substances are handled and stored safely;

• an assessment of the employees’ workstation is conducted;

• information and training on the safe use of equipment, including display screen equipment, is provided; and

• relevant risk assessments are carried out by your business Health & Safety Officer.

All employees who work from home have a duty to ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that they work in a safe manner and that they follow all health and safety instructions issued.

**Insurance, Mortgage, or Rental Agreements**

The homeworker is responsible for checking that all home and contents insurance policies provide adequate cover for the fact that they work from home.

The employee is responsible for checking applicable mortgage or rental agreements to ensure you are permitted to work from home, and for obtaining any permissions necessary to work from home.

**Requests to Work From Home**

Any employee who wishes to work from home should make the request under the organisation's flexible working procedure. The line manager should view such requests in a positive light and whenever it is possible and practicable, agree to the request. Individual requests for homeworking will depend on whether the work can be done from home effectively. Companies cannot agree to all requests because every job is different, and every employee is different. The following should be considered for Homeworking.

* **Is the job holder eligible?** The employer should set out who will be eligible. For example:

• Those requesting it as a reasonable adjustment.

• Those making a flexible working request.

• Those who have completed a certain length of service or satisfactorily completed their training and achieved satisfactory in their last annual performance review.

* **Is the role suitable to work from home?** The employer should set the factors for assessing whether the role can be done just as well away from the business base by someone working on their own
* **Is the home suitable?** Homeworkers need a safe and reasonable space, security and privacy in which to work, and for office type tasks, an internet connection able to support work systems.

**Personal qualities?** If making a request to work from home the employee should consider whether or not they have the necessary organisational and time management skills; the ability to work without direct supervision; and are able to cope with the potentially conflicting demands of work and family.