[Mole Valley logo image](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2189)

Agile Working Guidance

# Introduction

This guidance has been developed to provide a more up to date framework for home working and other alternative working arrangements. See relevant policies for specific information in relation to flexible working requests and hybrid working arrangements.

Increasingly work is perceived as an activity or service rather than a location. Agile working is designed to facilitate different ways of working to improve the working lives of our employees, to broaden our potential applicant pool, to make our work more productive and to improve service levels.

**With improvements to technology, agile working can facilitate many different objectives however service levels and business need will always take precedence.**

This policy potentially applies to contractors, employees, secondees or anyone who works for Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) though some roles may suit (or require) agile working more than others. This policy does not apply to agency workers other than under exceptional circumstances where it is specifically agreed that they may work in an agile manner.

Anybody wishing to conduct agile working must read this policy, discuss implications with their manager, and take the procedural steps outlined below before doing so.

*There are additional requirements for employees wishing to work at home (see sections 6 and 9 in particular and for whom a full risk assessment - Annex Two - must be undertaken).*

*Any form of agile or remote working should factor in consideration of data protection impacts to the scale that is considered appropriate. Some questions to consider are contained in the Risk Assessment at Annex Two to this Policy however if the risks regarding sensitivity and potential impact of breach are assessed to be particularly high the advice of Legal Services should be sought.*

In operational emergencies or where an employee is subject to disciplinary or capability proceedings requiring closer supervision, agile working arrangements may be suspended or terminated with immediate effect. Examples of operational emergencies include, where there is lack of cover due to unexpected wide scale sickness absence affecting the team, or service level emergencies increasing demand on the team.

This policy or the provisions within it do not result in an agreement to formal changes to working conditions. Requests for formal changes can be made through the Flexible Working Request Policy and Guidance. (See Section 15)

All sections of this policy should be read in order to gain an understanding of the impacts of agile working which need to be fully considered. The main principles of this policy have been summarised at Annex One (page 17) for ease of reference only. Annex Two (pages 18 onwards outline the risk assessment required to be undertaken).

# Definitions

Agile working is a broad term. It is about enabling individuals to work in an environment that best suits the job role so that work is completed in the most appropriate place, at the best time, and in the best way, to deliver the service to our customers.

Agile working includes working from a variety of MVDC locations as well as all forms of remote or off-site working including within the community and at home. It includes completion of work tasks, calls or administrative tasks offsite before or after meetings.

Throughout this policy the term ‘employees’ should be construed as potentially including all those who work for MVDC with the exception of agency workers. This policy is also potentially applicable to employees conducting work for MOVA and any electoral registration or election duties.

# purpose

The main objectives of agile working include:

* Achieving greater productivity through enhanced focus and reduced travelling time.
* Improving the service provided to customers by making it more timely and efficient
* Improving recruitment and retention by giving greater flexibility and by widening our applicant pool to facilitate employment of those who live outside normal travelling distances
* Potentially reducing expenditure on office accommodation

# aims of this policy

There are currently a variety of different working arrangements in place and many have evolved to suit the needs of the individual (e.g. to broaden our recruitment pool) in the absence of any negative impact on the business. Other more mobile practices have evolved where it makes sense for work to be completed off site e.g. around meetings or appointments.

There are also many ad hoc arrangements where individuals occasionally work from home either to suit their personal needs (e.g. need to work at home on a particular day for personal reasons) or to improve their performance (e.g. need to work at home on a particular day to complete a report, back log of work etc).

Some jobs do not involve any administrative tasks and are required to be based in the community.

This policy is not designed to revoke arrangements that are already working effectively but to provide a framework to ensure consideration of the variety of different logistical impacts and risks.

This policy is also designed to improve and maximise active consideration of the benefits and impacts of agile working particularly as improving technology enhances our ability to do so.

# types of agile working

Typically, assessment of agile working falls into one of the following four categories. It is advisable to conduct some role analysis to determine the most suitable work style by considering which category a particular role falls into when assessing the impacts of agile working. Please note however that this assessment is for workforce planning purposes only and will not result in permanent changes to working conditions without express agreement which must be reflected in the contract or flexible working request documentation.

**HR advice should be sought before making permanent or formal changes to contracts.**

**5.1 Office based**

Office based workers are employees whose role involves working the majority of their time in the office, often customer facing and therefore requiring a desk on a regular basis. They will only occasionally work at home.

**5.2 Flexible or Hybrid Worker**

Flexible workers are employees who spend their time split between office, meetings, off-site visits and sometimes home. It is possible they may work between 30 to 70% of their time at home. MVDC’s [Hybrid Working policy](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/employment-policies/) provides further information about the typical hybrid working arrangements in agreed circumstances.

**5.3 Home Worker**

A Home worker is an employee who spends the majority of their time, 80% or more, conducting their job role at home rather than on MVDC premises.

**5.4 Mobile Worker**

Mobile workers are employees who spend some of their time working remotely at a variety of locations. Time is spent visiting customers or carrying out work at various locations throughout the District. One of the goals of Agile Working is to enable employees who are mobile to spend more time out with the customer and less time travelling back to the office.

# home working

Depending on the nature of the arrangements it is most likely that agile working arrangements are ad hoc and will always be based around the needs of the business. Home working arrangements will again always have consideration for business need and will in most instances be a more structured arrangement. There are therefore additional requirements to ensure home working is considered appropriately.

Any work style can involve some working at home and in the absence of express agreement many employees work at home from time to time. This could be to concentrate on a particular project or task which needs dedicated and focused input and/or could be dealt with more efficiently at home e.g. saved travelling time and lack of interruptions or where it is difficult for an individual to get in to work e.g. adverse weather.

With improving technology home working may become a more viable option. All employees and their managers should follow the set up roles and responsibility (section 7) and additional home working approval procedure in this policy (**section 9)** before home working so that managers can give approval on the basis of the requirements of this policy.

Successful home working is dependent on a number of factors: the suitability of the role, the individual and the home work environment.

Home working will not normally be approved until the employee has successfully completed his/her probation period.

# Set up and roles and responsibilities

Employees who undertake any form of agile working must ensure that they have the approval of their manager (including the Business Manager for the service). In order for this to be possible they must:

* Have access to appropriate technology and equipment.
* Ensure that they have appropriate access to files and data in a manner that preserves confidentiality and is compliant with data protection legislation.
* Confirm that there are adequate wifi (broadband or 4G) connections to facilitate home working. Please note that remote connections must not be tethered to other MVDC equipment such as ipads or mobile phones. (In other words you should not use a hotspot or mobile connection from an MVDC mobile or ipad to power your internet access when working at home). Refer to the ICT team for further guidance on this.
* Make arrangements to manage telephone calls, e.g. by diverting calls to an alternative number (See section 19 on TELEPHONES below)
* Inform their manager and colleagues as necessary of the location and times they are working and how they may be contacted.
* Provide regular updates, in accordance with agreed performance targets, on progress of their work. (Note the purpose of this is two way – sometimes employees who work out of sight can feel concerned to ensure their efforts and input are recognised, which may lead to isolation or other negative behaviour - including excessive emailing - therefore the purpose of this is to mutually agree appropriate contribution).
* Ensure that physical absence from the normal place of work does not negatively impact other colleagues to an unacceptable degree. (NB this will be a weighing exercise against the anticipated benefits to productivity of working off site).
* Attend all agreed meetings (including training courses)
* Be prepared to come in if required, e.g. if there is an unforeseen emergency, problems with remote working or unexpected situation that results in changing job priorities needed on the day.

In addition where relevant employees must:

* Have undertaken a risk assessment and display screen assessment on their premises (See Annex Two). Have made appropriate care provisions (it will not be practical, for example, to work from home whilst caring for a dependent). Working from home must not be seen as an alternative means of child or elder care.

Managers’ responsibilities include

* Agreeing clear objectives. (Sometimes it may be helpful to develop measurable outputs and see that performance is managed against these however studies repeatedly demonstrate that agile working is just as likely to lead to increased delivery and/or extended working time therefore agreement of outputs should not equate to demonstrating lack of trust purely because an employee is out of sight – see section 8 below).
* Ensuring they are aware of the whereabouts of their employees at all times during working hours.
* Checking that secure arrangements are in place for the transfer of any data or confidential information. Transfer of data should be electronic rather than paper based wherever possible.
* Ensuring that staff are aware of any Health and Safety issues and that an appropriate risk assessment has been completed and reviewed where relevant.
* Ensuring that systems are in place for appropriate supervision and training.
* Ensuring that the correct equipment and technology is in place.
* Dealing with any issues raised by the employees – including their colleagues.
* Communicating with employees to ensure they are kept ‘in the loop’ at all times. This includes key organisational messages, departmental and appropriate ‘social’ announcements.
* Reviewing any agile working arrangement regularly - at least once every six months.

Employees and managers must agree working patterns, including any variation of the normal working pattern, in advance of undertaking agile working. It is expected that in the absence of discussion and agreement to the contrary working patterns will coincide with normal office hours in order to help maintain contact between the employee and their colleagues.

# MANAGING PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNICATION

Employees must agree with their manager the location and times they are working and how they may be contacted, also making this information available to working colleagues.

All working relationships benefit from starting from a position of trust regardless of where the employee, manager or other colleagues are working. Where colleagues are working out of sight avoid the tendency to test for ‘virtual presence’, e.g. by timing responses to emails or checking how active online an employee is. Depending on the employee’s job function, or the reason that they have elected to work at home on a particular occasion there may be a requirement for the employee to ensure a piece of work is completed. This may result in periods of focus where emails are not immediately responded to. For some jobs (e.g. those requiring regular unplanned customer interaction or where high degrees of collaboration with colleagues are required) and where normal responsiveness is not anticipated this must be agreed and planned for with the Business Manager in advance to avoid negative impact either on customers or other colleagues.

Similarly if you are working from home or offsite avoid the temptation to use emails to ‘chat’ with your colleagues or to evidence that you are working. Your productivity should be agreed and managed by your manager as appropriate – in the same way it would be if you are in the office - and should not be assumed to be measured by volume, frequency or timings of emails.

All employees will deliver their performance objectives, and active performance management is expected from all managers, regardless of the regular working location of employees.

For example, managers and employees will mutually agree tasks and objectives so that the employee has a clear idea as to what is expected of them when working at home. The manager will assess/monitor performance and output in the same way that they would if working on site.

The manager will ensure that employees have access to briefing notes, circulars and other information relevant to their work.

As with all other flexible working arrangements, team meetings, service meetings, 121’s should continue to take place regularly and work styles or work patterns should, where possible, be arranged to accommodate this.

All employees are contractually required to attend the office on a regular basis (at least once per calendar month) for team meetings, 121’s and other ad hoc meetings agreed with their manager. The manager and employee may find it useful to pre-book specific times in advance. The meetings may be held at the office, other MVDC accommodation or an alternative mutually agreeable location.

Employees and their colleagues must ensure that all employees are included in relevant activities in order to avoid the potential for isolation.

# procedure for approving home working arrangements

### In addition to reviewing the setup and roles and responsibilities for agile working (section 7), there are considerations that are specific to home working.

### The manager will consider the extent to which working at or regularly from home is appropriate considering the factors above and, in order to assist with this, may consider which work style (Section 5) is most applicable to the post.

### (If the manager wishes to decline any requests see Section 10 below).

### Where the manager considers home working is appropriate they will then discuss with the employee and ask the individual to complete an Agile/Home Working Risk Self Assessment in full – (See Annex 2)

### The manager will review the individual’s answers and comments before approving the assessment.

### The success of home working is not just about equipment. It also very much depends on the employee having appropriate responsibility levels, qualities and skills and with appropriate monitoring and support systems being in place. Decisions are therefore highly likely to vary across (and within) services as they need to be made in a context that balances many different factors.

### The manager will assess whether the individual meets their performance and development objectives, organises their time and communicates effectively.

### All employees working at home must have suitable childcare/dependent care arrangements in place where appropriate (e.g. agile workers must not be responsible for the care of children who need supervision whilst working at any location including home). Home working provides a flexible way of working to fit around caring commitments or other responsibilities but it must not be used an alternative to child or elder care. Children under secondary school age are particularly likely to require additional supervision for which dedicated childcare arrangements will be required however there may be exceptions to this guideline age and some children may have temporary or permanent conditions, or special needs, requiring additional supervision or support.

### Decisions about whether an individual works at or regularly from home will rest with the manager and will take account of the plans for the service area, impact on service levels and other colleagues and the satisfactory outcome of a risk assessment for health and safety and data protection purposes.

### Any employee conducting home working continues to be subject to performance management, work or organisation standards and all objectives applying to office based employees.

### Managers must agree working hours and patterns, contact times and availability with the employee in advance. Unless otherwise agreed, contractual working hours will remain the same when employees commence home, flexible or mobile working.

### Working at home must include the same level of responsiveness that would be expected in the office (e.g. taking telephone calls, responding to emails) unless specific provision has been made for cover by other members of the team. It will not, for example, be acceptable for customer service levels to be compromised (e.g. by switching telephones to voicemail and/or expecting the CSU to take messages) unless this has been the subject of explicit agreement in advance.

### Any employee concerns about working arrangements must be brought to the attention of their manager without delay.

### Managers may wish to consult with HR to consider wider employee relations issues or for general advice.

### Any permission granted under this policy does not form part of the employee’s terms and conditions in the absence of express contractual agreement. Before agreeing any formal changes the manager should consult with the HR team to ensure adequate provision and recording of changes as well as wider impact.

# Declining home working requests

### If a manager considers a home working arrangement would be unsuitable for an individual or a role then the employee will be given a clear explanation for the decision.

### Employees who are unhappy about the reasons should consider whether they wish to put in a formal flexible working request. If the employee is deemed to have already made a flexible working request through the discussion under this policy they may consider whether they wish to appeal the decision.

### For further information see [Flexible Working Request Policy and Guidance](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/employment-policies/).

# Termination of Home Working arrangements

### Managers, in consultation with HR, will only terminate home working arrangements for sound business or performance reasons and after fully consulting with the employee. Although not an exhaustive list the reasons could include:

### If the employee’s role changes, so that the job requirements or needs of the service are no longer met.

### Where feedback indicates that the arrangement has had an adverse effect on the work within the team and/or the service provided.

### If the employee’s performance or conduct is no longer satisfactory.

### If the employee’s personal circumstances change so that it is no longer practical or desirable to undertake home working.

### Some other substantial business reason, the precise reasons for which will be explained (together with an opportunity to seek alternative resolutions to any issues).

### Normally, at least 30 calendar days’ notice will be given to the employee to end the arrangement, business needs permitting.

### In operational emergencies e.g. unforeseen situations changing or increasing demand on the service, lack of cover due to unexpected wide scale sickness absence affecting the team, or in the event of disciplinary or capability proceedings or data protection concerns requiring additional supervision, the arrangement may be suspended or terminated with immediate effect.

# EXPENSES

### This policy does not give the right to claim travel expenses for the regular commute from home to MVDC offices for attending meetings as required.

### Mileage or other travel costs will be payable on business journeys from home less the cost of mileage in excess of travel to the office.

### This is the case whether your home or MVDC offices are your contractual place of work.

### This policy also does not give the right to claim for heating, lighting or broadband costs in the employee’s home. One of the advantages for employees of working from home is a saving in travel expenses incurred – these savings will be deemed to cover any household costs.

### No stationery or printing costs will be redeemable as it is assumed that documents can be viewed virtually or printed in the office where needed.

### Other than electronic equipment MVDC will not generally fund any other office equipment or furniture. Where this causes particular difficulties employees should raise the issue with their Business Manager.

# hours of work

### Contractual hours and times of work as a result of home working will remain unaltered unless changed by mutual consent.

### Where a variation is agreed the pattern of working hours will be agreed between the employee and the line manager to suit both operational and the employee’s needs.

### Accruing or redeeming flexi-time for eligible employees is possible during periods of home working however it is expected that there will be increasing emphasis on productivity rather than time spent. Employees will therefore need to sensibly manage their working time so as not to work significant hours in excess (or below) their normal working hours.

### Employees are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct to ensure that any additional or supplementary paid employment is disclosed to their manager in order to ensure there is no conflict, that working time arrangements are in accordance with Working Time Regulations and that health and safety aspects are considered.

### Managers will need to ensure the needs of the service will be met, and impact on other colleagues managed, in terms of when employees need to be available to work and/or be contacted, regardless of working location.

# sickness

### If an employee is unable to work due to personal sickness on a day that they should be working at home or otherwise off site, they must inform their line manager by telephone and/or follow the normal sickness absence procedure. Arrangements for return to work interviews should be put in place. These may be undertaken by phone or skype where appropriate.

# Flexible working requests

For consideration of flexible working requests, see Right to Request [Flexible Working Policy and Guidance](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/employment-policies/).

Employees wishing to include agile working as part of their working arrangements on an occasional basis (e.g. off site before or after meetings or working at home one or two days a week as the need arises on an occasional or temporary basis) are not required to complete an application for flexible working. In these circumstances employees should discuss the suitability of applying hybrid working arrangements and any restrictions that may apply to their role.

An employee who wishes to request agreement that their primary or main place of work is their home or to request formal alteration of their working terms and conditions may make an application using the [Flexible Working Request Policy and Guidance](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/employment-policies/).

# trial period and review

Depending on the nature of the agreement reached requests or agreement for agile working may be subject to a trial period, typically up to six months, in order to assess impact.

Agile working arrangements and practices will be reviewed regularly alongside normal performance management including through the Performance and Development Review. In the event of any difficulties arising or concerns over performance arrangements to facilitate agile working may be terminated. Usually notice of at least 30 days will be given for termination or changes to settled current arrangements unless there are good reasons for more urgent changes when immediate notice of the termination may be given.

# equipment

MVDC will provide laptops that will be powered through a fixed docking station situated on office desks and a power supply when being used remotely. MVDC will also supply a carrier case for laptops and privacy screen upon request. All equipment is for exclusive use of the employee and for business use only, i.e. not for use by family/friends.

Responsibility for ensuring the equipment and software is regularly updated and repaired as required, remains with the employee. This will include physically bringing the equipment to the ICT team at least quarterly.

All equipment, files, data or information must be returned by the employee on termination of employment (before the employee leaves) or a charge will be incurred to cover the cost of the outstanding equipment. The charge may be deducted from final pay where such pay is sufficient.

Employees going on sabbatical or extended leave may be asked to return equipment to ICT or their Business Manager for safe keeping or to pass to a covering member of staff.

# IT Support

18.1 Faults

Where computer or electrical equipment develops a fault the employee must notify the service desk in the normal way, and advise their manager. Where the fault relates to a piece of portable mobile equipment (e.g. laptop computer) and it cannot be rectified over the telephone, the employee is responsible for transporting such equipment to MVDC’s office at Pippbrook for diagnosis and/or repair. If a persistent fault prevents effective home working a manager will require an employee to work from their primary employment location, or another reasonable location as agreed.

18.2 Maintenance

MVDC is responsible for maintaining any equipment supplied and equipment may need to be returned by the employee, for checks and maintenance to ensure that electronic and other equipment is safe and functioning properly. Equipment should be brought in at least quarterly to enable maintenance.

Software updates will be supplied automatically when appropriate. Other non automatic updates may need to be undertaken by ICT on an ‘as and when’ basis and equipment may need to be returned by the employee to facilitate this.

The user is responsible for ensuring they have suitable connectivity to the Internet and any equipment provided by themselves in their home or other location.

MVDC is only responsible for the laptop, docking station, and means of providing authentication to support remote working connection. Any other hardware or software items specifically required based on individual need must be agreed by the Business Manager.

# Telephones

It is assumed that employees will be as accessible as they normally are during any agile working arrangements unless a specific alternative arrangement has been made with the manager. In most circumstances this will entail diverting their office telephone to an alternative number such as a mobile or home/other telephone number. Guidance as to how to do this is provided on Molly under Staff Information.

If the purpose of working at home is to complete a piece of work free from interruptions or distractions, contact times or methods must be agreed with the manager. It would normally be expected that voicemail messages are checked at regular intervals to ensure there is nothing that needs priority attention.

If an employee is in a customer facing role, the impact on other team members must be considered and managed appropriately and (where appropriate) the Customer Services Unit informed that a particular telephone number will not be in use for the duration of the period where it would normally be expected to be responsive. In that event alternative arrangements must be made for other members of the team to provide the same level of service to ensure service levels are not negatively impacted.

It is likely that further guidance will be included in this section as agile working becomes more common and new technology options are rolled out.

# . health and safety

### The regulations made under the *Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974* apply equally to employees undertaking home or agile working. In addition, they are required to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by their actions and omissions.

### Employees are expected to co-operate with their line manager in ensuring a safe and healthy working space at home.

### When working at or from home, the employee will ensure they have an appropriate workspace with adequate security, storage and screening from activities and noise in the rest of the home. There must also be adequate ventilation and lighting.

### Prior to commencing home or agile working, it is the responsibility of employees to carry out the Agile/ Home Working Risk Assessment and confirm that they have done so to their Line Manager, highlighting any areas of concern. This will be used to assess any risks and the measures necessary to control them.

### Employees must not have meetings in their home with clients, customers, or divulge their home address or personal telephone number, or anyone else’s, to them. It is not appropriate to hold any meetings with colleagues or officers at home, or to visit someone else’s. Meetings should be held in neutral venues, e.g. a local café.

### In order to ensure the safety of employees working alone or at remote locations, employees must comply with normal lone working procedures to ensure that their whereabouts are known.

### It is important that working patterns and level of hours are not detrimental to health and wellbeing. Employees are asked to work within the requirements of the Working Time Regulations (WTR). It is part of an employee’s responsibility to ensure that their manager is aware of the number of hours they work to comply with the WTR.

The main points to be aware of are:

* Maximum weekly working time is not to exceed 48 hours per 7 day period when averaged out over a 17 week period.
* A rest break of at least 20 minutes should be taken when working more than 6 hours per day.
* Length of daily rest break (overnight) of 11 hours per 24 hours.
* Length of weekly rest break (weekend), usually 24 hours rest in each 7 day period.

### Please note that travel time to and from your home if you have a fixed place of work (for example if you are office based) is not included in working time.

### All policies and procedures, such as accident reporting, continue to apply regardless of work location, unless otherwise stated in this document.

# . security

### Employees will need to be particularly vigilant about security when working off site. For example if working in a public place, think about whether confidential work can be seen by anybody sitting next to you or near you. Screen guards can be provided on request that make it much harder for anybody but the person using a laptop to view data or information on the screen.

### Employees must also be careful not to leave equipment, papers or devices behind when travelling or taking papers with them on the way to another location (e.g. train, bus, café etc). Wherever possible hard copy copies of papers with sensitive or personal data should be scanned in and accessed on screen, to avoid the risk of losing papers. Decisions about agile working must be responsibly made with full knowledge of what papers/equipment must be taken where either on the day or the night before (e.g. if you are planning to go out after work you should not take papers/equipment with you to a public place unless there is no sensible alternative). When travelling in a car any equipment or papers should be kept out of sight, in a locked boot.

### All information and equipment must be kept safely at all times. Line managers and the employee must be satisfied that adequate precautions are in place to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with Data Protection legislation and MVDC guidelines, policies and procedures.

### Confidential and sensitive information must be maintained at all times to ensure that it is not accessible to visitors or others in the same location. This includes, but is not limited to, others living in the same home.

### In the event of a data breach or other breach of confidentiality please ensure you are aware of the process that you need to follow to report it. In the event of a confidential data breach (i.e. sensitive data linked to an individual or from which an individual can be identified, such as email addresses, dates of birth, home addresses or any other personal data), or any other data breach your line manager and the Data Protection Officer must be informed immediately. Further guidance relating to Data Protection can be found on the [GDPR](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/gdpr/) page on Molly including: Data Breach Guidance.

### Employees are expected to take reasonable precautions in respect of the security of the equipment. For example, the venue storing the equipment or papers (including the employee’s home) should be locked when unattended, and wherever possible equipment should not be visible from a ground floor window. Laptop computers should be stored out of sight; items should not be left on show in vehicles etc.

### In the event of theft the incident must be reported to the police and a crime number obtained as soon as possible as well as reporting the situation to your manager.

### It is important that confidential waste is destroyed by shredder, and/or returned to the office for safe disposal.

### Employees who breach security rules will be managed via the Disciplinary Policy and may also forfeit the permission to work in an agile manner (including working at home).

# . insurance

### Employees undertaking any amount of home working, with the agreement of their manager, are covered by MVDC’s insurance policy for employer’s liability and personal accident in the same way as office-based employees.

### Working from home may affect the home and contents insurance policies of the householder. This will not usually result in an increase in premium but employees should be aware that MVDC will not reimburse any increase in premium that might occur.

### Equipment (if any) supplied is also covered by MVDC’s insurance arrangements providing it is used for work purposes only and it is stored securely whether in the office or in the employee’s home. Employees will be liable for the theft, loss or damage of equipment that is not stored securely, as detailed above in ‘security’.

# . related policies

### This guidance should be read in conjunction with all other related [employment policies](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/employment-policies/) particularly:

* Code of Conduct
* Data Protection Policy
* ICT Security Policy/Code of Practice
* Flexible Working Request Policy and Guidance
* Health and Safety Policies
* Hybrid Working Policy

Annex One:   
Agile Working Policy principles

It is our policy to ensure that:

* Agile working meets the needs of the service/organisation as well as those of the individual; however service levels and business need will always take precedence.
* The contractual ‘Normal Place of Work’ remains as stated in the individual’s employment contract
* Agile or home-working is not a right, but the decision to enable it is based on the suitability of the post/environment/person(s) concerned and must be agreed between management and the individual in each case. It is subject to agreement by the Business Manager of the appropriate function. Its suitability will be regularly reviewed and may be withdrawn.
* No existing employee will be required to work from home. However for new employees, home working may be a contractual agreement/requirement.
* Home working will not normally be approved until the employee has successfully completed their probation period.
* All employees will deliver their performance objectives, and active performance management is expected from all managers, regardless of location of their employees.
* Employees are provided with appropriate laptops and IT technical support and advice
* All equipment provided to support the employee working in an agile way is for the exclusive use of that employee and for business use only (i.e. not for use by family/friends).
* All working environments (including the home ‘office’) require a self-certified risk assessment to ensure the health and safety, and suitability of the chosen work area for the employee.
* All employees working at home must have suitable childcare/dependent care arrangements in place where appropriate. Agile workers must not be responsible for the care of young children (typically that means children under secondary school age) or those with temporary or permanent conditions or with special needs requiring additional supervision or support during the working day whilst working at any location including home.
* Outputs and responsiveness (to customers or colleagues) will be agreed up front.
* All other relevant policies that would apply if the agile workers were located at their normal place of work will continue to apply. (NB this will particularly include the Data Protection Policy, the ICT Security Policy/Code of Practice and all policies listed in Section 23 of this policy together with any others that are identified by the Business Manager however lack of specific inclusion in this list does not preclude their application in exactly the same way as if the employee were working in the office).

ANNEX 2:   
Agile/home working risk self assessment

**Agile / Home Working Risk Self Assessment**

**This must be completed in full by all employees who are regularly working at home and to the extent that the questions are applicable when working out of the office**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full Name: |  |
| Address/location where working is being conducted: |  |

|  | Yes/No/  N/A | Comments/Further Information |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplace and Work Equipment: NB If questions are not applicable in relation to location state N/A** | | |
| Is a room or space set aside specifically for working? |  |  |
| Is heating and lighting adequate for work to be carried out? |  |  |
| Is there adequate space and facilities for the safe storage of work and materials? |  |  |
| Is the workspace free of tripping hazards, eg. trailing cables, worn floor covering etc? |  |  |
| Has work equipment been provided by MVDC?  If yes, please list below: |  |  |
| Is an emergency exit easily accessible? |  |  |
| Has a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) workstation assessment been completed? |  |  |
| **Electrical NB If questions are not applicable in relation to location state N/** | | |
| Has the electrical equipment provided by MVDC been Portable Appliance Tested within the last 12 months? |  |  |
| Do the cables to plugs appear in good condition? |  |  |
| **Substances NB If questions are not applicable state N/A** | | |
| Does the work involve the use of any chemicals/substances? If yes which ones? |  |  |
| If so, has a COSHH assessment been carried out? |  |  |
| **Manual Handling NB If questions are not applicable state N/A** | | |
| Does the work involve manual handling? If yes which type? (i.e. lifting, pushing, carrying etc) |  |  |
| Has a manual handling assessment been carried out if necessary? |  |  |
| Have you been trained to lift and handle properly? |  |  |
| **General** | | |
| Are there any children, dependent people, animals etc. in the house likely to be affected by the work or could create a hazard? |  |  |
| Will the agile working take place only from home (or another residential address with minimal risk of being compromised by other known inhabitants of that address)?  Please list all other agile workplaces |  |  |
| Is personal or other confidential information, stored on an MVDC encrypted laptop (only), being transported from MVDC’s offices?  If so, how is the laptop transported between MVDC’s office and the agile workplace?  How is the laptop stored at the agile workplace when not in use? |  |  |
| Is personal or other confidential information, held in another form (eg; paper, audio, visual) being transported from MVDC’s offices?  If so, are you transporting any information from the office that is not required for the purposes of your current agile working experience (ie, that is not required before you visit the office next)?  If so, what procedure will you adopt for logging this information in and out?  If so, will the information be stored in a locked case during transit?  (Consider if manager authorisation is required)  If so, how will the information be transported?  If so, how long will the information be held outside of MVDC offices? |  |  |
| How is the information stored at the agile workplace when not in use? (Please disclose any particular risk of loss, theft or other unauthorized processing). |  |  |
| Will any information be left unattended in transit? |  |  |
| How will any information be shredded once it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it has been retained? |  |  |
| Please describe what the risks of loss, theft or other unauthorized processing of personal data are during the agile working experience, (unless already disclosed above) and how you propose to mitigate these to an acceptable level”? |  | |
| Maternity and Pregnancy | | |
| Are you a new or expectant mother? |  |  |
| Once you have notified your manager of your pregnancy they will arrange for a separate New and Expectant Mother risk assessment to be carried out. If you become pregnant in the future then once you notify your manager they will initiate this process. | | |
| Do you have any special needs or require specialist equipment provided to enable you to do your work?  If yes, please specify: |  |  |
| **Lone Working/Personal Security** | | |
| Will you be required to work alone for long periods? |  |  |
| Do you have access to a telephone? |  |  |
| Will you be making home visits to the public? |  |  |
| Is there a system in place for calling assistance in an emergency (Either in the home or visiting the public)? |  |  |
| Have arrangements been put in place for regular contact with managers and colleagues? |  |  |
| **First Aid and Accident/Incident Reporting NB If questions are not applicable in relation to location state N/A** | | |
| Do you have suitable arrangements for first aid in the event of an accident? (i.e. basic first aid kit) |  |  |
| Do you know the procedure for reporting accidents and incidents that occur to you while working? |  |  |
| **Insurance/Mortgage & Tenancy Arrangements NB If questions are not applicable in relation to location state N/A** | | |
| Have you informed your insurers of your home working arrangements to avoid the risk of invalidating your home insurance policy? |  |  |
| Have you checked with your tenancy/ mortgage agreements to ensure there are no provisions that prevent home working/informed them in writing? |  |  |
| **Additional Comments/Issues not addressed previously (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)** | | |
|  | | |
| **Employee Declaration**  I understand the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy work environment (including appropriate DSE set-up) and ensuring data is adequately protected in accordance with GDPR. I personally accept any risk or liability if this is not sufficiently maintained in my agile or home working environment.  Employee’s Signature (typed name is acceptable if emailing):  Date: | | |
| Once completed, return this form to your Line Manager if there are areas for concern to be addressed, by email.  You should retain a copy for your records. | | |

**Agile / Home Working Risk Self-Assessment - Display Screen Assessment**

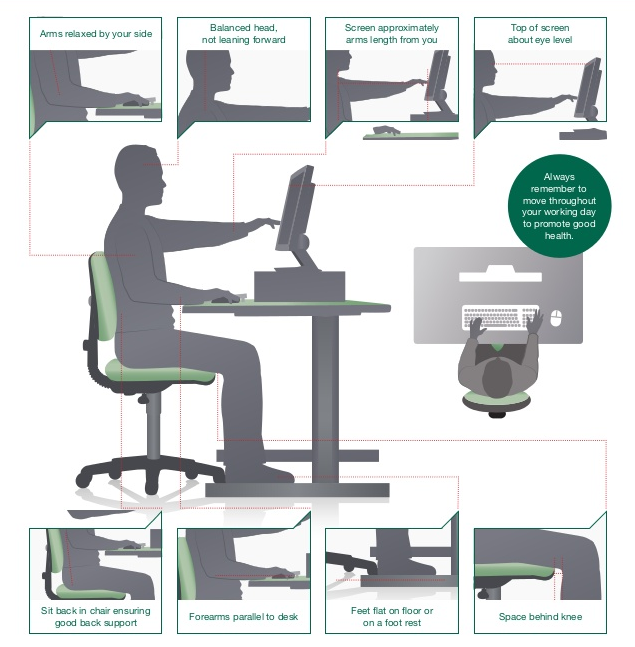
An assessment must be carried out on a workstation in relation to each user. MVDC will act to reduce these risks as far as is reasonably practicable. Depending on the extent to which the user is working away from an office desk/chair environment (e.g. brief responses to emails outside normal working day/meetings, working on train, etc) it will not always be practicable to follow all elements of a risk assessment (e.g. using a chair/desk on the basis outlined below). Any self assessment should be therefore be conducted on the basis of risk. If a user develops or has muscular skeletal problems, for example, they must particularly ensure sensible precautions including those described below.

Information provided by the User is an essential part of this assessment, so it is important that this questionnaire is completed fully and factually. These questionnaires are retained, and could form part of an evidence case used in support of any action taken in the future with regard to the user’s health & safety.

If you have any problems with the form, require any assistance or advice, or if any equipment is required to adhere to the guidelines such as a footrest, back support, wrist rest etc please discuss with your line manager.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **General Workstation:** | Yes | No |
| Are your arms at a comfortable, natural position and height when using the keyboard? |  |  |
| Are your eyes approximately level with the top of the screen and are you positioned approximately arms length from the screen (24 inches)? |  |  |
| With you at the correct height for use of the computer, are the backs of your knees at a right angle with feet flat on the floor or footrest? |  |  |

If the answer to any of these questions is No, please resolve by attempting to adjust the workstation to improve the set up.



|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chair NB it will not always be possible for MVDC to provide a chair of this type for agile working. Any decisions to do so are likely to depend on business benefit for the employee to work in an agile manner therefore if an employee develops problems that are thought to be caused/exacerbated by having an inappropriate chair when working in an agile manner they must discuss suitability to continue to work in this way with their manager.** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Does the user find the chair generally comfortable? |  |  |
| Is the chair being used at the correct height? |  |  |
| Is the backrest suitably adjusted to adequately support the lumbar region of the spine? |  |  |
| Has the seat depth been adjusted to take account of height of user? |  |  |
| **Additional Notes:** | | |
| **Display Screen** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Does the user find the image on the screen stable and free from flicker? |  |  |
| Does the user find the information on the screen clear and easy to read? |  |  |
| Does the user know how to adjust the brightness and contrast and is the user comfortable with the brightness and contrast? |  |  |
| Is the user aware of the need to regularly clean their desk and screen with screen wipes? |  |  |
| **Additional Notes:** | | |
| **Work desk and Work surface** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Is the desk and surface generally in good condition? |  |  |
| Does the user have to stretch to reach the phone and any other items regularly used? |  |  |
| Does the user have sufficient leg room under the workstation? |  |  |
| Is their any loose cabling or wiring under or around the workstation? |  |  |
| **Additional Notes:** | | |
| **Miscellaneous Equipment** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Is the keyboard generally in good condition? |  |  |
| Does the user find the key symbols clear and easy to read? |  |  |
| Is there approximately 4 inches between the keyboard and edge of the desk or is a keyboard wrist support in use? |  |  |
| Does the user require a document holder? |  |  |
| Does the user require a footrest? |  |  |
| Does the user require a keyboard wrist support? |  |  |
| Does the user require a mouse wrist support? |  |  |
| **Additional Notes:** | | |
| **Lighting** | **Yes** | **No** |
| When at the workstation does the user suffer from direct glare from the windows? |  |  |
| When at the workstation does the user suffer from direct glare from the artificial lighting? |  |  |
| Does the lighting allow the user to work comfortably (Comfortable brightness, no flickering etc)? |  |  |
| **Additional Notes:** | | |
| **Regular Breaks** | **Yes** | **No** | |
| Is the user aware of the requirement for a 5-10 minutes break from DSE work every hour? |  |  | |
| Does the user take regular breaks every hour of 5-10 minutes by performing another task not involving DSE work? |  |  | |
| **Additional Notes:** | | | |
| **Training and Information** | **Yes** | **No** | |
| Have you directed the user to agile working information available on the intranet? |  |  | |
| Does the user understand how to adjust their workstation? |  |  | |
| Has the user received adequate training in the use of the software needed for work? |  |  | |
| Has the user attended the Health and Safety Induction Training Course or a DSE training course? |  |  | |
| **Additional Notes:** | | | |
| **Eye Tests** | **Yes** | **No** | |
| Is the user aware of the Eye care expense claim system? |  |  | |
| Has the user had their eyes tested within the last two years? |  |  | |
| Does the user suffer from tired, sore, aching eyes or headaches? |  |  | |
| Does the user require an eye test now? |  |  | |
| **Additional Notes:** | | | |
| **Problems** | **Yes** | **No** | |
| Does the user have any further issues or problems regarding their workstations? |  |  | |
| Does the user know who to contact if they experience any problems with their workstations? |  |  | |
| **Additional Notes:** | | | |

If you have marked in any of the grey boxes, please ensure that you take corrective action to mitigate any potential risk to your health and wellbeing.

|  |
| --- |
| **Employee Declaration**  I confirm that I have carried out the DSE assessment and I am aware and understand the safe working procedures.  I personally accept any risk or liability if this is not maintained in my agile or home working environment.  Employee’s Signature (typed name is acceptable if emailing):  Date: |
| Once completed, return this form to your Line Manager if there are areas for concern to be addressed, by email.  You should retain a copy for your records.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Version** | **Version Status** | **Date** | **Version Comment** | **Version Author** | | V1.0 | Final | 1 October 2018 | Approved by SLT |  | | V2.0 | Review | Due 2021 | Policies to be reviewed at least every 3 years or in the event interim changes are needed (e.g. changes in legislation, work practices). | CS | | V2.1 | Review | 11 January 2023 | Policy review and minor amendments made in line with introduction of Hybrid Policy. | CS | | V2.2 | Review | January 2023 | Review policy amendments by HR Exec Head | AD | | V2.3 | Review | 19 January 2023 | Review policy amendments by SLT | SLT | | V3 | Final | February 2023 | Guidance | CS | |  |  |  | Review in 12 month |  | |