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# Working from Home (Covid-19 Interim Policy)

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## 1. Introduction

This is an interim policy on home working in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our offices are currently operating on limited capacity so employees will generally work either at home full time or a hybrid of office/home working until notice. This policy is designed to help support to enable them to work from home safely and effectively.

This is a temporary position which will be continually assessed over the coming months, with reviews of this interim policy taking place at regular intervals as and when required.

GRAHAM are committed to being an inclusive workplace where all employees, customers and stakeholders can fully participate and contribute. We strive to ensure accessibility across all facets of our operations, including physical spaces, digital platforms, communication channels and services.

Our People policies are regularly audited against rigorous accessibility standards to ensure compliance and to support every employee.

Anyone who requires additional support or has any questions regarding accessibility can contact the HR team at [HR-GFM@graham.co.uk](mailto:HR-GFM@graham.co.uk)

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees in the company. It includes all employees transferring into the business through TUPE terms and conditions, unless expressly stated otherwise in their contract with GRAHAM

## 3. Working at Home – general rules

- 3.1 We reserve the right to terminate any full-time home working or hybrid office/homeworking arrangements, for example when more office capacity is available, or Government restrictions dictate, subject to reasonable notice.
- 3.2 You will be subject to the same performance measures, processes and objectives that would apply if you worked in the office.
- 3.3 Your line manager will remain responsible for supervising you, will regularly review your homeworking arrangements and take steps to address any perceived problems. They will ensure that you are kept up to date with circulars and information relevant to your work.
- 3.4 You agree to attend the office or other reasonable location for meetings, training courses or other events that cannot be run virtually.
- 3.5 You understand that when you do attend the office, you may not be able to sit at your normal desk.
- 3.6 Employees working at home are covered by GRAHAM Employer's Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance providing the rules of this policy have been followed.

- 3.7 It is the employee's responsibility to assess the personal implications of home-based work with respect to household insurance.
- 3.8 Where an employee who otherwise would be able to work from home is not able to do so because of a disability or other health condition, they should discuss with their line manager as to whether reasonable adjustments may be made.
- 3.9 Employees must be working from a residence within ROI. Any employee wanting to work from a residence outside of ROI must contact HR in the first instance.
- 3.10 Whilst home working, employees must take responsibility for their work.

The system is reliant on their being trust between managers and employees. This is so fundamental that any breach of trust will be treated very seriously and may be regarded as misconduct. Appropriate action may follow under the Disciplinary Policy

#### **4 Attendance at and Availability for work**

- 4.1 Employees must be available and able to work on their contracted days whether they are in the office or working from home, unless absence is for an authorised form of leave or sickness. Any variation to this arrangement can only be made by prior agreement with the line manager.
- 4.2 Employees should log in to the IT system to clearly indicate their availability status throughout their working day.
- 4.3 As a rule employees are expected to work in the same way, whether you are in the office or working from home. For example, if you would usually be available to answer the telephone, respond to emails etc. during the normal hours you will be expected to do this when working from home, unless a change is agreed with your line manager. Whether or not the line manager agrees to a change, will depend upon the circumstances of the request and its impact on the team and business delivery.

#### **5 Patterns of Work**

- 5.1 Working a hybrid work pattern from home/office does not mean that employees are able to choose when and where they work. The days that you work in the office or work from home will be organised, planned and agreed in advance by your line manager.
- 5.2 Homeworking cannot be in a public place e.g. a library or internet café.
- 5.3 The needs of the business will always take priority, however a collaborative approach between management and employees is more likely to achieve a mutually beneficial arrangement.
- 5.4 Ultimately the manager will have the responsibility for ensuring that business needs take priority; that employees are treated fairly and are trusted to take responsibility for themselves and their work when working from home.

- 5.5 Managers will, in consultation with their employees, decide a pattern that best meets the needs of the business.
- 5.6 Employees must understand that these patterns are subject to change; there is no entitlement to work from home on specific days of the week. Consequently, employees must be ready to alter their working pattern if required and should be wary of making any commitments on homeworking days as these may need to change.
- 5.7 The arrangements for the scheduling of office/home working rotas will vary to suit operational needs. Rotas will also need to be reviewed to take into account new starters and leavers.
- 5.8 Working from home is not a substitute for caring for dependants. You are expected to have made alternative arrangements for the care of your dependants during your working day. Where there is an issue with caring responsibilities due to Covid you should speak with your manager in the first instance.

## **6 Employee Performance**

- 6.1 Working from home relies on outcome-based management. This means that employees are managed based upon their results. To achieve these employees are expected to deliver outcomes within their contractual hours. The arrangements for how hours are worked will be agreed in advance with your line manager.
- 6.2 This approach will require a strong commitment by managers and employees to plan and ensure that regular 1-2-1 meetings take place and relevant targets are used to represent the outcomes required.
- 6.3 Working from home requires some changes in relationship between employees and their managers. As a result, there are different responsibilities for all employees and managers.

## **7 Manager Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Managers will:**

- 7.1.1 Ensure that safe working practices are understood by employees and that you have sufficient tools to do your job effectively
- 7.1.2 If available, plan which employees are working in and out of the office on any given day. This will necessitate thinking creatively about how home working could work for their employees.

- 7.1.3 Ensure employees have access to sufficient technology to work effectively both in the office environment and from home
- 7.1.4 Ensure employees have access to appropriate training and support to work effectively in the new ways
- 7.1.5 Ensure employees take responsibility for creating a safe working environment when working from home
- 7.1.6 Ensure employees have access to appropriate support equipment to assist in the creation of a safe working environment when working from home.
- 7.1.7 Ensure employees have their individual circumstances and requirements (particularly where an employee has a disability) taken into account.
- 7.1.8 Ensure employees have access to a regular performance review process which includes regular 1:1 conversations and/or supervision
- 7.1.9 Ensure that information governance (in accordance with GRAHAM IT Acceptable Use Policy) and health and safety requirements are adhered to at all times

## **8 Working at Home – Equipment and Expenses**

8.1 We will provide any equipment that we consider you reasonably require to work from home which will remain the property of GRAHAM.

8.2 It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient and appropriate equipment for working from home. We are not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement, or repair in the event of loss or damage to any personal equipment used by you when working for us.

8.3 We are not responsible for associated costs of you working from home including the costs of heating, lighting, electricity or telephone calls.

## **9 Working at Home – Data security and confidentiality is subject to the Terms & Conditions of IT Acceptable Use Policy (reference section 4.10)**

## **10 Working at Home- Health and Safety**

10.1 Home working is a form of lone working. This means that there may be a risk of employees not having immediate access to another person for assistance or supervision if circumstances require, i.e. in an emergency situation. To mitigate against this risk, employees that are working from home are required to:

- Keep your work diary up-to-date.
- Agree a schedule or protocol for keeping in touch with your manager.
- Be contactable via email and/or by voice as agreed with your line manager, either through home phone/mobile phone or via Skype/Teams/Zoom/other online platform.

- 10.2 When working at home you have the same health and safety duties as other employees. You must take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by your actions and omissions. You must also attend the usual office health and safety courses and undertake to use equipment safely.
- 10.3 We retain the right to check home working areas for health and safety purposes. The need for such inspections will depend on the circumstances including the nature of the work undertaken.
- 10.4 You must not have meetings in your home with clients or employees and must not give clients/employees your home address or telephone number.
- 10.5 You must ensure that any electrical devices you use are plugged into recognised power sockets and you must not overload any socket or use extension leads in a way that would cause electrical overload.
- 10.6 Company Electrical devices that you use, must be available for the relevant electrical compliance testing as and when required.
- 10.7 It is your responsibility to ensure your workstation at home is set-up correctly without hazards (such as trailing cables, etc) that could cause harm to yourself or others.
- 10.8 There is advice in the form of a simple infographics poster from the Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors at <https://www.ergonomics.org.uk/common/Uploaded%20files/Publications/CIE-HF-Working-from-Home-Infographic.pdf>
- 10.9 You must ensure that your working patterns and levels of work both over time and during shorter periods are not detrimental to your health and wellbeing. If you are aware or feel your health is or could be affected, you must raise this with your Line Manger and HR as soon as possible
- 10.10 You must use your knowledge, experience and training to identify and report any health and safety concerns to your line manager.
- 10.11 When you are working at or from home you are covered by our accident insurance policy. Any accidents must be reported immediately in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.

## 11 Terms and Conditions

- 11.1 An employee who is working from home is still governed by the same terms and conditions of their standard contract of employment.
- 11.2 This interim policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be amended at any time.
- 11.3 An employee's contractual work location is not changed by this interim arrangement.
- 11.4 The Code of Conduct and all other GRAHAM policies, procedures and associated guidance remain in place and should be adhered to during any period of working from home.