

Checklist for managing homeworking.

Your staff fulfil a range of different roles and may not have worked from home previously. Managers too may have had little or no experience in this, so below is a checklist of considerations to help ensure things run smoothly.

- ✓ When thinking about a job that will involve homeworking, consider if the employee has the necessary skills and qualities, including:
 - self-discipline
 - the ability to work without direct supervision
 - organisational skills
 - effective time management ability
 - effective communication skills
 - an ability to cope with potentially conflicting demands between work and home/family.

And if not, compile plans to support them.

- ✓ Remember that even if your staff are at home, you still are under a duty to take care of the health, safety and welfare of homeworkers in the same way as you would be if they were on the business premises.
- ✓ Make sure that the worker's home environment is suitable for homeworking (for example in terms of the environment, the amount of space available and any equipment the worker will use) and as hazard free as is reasonably practicable. This can be achieved by asking each staff member to complete a self assessment.
- ✓ Depending on the type of work involved, the homeworker may have to be trained to carry out tasks form part of the job.
- ✓ If the work involves using a computer, make sure you've provided them with written guidelines and procedures for the use of the equipment provided and require the homeworker to sign a copy of the guidelines, confirming that he or she has read, understood and agreed to them.
- ✓ Think carefully about whether any furniture, tools and/or equipment (e.g. a computer) needed for the work should be provided by the employer or the homeworker.
- ✓ If the equipment is provided and paid for by the employer, then they will be in a position to determine how it is used and set down rules or restrictions regarding its use.

- ✓ Check your insurance policies (e.g. employers' liability insurance) to make sure that the necessary cover is in place for employees who work wholly or partly at home.
- ✓ Ask the homeworker to check his or her home and contents insurance policies and any mortgage/rental agreements to make sure they do not prohibit homeworking or invalidate cover in respect of the particular type of work to be performed at home.
- ✓ If the homeworker's job involves dealing with confidential or sensitive information, take appropriate steps to ensure that all working arrangements are secure and any documentation to be held in the home will not be subject to breaches of confidentiality.
- ✓ If there are children in the home, seek to agree measures with the homeworker that will prevent them from accessing filing cabinets or the computer that the homeworker will be using.
- ✓ If the homeworker is likely, in the course of his or her work, to obtain or use personal information about individuals, you should ensure he or she is trained fully in the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and current Data Protection Act relevant to data security. Issuing, or re-issuing, your data protection policy is advisable.
- ✓ You may need to put in place arrangements for work to be delivered to and collected from the worker's home.
- ✓ It will be important to agree whether the homeworker should be contracted to work fixed hours or whether there can be flexibility as to how many hours they work and when those hours are worked.
- ✓ In the event that there are no fixed hours, it may nevertheless be appropriate to agree with the homeworker that he/she will be available at set times (core hours) so that telephone or email contact can be made.
- ✓ The contracts of homeworkers should stipulate whether, and if so how often, they will be required to attend the employer's premises for meetings or other purposes.