

# Homeworking

## 1. The Purpose

This policy sets out the Forestry Commission's approach to managing employees who undertake some or all of their duties from home.

## 2. The Principles

The principles of the policy are:

- all home workers will have a safe and healthy working environment;
- home working will not be agreed as an alternative to normal childcare or other caring arrangements, or in place of sick leave;
- managers will decide if there is a business requirement or a business efficiency for all or some of a job to be home-based
- where an individual wishes to have a formal homeworking arrangement, an application must be made using the [HR Policy and Procedure – Flexible Working](#).
- occasional homeworking must be approved in advance by management;
- formal home workers will be provided with the necessary resources, equipment and support required to allow them to effectively carry out their work; and
- homeworking facilities allowance will only be paid where there is a business requirement or business efficiency for all or some of a job to be home-based.

## 3. The Policy

Formal home working is a contractual arrangement where an employee's home is their official place of work for some or all of their working time. Occasional home working is a non-contractual arrangement and is usually agreed on a very ad-hoc basis between the employee and their line manager on each occasion that it is required. Further information on the different types of homeworking are contained within HR Procedure – Homeworking.

### 3.1 Your responsibilities as a homeworking employee

You are expected to:

- familiarise yourself with this policy and the associated procedure;
- advise all necessary parties of your intention to work from home, see [HR Procedure – Homeworking](#);
- take responsibility for your own health and safety by taking appropriate rest breaks and maintaining your home workplace in a safe working condition;
- ensure that you make adequate arrangements for the care of dependents during working hours;
- take reasonable care of any equipment provided to you by the FC and ensure that official information is stored securely;
- allow your manager, HR, a security officer or a Health and Safety representative access to your home when required;
- arrange for any meetings you are holding with colleagues or visitors to take place within an FC office, ensuring that only visits directly connected with your homeworking arrangement, e.g. your annual risk assessment take place in your home;
- ensure that you are contactable during your agreed working hours;
- attend meetings at an FC Office in person where required;
- advise your manager if you are moving home; and
- adhere to all other agreed terms of your home working arrangement.

### 3.2 Your responsibilities as a manager

You are expected to:

- check that the employee's home is suitable for home working from a health and safety perspective and that information systems and security requirements can be met;
- advise the [Employee Life Cycle Team, HR Services](#) of the terms of the home working arrangement, including whether Homeworking Facilities Allowance is applicable;
- agree how and when you will keep in touch with employees who work from home (including arrangements for team meetings);
- continuously manage the performance of staff working at home and keep them updated on work matters, changes affecting them and training/development opportunities;
- ensure that home workers are aware of the need to take rest breaks and do not exceed their contractual working hours
- review the home working arrangement at regular intervals, to ensure it continues to meet business needs;

- discuss next steps with your HR Operations/Case Manager should you consider that a homeworking arrangement is no longer suitable.

### 3.3 Human Resources responsibilities

Human Resources have responsibility for:

- providing advice and guidance to managers on the application of this policy and the associated procedure;
- confirming any changes to employees' terms and conditions of employment as a result of an agreed formal homeworking arrangement;
- arranging payment of Homeworking Facilities Allowance where this has been approved by management;
- working with employees to identify actions to mitigate any risks in their home workplace; and
- monitoring and reviewing this policy and the associated procedure, in consultation with the FC Trade Unions.