*Delete this page from the policy given to the employee*

Template policy: Temporary homeworking

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| V1: 26 March 2020 |

**When to use this policy**

At the time of writing we are in the midst of a global coronavirus pandemic. As a result, on 23 March 2020 the government announced a "lockdown" for all UK residents, excluding those for whom travel for work is essential (essentially [key workers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision)). This will lead to a significant increase in the number of people who are working at home. Some may be accustomed to working at home but for others it is an entirely new way of working. At the same time, businesses will have to manage whole teams working remotely. Meanwhile working parents have to try to home school their children whilst working. So, we have created this policy to help businesses and employees manage all of this. See below "*More advice on homeworking*".

Please note - **this policy applies to your internal employees only and not to any temporary workers** you supply to clients. Unfortunately for temporary workers, they do not have any right to remain in a temporary assignment and to work from home. For more information on how various government announcements apply to temporary workers please see the REC's [Coronavirus hub](https://www.rec.uk.com/news-and-policy/coronavirus-covid-19-hub).

## **More advice on homeworking**

There is lots to think about when agreeing to or arranging homeworking. So when thinking about how to use this policy have a think about the following:

* equipment- will the employee use their own laptop, phone and printer or will they use company hardware?
* hours of work - particularly where the employee has caring responsibilities they are trying to manage whilst working.
* rest breaks - it is important to ensure that employees still take proper breaks.
* isolation - as we expect to work at home for a significant period, employers need to ensure employees stay connected and do not become isolated from the business or colleagues. Businesses are discovering lots of online tools to keep teams connected.
* motivation and trust - how will employees stay motivated in a different working environment and how will managers trust that their staff are doing what they need to be doing?
* data security - how will employees access data and what security protections does the business have in place to protect both personal data but also confidential information. For more information see the [data protection](https://www.rec.uk.com/legal-resources/legal-guide/data-protection) section of the REC legal guide.
* physical space - where will the employee work within the home? Can they work (relatively freely) from distractions?

## **Using this policy**

This policy is for use during the present Coronavirus emergency. We emphasise throughout the policy that it is temporary and only applies during the present crisis. You can alter or adapt the policy to reflect your own business needs and developing government guidance. If you need help doing this, our [legal business partners](https://www.rec.uk.com/business-support/business-partners) can assist at discounted rates.

REC template documents have been prepared exclusively for REC Corporate Members. You must not distribute these template documents to third parties except where you require them to complete the document.

Temporary homeworking policy

Throughout this document “the Company” means [insert business name].

## **The Policy**

This Temporary Homeworking Policy applies only during the present coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency. At this time, it supersedes any other homeworking policy. It applies to those who have to work from home during this crisis either because of Government guidance or because [the Company] has asked employees to work from home to prevent the spread of infection and safeguard the health and safety of its employees.

**The policy is temporary and only applies during the period of the coronavirus crisis.** It sets out the main considerations that [the Company] and its employees should consider during this temporary period of homeworking.

## **A Temporary Homeworking Policy**

As stated above, this is a temporary policy and only applies during the present coronavirus emergency. It does not set, therefore, any precedents for applications for homeworking under other policies. [the Company]’s existing policy on homeworking, which is temporarily suspended, will only apply to staff requests to work from home once the present emergency comes to an end.

## **Terms and Conditions**

An employee’s current terms and conditions as set out in their contract of employment with [the Company] will continue to apply during the coronavirus crisis and this consequent arrangement for the employee to work at home.

## **Equipment**

The [IT Department] will ensure that homeworkers have the necessary equipment and access to the necessary sites and online tools[, including the [the Company]’s intranet].

If employees use their own personal equipment (including phones, laptops and printers) such personal equipment remains their responsibility and [the Company] is not liable for any loss, damage, repair or replacement of any personal equipment. [Note: amend this if you require employees to only use company equipment.] If an item of equipment is deemed necessary for work, the employee should contact their line manager.

All equipment used by the homeworker must be safe and fit for purpose. The Company may ask the employee to complete a workstation assessment and a display screen equipment (DSE) assessment.

## **Keeping in Touch**

During this temporary arrangement, the employee’s main place of work will be their home. Nevertheless, they will still need to keep in touch with their line manager.

[The line manager will agree a work schedule with the employee on a daily and weekly basis.] Employees are expected to manage their time to ensure that the work is completed promptly and satisfactorily. Persistent failure to meet deadlines will result in disciplinary action.

Colleagues may need to contact each other for work updates. The employee is expected, therefore, to be available at agreed times. [Note: if you wish, you could add something about core hours and flexibility e.g. where employees have caring responsibilities they are trying to manage during normal working hours.]

[The employee should ensure that they check the intranet regularly for any company news.]

Any problems should be communicated to the line manager immediately.

## **Costs of Homeworking**

[The Company will not cover the costs of electricity, water, heating, telephone, broadband and other utilities. These costs will remain the employee's responsibility. OR [[the Company] will contribute [£] towards the added costs for the employee working from home. This will be paid via the payroll with the employee’s salary.][Note: add what evidence you require of expenditure. Please also check with payroll or HMRC whether you must apply tax and national insurance to such payments.]

## **Data Protection and Confidential Information**

Employees must always keep [the Company]’s data and materials safe and secure, and take reasonable precautions to maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Company's Data Protection policy. [Note: insert hyperlink to where employees can find this]

Employees are reminded that client, candidate and work-seeker data are confidential information belonging to the Company. Restrictions on the use of such confidential information are set out in employees' contracts of employment.

**Breach of the Company's Data Protection policy** [Note: insert hyperlink to where employees can find this] **and/ or breach of the confidential information requirements set out in an employee's contract of employment may lead to disciplinary action.**

## **Other Practical Considerations**

The Company recognises that it is not always easy to separate domestic and working life when working from home. Employees needs to think about how they will explain to and persuade those who live with them not to interrupt while they are working. They also need to ensure that no one else can access to their computer or work files. **Breach of security will be treated as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.**

If the employee owns the house through a mortgage, they should check with the lender that there are no issues regarding homeworking. They should also check with the insurer that any equipment, etc will be covered by household insurance. If it is not, then they must inform [the Company] so that proper arrangements can be made. If the employee does not inform [the Company], then should thefts occur, the employee may be held personally liable for replacing any stolen or damaged equipment.

## **End of the Temporary Arrangements**

As has been stated above, these arrangements for employees working from home are temporary to cover the present coronavirus emergency. All such arrangements remain at the discretion of [the Company].

[the Company] will keep employees updated of developments and of the arrangements once the risk of infection has deemed to have passed and, therefore, of the end of this temporary policy, including when employees can return to their work in the [office/site].