



Home Working Policy

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V 4.0	10 December 2015	Approved extension to review date by SPF to March 2016

The Trust will not tolerate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity. The Trust will not tolerate unfair discrimination on the basis of spent criminal convictions, Trade Union membership or non-membership. In addition, the Trust will have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity

between people from different groups and foster good relations between people from different groups.

Names and roles of contributors, user engagement etc.	
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Linked procedural documents	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 Flexible Working Arrangements Policy Sickness Absence Management Policy Disciplinary Policy (Managing Conduct and Performance) Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users Including Visual Display Unit (VDU) Policy Equality Act 2010 Information Security Policy Remote Access Policy Operational Security Policy Encryption Policy
Dissemination Requirements	All Trust employees by intranet Public- To be published on the Trust's website

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This document outlines the Home Working Policy for the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (the Trust). The Trust is committed to improving the working lives of its employees and to encourage a healthy work life balance. In order to provide the best services to our patients, it aims to ensure that all staff work in the most effective and efficient way possible in an appropriate work environment which optimises productivity and performance. As a regional organisation operating across 7500 square miles, it recognises that the traditional 'office based working' approach does not necessarily support this in all cases.
- 1.2 As an employer with a developing IT infrastructure aimed at facilitating remote working functionality/availability, the aim of this policy is to support both the aforementioned commitments and facilitate home working arrangements where these support effective service delivery.
- 1.3 For the purposes of this policy a distinction is made between employees who have (or wish to apply for) a formalised agreement with their line manager to work from home on a permanent basis (referred to in this policy as 'permanent home workers'), and those who work from home on an occasional basis without a formalised agreement (referred to in this policy as 'temporary home workers'). Permanent home workers can be contracted to work from home on a full time basis (all of their contractual hours) or part time basis (e.g. working from home one day a week and in the office for their remaining contracted hours). The arrangements for both of these working agreements are defined more clearly in section 5 below.
- 1.4 It is important to appreciate that there is no automatic right for employees to work from home or for the Trust to insist on employees working from home. A request for home working could be made by the employee or the Trust. All requests to work from home will be reasonably considered and where they are deemed not to be appropriate, a written explanation will be provided. Each application will be considered on its individual merits.
- 1.5 Any permanent home working arrangements agreed between the employee and line manager will constitute a contractual change to the employee's terms and conditions of employment.
- 1.6 All employees who work from home should ensure that they have a suitable environment in which they can focus on work. Employees should ensure that they can work free from disruption, e.g. by having adequate care arrangements in place for dependants who may be at home during working hours. (see paragraph 5.6 below)

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- 1.7 In allowing an employee to work from home, the line manager will ensure that there is no negative effect on productivity, performance or other employees.
 - 1.8 The Trust has the right to review any existing home working arrangements and, following consultation, to vary an existing arrangement with appropriate notice periods.
 - 1.9 This policy has been written in partnership by management and staff side.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Trust employees.

3. Access To The Procedure

- 3.1 All employees are entitled to access to this policy which is located in the HR Policies and Procedures Folders and/or on the Trust's Intranet. However, if you require this policy in any other format please seek guidance from the Human Resources Department, your line management or trade union representative.
- 3.2 Employees and Managers may also wish to consult associated policies or documents such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended), the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, Flexible Working Arrangements, Sickness Absence Management, Disciplinary Policy (Managing Conduct and Performance), Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users Policy Including Visual Display Unit (VDU) and Equality Act 2010

4. Roles And Responsibilities

4.1 Line Manager Responsibilities

- Treat each application to work from home on its own merits and give it reasonable consideration. This will include the potential impact on other team members, the level of regular contact/interaction required etc.;
- Consider the needs of the individual applying to work from home, including welfare. Applications for home working from people with disabilities may be considered as being a 'reasonable adjustment' under the Equalities Act (under Disability Discrimination);
- Assess the sensitivity and confidentiality of the work to be undertaken from home and ensure that all necessary measures are in place to protect the information, when considering suitability for working from home;

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- Ensure they liaise with the employee and the Health and Safety department to ensure that a risk assessment has taken place, where appropriate, prior to any home working commencing;
 - Ensure that an annual review of the risk assessment is undertaken by the line manager and any electrical testing of equipment carried out (see paragraphs 5.3, 5.5 and 7.2 below);
 - Liaise with the Human Resources Department before sanctioning any home working applications, to discuss/agree potential contractual changes and to facilitate consistency and fairness in decisions across the Trust;
 - Liaise with the IT Department before sanctioning any home working applications, to discuss/agree potential IT equipment/access requirements, where necessary;
 - When approving any ad hoc expenses the line manager will act diligently to ensure cost effectiveness;
 - Supply clear written information detailing the Trust expectations and what the employee can expect in return e.g. who the employee reports to, working hours, contact and communications, attendance at meetings and all other relevant information;
 - If considered necessary agree a trial period of at least 4 weeks. , The agreement should be reviewed at least annually by the two parties.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Ensure completion of the risk assessment form (Appendix A) prior to the commencement of any home working (permanent or temporary);
- Ensure that they are fully contactable during their working hours;
- Ensure that they are available at all times during their work hours to attend an alternative workplace at the request of their line manager. This includes pre-planned and reasonable short notice requirements;
- Ensure that they undertake their work during the times pre-agreed with their line manager and pre-agree any changes to this with their line manager so that these can be communicated as necessary;
- Ensure that their home working environment is conducive to effective working free from non work related disruption(s);
- Inform their line manager as soon as possible in the event of accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences whilst working at home and ensure that it is logged on the Datix system as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours;
- Work safely and comply with any control measures identified in the risk assessment;

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- Report any sickness in line with the usual absence reporting procedure, as set out within the Trust's Sickness Absence Management Policy;
 - Provide reasonable notice in the event of moving house to enable the Trust to make any arrangements necessary to facilitate the continuance of the ability to work during the moving period and to carry out a new risk assessment form;
 - Apply in writing to the line manager, providing a minimum of 8 week's notice, should a return to the office workplace be required, either full time or for part of their contractual hours. It should be noted that this may not be able to be facilitated and there is thus no automatic right to require office provisions in replacement of home working. Where this can be facilitated, a permanent change of contract will be enacted;
 - Ensure that their tax position, mortgage or tenancy agreement and insurance policies are checked and are appropriate for and covers the working from home, evidence will be required annually. All such responsibilities and liabilities rest with the employee;
 - Ensure that they adhere to any and all confidentiality requirements in respect of Trust business with particular reference to data protection principles and Caldicott principles;
 - To attend a locally agreed site for IT software updates;
 - Having due care and attention of the IT equipment provided for use at home;
 - Comply with the Trust's policies and procedures whether working at home or at their office base.

4.3 The Human Resources Department is responsible for keeping the provisions within this policy in line with employment legislation, best practice people management principles and NHS guidelines.

4.4 Managers, HR staff and trade union representatives are responsible for providing advice and guidance to employees on the application of this policy and procedure.

4.5 Management and trade union representatives are responsible for bringing any mutually beneficial improvements to this policy to the attention of the Trust.

5. Application Procedure

Temporary Home Working

5.1 The Trust recognises that the work undertaken by many of its employees may be carried out more effectively in a quiet location and without disruption.

In cases where office facilities are shared, where employees are easily disrupted or an employee considers that the performance of a specific task would be carried out more effectively from home, they may work from home at the discretion of their line manager.

- 5.2 Temporary home working will only be possible if it can be ensured that the employee's absence from the workplace will not give rise to problems for other employees.
- 5.3 Permission to work temporarily from home should be sought from an employee's line manager, on each occasion, in writing (this can be done by email). On the first occasion, this should be accompanied by a fully completed initial home working risk assessment, attached at Appendix A. Subsequent risk assessments should be undertaken as necessary and agreed with their line manager.
- 5.4 At the point of agreement of the temporary home working, the line manager will set out the length of the arrangement indicating a start and finish date. During this period a review may be undertaken and the end date re-negotiated.

Permanent Home Working

- 5.5 Permanent home workers are employees with a formalised agreement to work from home, either in a full time capacity or for part of their working week. Where a permanent change is required to work from home, the employee should make a formal request using the procedure set out within the Trust's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy. All requests must be accompanied by a fully completed initial home working risk assessment, attached at Appendix A.
- 5.6 In making a decision on whether to agree an employee's application for permanent home working through the Trust's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy, the line manager will also have regard to the employee's:
- Time management skills;
 - Self-motivation;
 - Ability to work without direct supervision;
 - Ability to meet scheduled deadlines;
 - Home as a suitable place to work;
 - Awareness of the health and safety implications of using the home as an appropriate working environment;
 - Ability to cope with potentially reduced social contact and isolation;
 - Ability to demonstrate they have no dependent care responsibilities within contracted working hours which would have a detrimental impact on their work.

No final decision will be reached without the authorisation of the relevant budget holder(s).

- 5.7 Additionally, where the application for permanent home working is agreed, a written notice will be sent out to the employee, in line with the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy timescales, and will specify the agreed contract

variation and the date on which the new permanent home working arrangements are to take effect. It will also set out confirmation of:

- any equipment to be provided for home working;
- the line manager arrangements to visit the employee's home to carry out a health and safety risk assessment (if the risk assessment indicates this is necessary);
- the type and level of reimbursement of costs for agreed business purposes will be based on HMRC guidance;
- the requirement to be fully contactable and available to attend an alternative work place/s during working hours;
- frequency and timing of contact arrangements with the line manager;
- the agreement the employee must provide evidence of suitable insurance to cover working from home.

5.8 Permanent home workers will be required to ensure that suitable and clear communication channels e.g. mobile phone signals, broadband connectivity are in place to enable them to carry out their work effectively and for colleagues to contact them at home. No home working should commence until communication support arrangements are in place.

5.9 Permanent home workers, or those planning to apply for permanent home working, are required to seek advice from the relevant agencies with regard to the effect of home working on their house and contents insurance; mortgage or tenancy agreement; and, council tax/business rates. Employees will be required to confirm on their home (flexible) working application that the following checks have been made and permission has been given (where required), and specify any additional costs that would be incurred.

5.10 Responsibility and liability with regards to home working rest with the employee to notify their insurer, mortgage lender, landlord, local authority or other such body. The Trust will not accept any responsibility for an employee who suffers any detriment, loss or legal action as a result of not obtaining any necessary permissions.

5.11 With regard to Trust assets, where permission has been given for an employee to work permanently, or temporarily, from home, the Trust retains all liability for those assets, providing due care has been taken with security measures.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on employers, self-employed people and employees. Employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees, including home workers. In order to ensure this duty is fully met, all employees applying for both temporary and permanent home working must complete an initial home working risk assessment form (Appendix A). Once completed, this form will be sent to the employee's line manager for evaluation. Should the line manager consider that a more detailed assessment is required, based upon the completed initial home working risk assessment, the line manager may carry out their own home working risk assessment to ensure health and safety requirements are met, or seek assistance from the Trust's Health and

Safety Department or other suitable persons, to do so on their behalf. No home working can commence prior to these risk assessments being carried out and any necessary control measures having been implemented.

- 6.2 As the control that can be exercised over an employee working from home is limited, the main responsibility will rest with the home worker. This places obligations on home workers themselves to ensure that they, and other persons who may be affected, including other members of the household as well as the public, are not endangered by work activities undertaken at their home using the Trust's equipment.
- 6.3 Both temporary and permanent home workers should make themselves aware of the requirements of the Trust's Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users Policy Including Visual Display Unit (VDU) and any requirements contained therein.

7. Trust Equipment

- 7.1 The Trust will provide any necessary computer and electrical equipment (e.g. laptops, printers and mobile phones/Blackberry) to permanent, and where appropriate and budgetarily viable, to temporary home workers. Where equipment is provided, the Trust will be responsible for the service and maintenance of the supplied equipment at one of the offices which has an IT service centre. These items will remain the property of the Trust and must be returned should the permanent home working arrangement cease or employment with the Trust ceases. Home working employees will normally be expected to use their own desk and chair, subject to a risk assessment. An application for home working will be refused if there is not sufficient space to accommodate all equipment necessary to effectively perform their duties at home.
- 7.2 All Trust electrical equipment will be PAT tested annually, in line with the Trust's electrical equipment testing procedures.
- 7.3 For permanent home workers, the Trust will purchase any additional equipment and materials (such as a filing cabinet, paper, ink cartridges and stationery) required to undertake the job requirements. Where possible these will be collected by the home worker from IT.
- 7.4 The Trust will maintain its own equipment, but will not be responsible for maintaining a home worker's own computers and equipment e.g. electrical sockets and other parts of the home worker's domestic electrical system, which are their own responsibility. Should a problem arise with Trust loaned equipment, staff will be supplied with a replacement PC or laptop, either temporarily or on loan, as required in line with Trust IT procedures

8. Security

- 8.1 There is an expected minimum standard of security, both physical and IT dependant, on the nature of the work to be undertaken. The Trust will ensure that both temporary and permanent home workers have secure remote access to its server and computer network drives as required. If necessary a separate phone line may be organised by the individual home worker with

prior agreed from their line manager. The Trust will not pay for any additional costs incurred by employees using their home for work (with the exception of pre-agreed reasonable costs as outlined in section 5.7 and 7.3 above) unless there is a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010.

- 8.2 It is the Trust's responsibility to ensure the home worker is able to retain security and confidentiality of information within the home.

9. Business Continuity

- 9.1 In emergency situations, for example, where it becomes impossible for an employee to work at their normal base, employees may be offered the option of working from home temporarily until the emergency situation can be rectified. This would only be permitted where the employee is unable to attend work at another Trust building and where Trust equipment is available for use to allow them to complete their work adequately.

10. Ad Hoc Costs/Expenses

- 10.1 All permanent and temporary home workers will be required to complete a monthly expenses claim form for any ad hoc costs/expenses incurred whilst working from home which have been authorised by their line manager through the home working contract of employment, e.g. postage.

11. Tax Relief

- 11.1 Employees who choose to work from home are not normally entitled to tax relief on additional outgoings. However, if there is a requirement from the Trust for an employee to work from home, there may be tax relief on a proportion of the costs for heating, lighting, travel expenses and on rent of a room used for business purposes. It is the responsibility of the home worker to clarify their position with the Inland Revenue.

12. Contractual Changes

- 12.1 Provision of unsocial hours payments, fringe allowances and other agenda for change benefits will be confirmed to the permanent home worker during the flexible working arrangements application process, where applicable.

13. Monitoring

- 13.1 Line managers will regularly review any agreement which has been given for home working to ensure the on-going effectiveness/efficiency of the arrangement and may, following consultation with the employee, remove that agreement. If the Trust finds it necessary to terminate the home working agreement for any reason, a minimum period of 4 week's notice will be given to the employee (unless a shorter mutually agreed period is arranged) and they will return to a suitable Trust work location.

- 13.2 Line managers should monitor the working patterns of temporary home workers on an ad hoc basis. If there are regular patterns of working from home, the line manager and employee should discuss the possibility of making more formal home working arrangements.

13.3 For health and safety purposes, the risk assessment will be re-checked by the line manager on an annual basis, or earlier if there has been a change in working conditions.

14. Policy Review

14.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or amended in the light of new employment legislation and/or relevant case law.

Initial Home Working Risk Assessment

This form should be used by the employee to undertake an initial assessment of the suitability of that part of their home which has been identified as the intended location for home working. It must then be signed by both the employee and the line manager before being submitted to the line manager.

Note: the Health and Safety Department may, subsequent to completion of this form, require a full risk assessment to be arranged. Should this be the case, no home working can take place prior to the full risk assessment by the Health and Safety Department taking place.

Name of intended home worker	
Home address	
Area of home intended to be used as a workplace	
Managers name and telephone number/extension number	
Directorate	
Summary of the main duties of the home worker and what equipment will be used in the home to undertake the role	
Date of Home Working Suitability Assessment (if applicable)	

	<u>Yes/No or N/A</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Is the size of the room adequate for the intended purpose and is there sufficient space to move around safely?		
Is there a source of natural light?		
Can the light be sufficiently controlled by blinds or curtains?		

Is the artificial light sufficient for the intended tasks?		
Is adequate ventilation available?		
Does the heating system provide a comfortable temperature which is appropriate for the tasks?		
Is there sufficient storage space for the intended range of tasks?		
Are proposed work surfaces large enough for the intended tasks?		
Is a suitably adjustable chair available?		
Are there sufficient <i>fixed</i> electrical sockets to cope with essential electrical equipment?		
Are electrical and telephone sockets appropriately located to avoid the need for trailing cables across the room(s)?		
Is the work area suitable for any necessary manual handling activities?		
Is a suitable smoke alarm fitted and tested regularly?		
Is there any requirement for additional health and safety equipment (i.e. footrest, ergonomic keyboard/mouse etc)?		

Employee's signature: _____ **Date:** ____ / ____ / ____

Line Manager's signature: _____ **Date:** ____ / ____ / ____

Appendix B

Document Reference:	Document Title: Home Working Policy
Assessment Date: 12 March 2012	Document Type: HR Agreement
Responsible Director: Lesley Bradley	Lead Manager: Tracey Leghorn

Step 1: Identify main aims of policy

Describe the main aim, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed project/policy

<p>Aim: It aims to provide a framework to outline the principles of home working.</p>
<p>Objectives: To provide clarity where the Trust requires or agrees to employees to work from home.</p>
<p>Intended Outcomes: Employees who work from home are enabled to do so, in order to work in the most effective and efficient way possible, in an appropriate work environment which optimizes productivity and performance.</p>

Step 2: Collect and Analyse Information

Has any previous work or research been done on equality issues in the area of the proposed project/policy? If so, what were they?

No			
<p>You should ask relevant questions in relation to all the strands equality & diversity, but information gathered should be relevant to your needs that will inform your decisions around the topic you are reviewing. If you identify a need for information that is not available you should consider and plan with the relevant others how this information could be obtained.¹</p>			
Gender including transgender	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		
Race	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		
Disability	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		

¹ Refer your need for information and proposal to the Equality & Diversity Steering Group using a copy of this page with your information before proceeding to ensure all similar requests can be coordinated

Sexual Orientation	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		
Age	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		
Religion & Belief	Do you have enough information?	Yes	No
	What else do you need to know?		

Step 3: Identify the level of impact

To help you think about this, you should complete the High, Medium, Low table and give reasons/comments for where:

- (a) The policy/strategy/project could have a positive impact on any of the equality target groups or contributes to promoting equality, equal opportunities and improving relations within equality target groups.
- (b) The policy/project/procedure could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups, i.e. disadvantage them in any way. **If the impact is high, a full Equality Impact Assessment should be completed.**

Equality	a. Positive impact			b. Negative impact			c. If NONE how did you evidence this?
	Low	None	High	Low	None	High	
Gender (including transgender)		X			X		Benefits all equally
Race		X			X		Benefits all equally
Disability			X		X		May be considered reasonable adjustment
Sexual orientation		X			X		Benefits all equally
Age		X			X		Benefits all equally
Belief and Religion			X		X		Accommodates personal beliefs/cultural preferences

Step 3^a: Decide if policy is equality relevant

Does the proposed project/policy have an explicit focus on inequalities, human rights and diversity? If so, how?

No

Is there a risk that the proposed project/policy may unintentionally mask or cause a negative impact on equality and diversity?

No

Is there a risk of adverse impact? If yes, please list the specific risks. If no, please explain the basis of your judgement.

No

Step 3^b: Record findings and produce action plan

If there are any potential or actual risks, what action will be undertaken to mitigate the specified risks, or to minimise the adverse impact. Within what timescales will this be done, what are the implications on resources and who will be responsible?

Findings	Proposed action	Timescale	Implications on resources	Responsible lead

Please state how the policy, procedure or process will be monitored for inequalities that may arise after the implementation:

Reviewed on a yearly basis and/or reviewed if changes in legislation occur, or other feedback received.

Summary:

On the basis of the information/evidence/consideration so far, do you believe that the proposed project/policy will have a positive or adverse impact on equality or diversity? (please circle one)

Positive Impact		Adverse Impact	
Yes	No	Yes	No

Basis for your judgement:

Home Working provides ability for greater flexibility for people within the target groups - disability and/or religious.

Has a significant adverse impact been identified that requires a Full Equality Impact Assessment?

YES	Some Impact Identified Local Actions set out to resolve the impact ²	NO
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Name of the project/policy lead completing this assessment:

² Please ensure that the arrangements for monitoring

Name: Laura Norton	Job Title: HRBP
Signature:	Date: 12 March 2012
<p>Please email this completed draft document to the Equality & Diversity Lead for quality assurance purposes and record monitoring. <i>This form must accompany all policies and procedures when sent to Trust Board Committee or Group for approval</i></p>	

Executive Summary Page for Equality Impact Assessment:	
Document Reference:	Document Title: Home Working Policy
Assessment Date:	Document Type: HR Agreement
Responsible Director: Lesley Bradley	Lead Manager: Tracey Leghorn
Conclusion of Equality Impact Assessment:	
Recommendations for Action Plan:	
Risks Identified:	
Approved by a member of the executive team:	
YES	NO
Name: Lesley Bradley	Position: Director of Business Transformation
Signature:	Date: