

## **TEMPORARY REMOTE WORKING POLICY**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Organisation's commitment to promoting flexible ways of working in light of the Governments recently issued directive on measures to limit the spread of the novel virus and in response to these extenuating emergency circumstances. This policy sets out the procedures entailed in remote working and the main considerations that the Organisation has taken account of in the overall risk assessment carried out in respect of COVID-19.

Remote working is recognised as a proactive approach to allowing Employees greater flexibility in managing work commitments whilst at the same time enabling the Organisation to achieve its objectives in response to extenuating emergency circumstances. The same workplace principles need to be applied when considering elements of remote working.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Employees of the Organisation.

### **Policy**

In the cases of the extenuating circumstances currently presented the use of this policy is for the purpose of promoting social distancing and maintaining the health, safety and welfare of all Employees. It is for this purpose that the Employer may request an Employee(s) to work from remotely for a temporary period of time.

The Organisation recognises that that some roles may be suitable to be carried out remotely, however, the Organisation cannot guarantee that all roles will be suitable for remote working, as some parts of the business depend on Employees being available and communicating within the workplace. It is on this premise that the suitability of remote working will be considered on a case by case basis.

### **Definition of Remote Working**

Remote working allows Employees to work remotely from home, with management agreement, for part or all of their contracted working hours. It involves carrying out the work and duties normally undertaken at the workplace remotely. Remote working, while flexible in its approach, should not be reflective of an agreement to varying hours or other flexible arrangements unless authorised in advance.

### **Suitability for Remote Working**

Certain roles will be more suited to remote working than others. These are roles or aspects of roles that involve individual/PC based work.

All remote working relies on trust between the Organisation and the Employee. Remote working must not be used as a reason for Employee's absence from the workplace when sick leave or annual leave is more appropriate.

When remote working, the Organisation expects the Employee to deliver the scope and quality of work they would normally undertake at a work premises with equal commitments regarding working hours and breaks in line with contractual arrangements.

## **Employee Suitability for Remote Working**

Remote working is suitable for Employees who are self-reliant and self-motivated.

Employees should be aware that not attending the workplace regularly may result in reduced social contact with colleagues and feelings of detachment/isolation from the workplace. It is not the intention of the Organisation to deliberately cause these feelings; they may be a consequence of undertaking remote working.

## **Government Advice on Social Distancing**

Social distancing aims, through a variety of means, to decrease or interrupt the spread of COVID-19. It does this by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals.

Social distancing is keeping a 2m (6ft) space between you and other people. All Employees should not shake hands or make close contact where possible.

## **Working Arrangements**

### **Workload**

As there is a requirement, for those Employees involved in remote working, to demonstrate self-discipline, self-reliance, an ability to work unsupervised and to manage their own workload, an Employee who is remote working is expected to maintain high levels of performance and high-quality work at all times.

Delivery of workload will be managed by the individual Employee and supervised by their Manager. All work outputs must be delivered in line with agreed timelines and deadlines. Where a concern arises as to the performance or conduct of an Employee who is remote working, similar to any other Employee of the business, the individual involved may be subject to the disciplinary process.

Employees working remotely on a temporary full-time basis must continue to reach targets or key performance indicators as set out at the commencement of the calendar year and to comply with any deadlines pertaining to the delivery of their work.

### **Attendance at Work and Working Time**

Employees working remotely on a temporary full-time basis must continue to attend work during the prescribed 'office' hours as indicated in the individual contract of employment. Employees should ensure they are working enough hours to meet their contractual working hours, make time for a lunch break, and follow normal flexi-time working procedures (if applicable).

A record of working time and attendance should be maintained on the appropriate system which will be reviewed by your Manager at regular intervals.

### **Provision of Equipment**

Employees must ensure that any equipment being used is in good working order and appropriate for their own safety, comfort and wellbeing (i.e., desk, chair, etc.). Employees should avoid printing work related documents or sensitive information where at all possible, but rather work in a paper free environment, storing documents on the organisation's shared systems or central server. Should

printing of documents be necessary, the Employee must adhere to the organisation's Data Protection Policy (in the Employee Handbook) and ensure they have adequate secure storage space for work related documents.

Employees must not purchase equipment or attempt to reclaim any expenditure in relation to any equipment or work supplies unless prior approval from the appropriate Manager is given. Any supplies used by remote working Employees are only to be used for business purposes.

### **I.T. Equipment**

Any equipment provided by the Organisation for the purposes of working remotely will be maintained by the Organisation. The Remote Worker is required to take reasonable care of all equipment, to keep it secure and to use it in accordance with operating instructions. They must ensure that any such equipment provided is returned at the end of the temporary arrangement.

### **I.T. Systems**

Employees involved in remote working may have access to IT systems as required and must act in accordance with the appropriate policies and procedures while accessing such systems. Any breach of policy and procedure in this regard may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

### **Security of Data**

Remote Workers must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Remote Workers must ensure that confidential Organisation information/ documents are not accessible to other members of the household, that they are stored securely, and that documents stored on a PC or laptop are subject to password protection.

The Employee must ensure that any device in use for work purposes has the necessary updates, such as operating system updates (like iOS or android) and software/antivirus updates and should contact their Manager if in doubt.

The Employee must ensure that the use of a computer, laptop, or device, is done so in a safe manner and location in order to minimise who else can view the screen, particularly if working with sensitive personal data. The Employee must ensure that all devices used for work purposes whilst remote working are locked if left unattended for any reason.

The Employee must ensure that all devices used for work purposes whilst remote working are locked or shut down and stored carefully when not in use in line with the relevant policies.

Where effective access controls (such as multi-factor authentication, strong passwords and encryption (to restrict access to the device) all Employees are expected to adhere to guidelines pertaining to the proper use of same are in use to reduce the risk if a device is stolen or misplaced.

It is the Employee's responsibility to adhere to a clear desk practice. Employees are expected to look after Organisation information and information assets in a responsible, safe and secure manner. The use of your Organisation IT equipment (laptop, PC, mobile phone, Blackberry, etc.) by non-Employees is strictly prohibited.

Confidential or sensitive paper documents must be shredded or returned to the Organisation in a secure manner for disposal. Business conversations must remain confidential at all times.

The loss or theft of Organisation information, information assets or Organisation IT equipment must be reported immediately to your Manager and An Garda Síochána.

### **Emails**

All Employees who are working remotely are expected to follow any applicable policies in the safe and appropriate use of email such as using work email accounts rather than personal ones for work-related emails involving personal data.

### **Cloud and Network Access**

Where possible Employees are expected to only use the organisation's trusted networks or cloud services and comply with any organisational rules and procedures about cloud or network access, login and, data sharing.

Where an Employee is working without cloud or network access, the Employee is expected to ensure any locally stored data is adequately backed up in a secure manner.

### **Smart Devices**

Whilst working at remote there is an expectation that all information relating to work is maintained at the utmost of confidentiality and therefore all Employees should turn off and remove smart devices, such as Alexa, Google Assistant etc from their remote working area in order to maintain client/customer/ service user confidentiality.

### **Insurance Cover**

Remote workers are advised that working remotely may affect the provisions of any home contents/ domestic insurance and are advised to inform their insurers prior to commencing working remotely.

### **Personal Details and Safety**

Staff are advised not to release their home address and telephone number to non-members of staff. Work-related contacts, visitors, donors may not be invited to Employee's home for security reasons.

### **Health and Safety**

The Organisation has a duty to protect its staff's health and safety at work in accordance with the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005- 2014 and the regulations made under it. Staff are required to comply with the Organisation's Health and Safety policy while they are working and to take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare and that of any third party with whom they come into contact during the course of their employment with the Organisation or any other person who may be affected by the Employee's acts or omissions at work. Failure to comply with the Organisation's Health and Safety policy may result in disciplinary action against the member of staff.

### **Employee Management**

The Employee and the Line Manager will establish targets/deadlines/tasks so that the Employee is clear what output is expected when Remote working. Output will be used to monitor Employee performance and the suitability of the Remote working arrangement.

Two-way contact should be maintained during the period of remote working to monitor and provide feedback on output, and to keep the Employee up to date with news and developments.

Sickness must be reported in accordance with normal Sickness Reporting Procedures. The Employee Handbook guidelines remain valid as applicable.

### **Communication and Accessibility**

Remote Workers must accept that their Line Manager and colleagues may need to discuss work related issues during normal working hours, therefore Remote Workers must ensure they are fully accessible when working remotely. It is essential that the remote working Employee must be contactable by telephone and email. In addition, remote workers must also check their e-mails regularly for news and requests.

All Employees must adhere to the Internet & Email Policy when working remotely.

Confidentiality is of paramount importance at this time and Employees are expected to comply with their contractual terms and conditions (express or implied) in this respect.

### **Remote Working Review**

All Remote working arrangements are for a temporary period only and are subject to continuous review in light of business needs. All Employees who are working remotely must ensure that the required performance and quality standards are being met.