

TEMPORARY HOME WORKING



Your employer recognises they have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers. The purpose of this leaflet is to provide you with guidance on how to work from home safely for a temporary period of time.

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Temporary home working guidance

Display screen equipment (DSE)

Home working employees should make sure their workstation is comfortable and properly set up. If there are concerns or queries these should be escalated to a line manager. There is no requirement to document the self workstation assessment.

Some workers may experience fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache from overuse or improper use of DSE. These problems can also be experienced from poorly designed workstations or work environments.

- Forearms should be approximately horizontal and eyes at the same height as the top of the screen.
- Make sure there is enough work space for documents etc.
- Arrange the desk and screen to avoid glare or reflections.
- Adjust blinds to prevent intrusive light.
- Make sure there is space under the desk to move legs.
- Make sure there is space in front of the keyboard.
- Keep wrists straight when typing.
- Keep a soft touch on keys and do not overstretch fingers.
- Position the mouse within easy reach so it can be used with a straight wrist.
- Sit upright and close to the desk to avoid over stretching.
- Make sure characters on the screen are sharp, in focus and don't flicker or move.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast to suit the lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.

Breaking up long spells of DSE work helps to prevent fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache.

- Stretch and change position.
- Look into the distance from time to time and blink often.
- Change activity before getting tired.
- Short, frequent breaks are better than longer, infrequent ones.



- ✓ Arrange your desk so you have enough work space.
- ✓ Position your screen, keyboard and chair height to ensure good posture and avoid glare or reflections.
- ✓ Take short, frequent breaks.



Use of equipment

Equipment and machinery must be safe, suitable for the intended use and maintained in a safe condition.



- ✓ Check all equipment before using it - check cables, plugs, sockets and switches.
- ✓ Operate equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ Take damaged equipment out of use and report immediately.



- ✗ Allow trailing cables to cause tripping incidents.
- ✗ Use defective or damaged equipment.
- ✗ Use water around electrical sockets or appliances.
- ✗ Handle plugs, switches, any electrical appliance or equipment with wet hands.



Mental health

Your employer should keep in touch with you, but keep in regular contact with colleagues to support each other and make sure everyone is healthy and safe. You should also take advantage of any support schemes that your employer has in place for your wellbeing.

Trust and flexibility whilst working from home will promote improved mental wellbeing and reduce stress. Your employer will recognise that a certain amount of flexibility is likely to be required to juggle commitments with children who are off school and other family members. Trust can sometimes break down due to a lack of communication so use the contact time with your manager to discuss your own circumstances.

Finally, try to take regular exercise. Physical exercise helps lower your overall stress levels and improves your quality of life, both mentally and physically. It can also have a positive effect on your mood by relieving the tension, anxiety, anger, and mild depression that often go hand-in-hand with stress. It can improve the quality of your sleep and help boost your confidence levels.

If you have any concerns about any aspect of home working, speak directly to your manager.