

Guidance on managing the health and safety of home workers

Introduction

As an employer the Council or the School has the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers.

Managers will already be aware of the work employees under their control are being asked to carry out, along with the tools and equipment they have available.

When someone is working from home, permanently or temporarily, the manager should be considering:

- How will you keep in touch with them?
- What work activity will they be doing and for how long?
- Can it be done safely?
- Do you need to put control measures in place to protect them?
- Lone working without supervision

Staff whose job involves intensive data input should be subject to a specific assessment and contact the Corporate Health & Safety Team - workstationassessment@hackney.gov.uk

Working with display screen equipment

There are some simple steps Managers can promote to reduce the risks from display screen work :

- breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every half hour) or changes in activity that take you away from your screen
- avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position
- getting up and moving or doing stretching exercises
- avoiding eye fatigue by changing focus or blinking from time to time

Please also refer to:

[Top ten tips for your health and wellbeing while working remotely](#)

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Stress and mental health

Keeping in touch

Managers should have arrangements in place so you can keep in direct contact with home workers so you can recognise signs of stress as early as possible.

It is also important to have an emergency point of contact and to share this so people know how to get help if they need it.

Managing staff remotely normally requires additional effort (at least at first) and additional trust; and usually involves a shift from managing attendance to managing outputs.

Key points to consider are:

1. Management style:

- a high trust, low control management style will normally work best (note, the work produced is still monitored).

2. Job specific issues:

This might include identifying:

- specific periods that the employee will need to be available/contactable;
- how contact will be made;
- clear goals, boundaries and expectations;
- the required quality and quantity of work.
- the work produced can be monitored but this should not be excessive compared to other employees;
- storing and transporting confidential information in line with GDPR requirements

3. Support:

This involves consideration of the support the employee might need:

- arrangements for contacting their manager in an emergency?
- recognise signs of stress (which may include for example the tone of emails or telephone calls).
- home working can cause work-related stress and affect people's mental health.
- being away from managers and colleagues could make it difficult to get proper support.