



Southwater Parish Council

Working From Home Policy

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Statement

The UK Government has instructed, where possible, employees who can work from home to do so for the time being. Therefore, Southwater Parish Council (SPC) request that certain employees work from home unless or until notified otherwise.

Home working is a form of flexible working. However employees are reminded that other aspects of flexible working are not part of home working, i.e. amended work hours.

Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish SPC's approach to employee home working. SPC may amend this policy at their own and absolute discretion.

Defined home working, office attendance and who the policy relates to

1. Flexible home working with split time between home and regular office, and
2. The office as the main place of work with working from the home occasionally; and
3. SPC will advise how frequently, for how long, where and for what reasons the employee's attendance at the office will be required.
4. This policy applies to all employees, irrespective of seniority, tenure and working hours, including all directors and officers, casual or agency staff, trainees and fixed-term staff and volunteers.

Initiating home working; process, decision, considerations and home access

5. SPC will outline the process to be followed, consider factors assessing the request, the final decision and grounds of appeal upon refusal of a request.
6. An employee may request to work from home for a specific reason, this request should be done in writing. SPC will reserve the right to decide if that reason is adequate or reasonable.
7. SPC may request an employee work from home on a flexible basis.
8. Included in SPC deliberations to allow or request home working, SPC will consider:
 - a Suitability of the role; and
 - b Employee eligibility; and
 - c Suitability of the employee; and
 - d Suitability of the home; including additional charges for; insurance, utilities, communications, transport, relocation of equipment and materials; and
 - e Will home working be beneficial?
9. SPC will advise frequency and circumstances it requires access to the home. Examples; Initial set-up, maintenance of equipment, health and safety assessment, who is responsible for electrical equipment testing, one-to-one meetings, virtually or in person.

Termination of home working

10. SPC will notify the employee of termination of the home working arrangement.
11. Home working arrangements are by exception and do not guarantee the right to work from home permanently.

Work hours

12. The employee should ensure that adequate breaks are taken throughout the core hour period.
13. Changes with conflicting demands on work, sickness (employee or others that may impact employee), child care and care of dependants should be notified to the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk as

soon as possible. This will allow rescheduling or re-distribution work as required and further discussion with the employer.

Communication

14. Employees working from home should keep regular contact with the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk, to notify them of any queries or concerns or seek clarity of tasks undertaken.
15. All forms of communication should be used including email, text, telephone and video calls, individually or as groups or meetings, to ensure relationships and team working is maintained.

Equipment and materials

16. The SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk should be notified of the need for equipment and materials immediately. SPC will endeavour to provide equipment and materials where possible, as soon as possible. However, some equipment and materials may not be available. Where possible, discuss this potential situation with the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk in advance.
17. Equipment and materials provided by SPC, remain the SPC property for the duration of home working.
18. SPC provided equipment and materials is for SPC work related purposes only.
19. The employee is responsible for damage, beyond general wear and tear, to SPC property.
20. Any issues, breakdown or failure of equipment and material provided by SPC should be notified to the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk immediately. Subsequent collection of equipment and materials should be available as arranged.
21. SPC should be notified of any and all use of employee personal equipment and materials.
22. The employee is expected to provide heating, lighting, telephone and broadband service.
23. Who will pay for any installation and other necessary costs, and, if required and agreed, how costs can be claimed back will be arranged prior to commencement of home working.

Expenses

24. SPC will reimburse reasonable costs if appropriate, when working from home, subject to production of itemised bills and other evidenced documentation required.

Tax

25. The employee may be able to claim household expenses incurred as a result of home working, provided the expenses are solely work related.
26. SPC will set out implications of home working on tax.

Security

27. The employee is responsible for ensuring the security of all equipment, materials, documents, and information. Confidential information is to be kept secure at all times. In particular:
 - a Information held on any computer to be password protected and computer locked when unattended; and
 - b Confidential paperwork stored securely, and disposed of in a secure manner i.e. shredded; and
 - c Comply with Data Protection and Communications & Equipment policies; and
 - d Report data security breaches to the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk immediately.

Health and safety

28. The Employee should be aware of SPC Health and Safety Policy and follow health and safety instructions issued by SPC from time to time.
29. Equipment and hardware provided by SPC should be appropriate for home working. Inform the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk if there is any doubt as soon as possible.
30. Occupants of the household where home working is carried out should not be exposed to health and safety concerns. Advise the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk of any concerns or changes that arise during the home working period.
31. SPC will carry out risk assessments to ascertain home health and safety requirements.
32. Employee to complete both the SPC homeworking checklist and risk assessment sent to them and return to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk asap from commencing any home working.

Sickness

33. If an employee becomes sick, for any reason, the employee must notify the SPC Clerk or Deputy Clerk immediately.

Holiday

34. Employees are entitled to and can request annual leave as set out in their employment contract.
35. Previously booked leave that occurs during the period of home working cannot be cancelled unless authorised by SPC.
36. Employee should review government website regarding carry over annual leave during pandemic or other national emergencies.

Employee mortgage, lease and insurance issues

37. The employee should tell their mortgage provider or landlord and home insurer of their intention to work from home. They should check that there isn't anything preventing them from working at home - for example, in their mortgage agreement, lease or insurance.
38. The employee should obtain from their home insurer confirmation of cover should work equipment cause damage and for a claim from a third party.
39. Following SPC considerations to allow home working, SPC will advise if they will consider to pay extra if the employee's premium rises as a result.
40. Work property and a claim by a third party should be covered by the employer's insurance policy.