



EMPLOYEE HOME WORKING POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Introduction and scope

Mind in Croydon have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and this includes home workers. Home workers are defined as those people who regularly work at home because of formally agreed arrangements with their line manager/HR, or are contracted to work at home.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Site Safety Managers to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out for home workers. Any equipment provided to an employee to use at home remains the responsibility of the organisation. This might include computers, power packs/re-chargers, etc. The domestic electrical supply is the responsibility of the employee as is any equipment owned by them. Approval to work at home, even occasionally, must be given by the employee's line manager for them to be covered by The Organisation's insurance.

3. Guidance

- **Management control** - as direct supervision of home workers is not possible, the arrangements for home working must be agreed between the home worker and their supervisor or line manager and incorporated into the local safety management system. Home working may result in feelings of social isolation, so it is particularly important for the mode and frequency of communication to be agreed.
- **Persons at Risk** - the principal person at risk is the home worker. However, any activity carried out at home may put the home worker's family or visitors at risk. It is anticipated that most of the work carried out at home will be related to the use of information technology, personal computers and associated peripherals (IT equipment).
- **Hazards** – in some cases, according to the activity, it may be necessary for an overall risk assessment to be carried out in the home. For low-risk activities such as the use of IT equipment at home the hazards will be the same as in the normal workplace and they may be assessed and reviewed by the home worker. A simple checklist covering such items as the work environment, maintenance etc. Must be completed prior to the work commencing and reviewed annually. The line manager should keep copies, and act upon any matters of concern.

Typical hazards associated with home working will include:

- Manual handling such as loading and unloading goods from vehicles and moving in relatively confined spaces.
- Electrical hazards. It is the responsibility of the home worker to carry out visual checks of any equipment and check the capacity of domestic power supply to ensure it is adequate for the electrical equipment required. Before equipment is issued from The Organisation, portable appliance checks should be made.

- Regular or prolonged use of IT equipment and office furniture. A Display Screen Assessment (DSE) should be carried out.
- Fire and security.
- Lone workers/social isolation.
- First Aid - the home worker must ensure that there are adequate first aid supplies available.
- Accident and incident reporting - home workers should be advised to use the organisation reporting forms and systems for any work-related accident or injury and to send completed forms to their manager.
- Record Keeping - Records should be kept of all risk assessments.
- Work equipment supplied to the homeworker.
- Maintenance and testing of the equipment.
- Monitoring arrangements such as completed checklists; and accident and incident reports.

4. **Training requirements**

In many situations it is appropriate for the home worker to conduct their own risk assessments, particularly for their own workstations and to keep these up-to date. They may also need some information about the visual inspection of electrical equipment and the use of DSE.

5. **Risk assessment**

A Working from Home assessment tool has been produced and Site Safety Managers are required to ensure that each home working employee completes and returns this form thereby enabling an assessment of risks to be established. A copy is attached as Appendix 1 to this policy.

Appendix 1

Health and Safety Working from Home Self-Assessment Tool Use

Use the following self-assessment tool to find out how safe your home working space really is. Take a look at the risks in the first column, answer 'yes' or 'no' as applicable and then make a note of what needs to be done to reduce or remove the risk if necessary.

Date: Name:

Location of Assessment:

Risk	Yes/No	Action Required
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Desk area		
Do you have adequate space to work comfortably?		
Is there enough space underneath your desk to stretch your legs?		
Are there trailing electrical cables around your working area that need to be tied up?		
Is your working area warm, well-lit and well-ventilated?		
Do you need a desk lamp to improve lighting?		
Is your working area clutter free so that you can focus easily on the task?		

Display Screens Set-Up		
Is your desk chair set up correctly? Is your lower back supported, are there armrests and are your feet flat on the floor?		
Do you have enough surface space on your desk to work comfortably?		
Are your keyboard and mouse clean and within easy reach, without having to stretch?		
Is your display screen clean and positioned so there is no glare from a window or light?		
Is your display screen level with your eyes so it doesn't cause discomfort to your neck or head?		
Can you easily reach everything that you need without twisting and straining your upper body?		

Fire and Electrical Safety		
Are smoke detectors working and checked regularly, e.g. every month?		
Do you regularly dispose of waste, including papers, to prevent a buildup of fire 'fuel'?		
Does any electrical equipment spark or show signs of burns and so needs removing from use?		
Do any wires look damaged or frayed and so need removing from use?		
Do you regularly inspect your electrical equipment to check for signs of wear and tear?		
Do you switch off equipment when not in use?		
Do you have emergency arrangements in place in case of fire?		

Stress and Welfare		
Do you take regular breaks away from your workstation?		
Do you carry out regularly stretches at your desk to avoid stiff or sore muscles?		
Do you sit with a good posture or are you hunched over the desk?		
Do you have easy access to first aid equipment if required?		
If you regularly use a computer, do you have your eyes tested every year?		
Can you easily reach everything that you need without twisting and straining your upper body?		

Manual Handling		
Are all items that you need for work within easy reach?		

Are heavy items stored on lower shelves to avoid the need for lowering them?		
Do you know how to correctly pick up, carry and lower heavy items?		

Slips, Trip and Falls		
Are floor coverings, such as carpets and rugs, secure?		
Do you frequently carry hot drinks and food upstairs/downstairs and risk tripping?		
Are stairways and corridors clear of trip hazards?		
Is the floor area around your desk clear of boxes, papers and wires?		

Lone Working		
Are you familiar with your employer's lone working health and safety policy?		
Do you know the name and number of a manager or supervisor who you can get in touch with easily?		
Do you have a system for regularly 'checking in' with your employer if you are not visibly online each day?		
Is your home kept secure whilst you're working there?		
Are important files and laptops kept locked away securely when not in use?		

Number of Actions Required:

Date Actions Completed: