**COVID-19 (Coronavirus) - Working from home policy**

In view of the current COVID-19 situation, [insert company name] (“Company”) are following the Governments advice and are supportive of protecting the health and well-being of our employees, clients and associated communities.

For that reason, we have introduced a homeworking policy which clearly defines the steps all Company employees need to follow to support the Government COVID-19 strategy and will protect their own health and the health of their colleagues, clients and contacts.

Homeworking means working from home on an occasional, a temporary or a permanent basis. Homeworking does not entitle you to choose when and how you work. it simply means you do your job from home. Your contractual obligations, including your core working hours, continue to apply. Any changes would need to be agreed in advance.

We may decide to end your homeworking arrangement on short notice if we think that it is not working as it should, or that it has become or will soon become unsuitable, or the current COVID-19 advice or Government strategy alters.

If homeworking has become unsuitable because of your conduct or performance, we may terminate the homeworking arrangement immediately subject to health and well-being considerations. We reserve the right to implement our Disciplinary Policy which could lead to you being suspended and/or your employment being brought to an end.

When your homeworking arrangement has ended, we will bring you back into your usual workplace.

This policy does not form part of your employment contract and we may update it at any time.

**Working from home**

The Company is committed to supporting the Government’s social distancing strategy by ensuring that as many people in the firm are able to work from home to reduce the chances of spreading the virus.

Authorisation for working from home will be given by [insert name / positon] based on any of the following circumstances;

* The need to self-isolate due to showing mild symptoms themselves;
* The need to self-isolate due to family members showing signs of Coronavirus;
* The need to follow government social distancing restrictions or;
* The need to stay at home to care for children.

We would urge anyone who has been given the opportunity to work from home to support the Government policy on social distancing. In doing so this will support and potentially enhance the health position of those who are still required to attend their workplaces.

**Sickness**

The Company’s usual sickness procedures should be followed regardless of type of illness.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff absent through sickness or injury to inform [insert name / position] by [insert time] by telephone on the first day of absence, and every other day of absence unless doctor’s note is provided.

[insert name / position] is to be contacted on [insert number]. Notification of absence by text message or email or to any other person is NOT permitted.  If any member of staff does not contact [insert name / position] before [insert time] by telephone, the day is treated as unauthorised leave and could lead to possible disciplinary action.

For absences up to seven days, staff are required to complete and sign a Statutory Sick Pay Certificate form countersigned by their line manager. Any issues with logistics in the current climate should be referred to [insert name] in the first instance.

# Sickness due to COVID-19

**If you are showing any symptoms of Coronavirus you must not attend the office and should follow the Company’s usual sickness procedures as stated above.**

# In the event of your sickness being in relation to Covid-19, or you live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus you should obtain an Isolation Note from NHS 111 online service and provide this to [insert name / position] by email.

Use this online service if you have been told to stay at home because of coronavirus.

This service is only for people who:

* have symptoms of coronavirus and have used the [111 online coronavirus service](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19)
* have been told by a healthcare professional they have symptoms of coronavirus

If you are not sure if you need to stay at home, [get the latest NHS advice on coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/).

### How long to stay at home

* if you have symptoms of coronavirus, you'll need to stay at home for 7 days
* if you live with someone who has symptoms, you'll need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms

**Before returning to the office or attending the office you must contact [insert name/position] to discuss your return and the current position with regards to home working status.**

**Working hours/availability**

Your working hours remain the same as your contracted hours with the exception of authorised childcare arrangements.

You must work 37 hours (or your reduced hours, if you are not full-time) in accordance with your contractual obligations to the Company. [We acknowledge and accept that these hours may be worked outside of the traditional Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00 and may extend to weekend working.]

[If you have been authorised to work from home, YOU MUST divert your calls to your mobile number. Your divert MUST be on during working hours of 9-5 (or your usual working hours) and you can take the divert off after working hours.]

Any change of your contracted hours is to be requested via [insert name / position] under the Company’s normal procedure.

If you are well and working from home and subsequently become sick, you must follow the Company’s usual sickness procedures as defined above.

Ensure you update your email out of office assistant with your availability on a daily basis, so everyone is aware of who is and is not working.

It is of the upmost importance that you notify [insert name / position] if you don’t have enough work to fill your 37 hours a week (or reduced hours if you are part time) and they will endeavour to provide you with suitable tasks to undertake.

Whilst robust planning has been in place for some weeks to ensure the continuing sustainability of the practice and job security, there may come a point when we need to apply to the Government to secure some of the funding that has been made available to businesses.

If that happens, we are likely to be required to provide evidence of reduced workloads so it is important you communicate effectively with your Line Manager should that position occur and they in turn will record and report to [insert name / position] .

**HR Support**

Any other HR issues should be referred to [insert name / email address]  in the first instance.

**Accounts procedures/Cyber Crime**

Fraudsters and cybercrime opportunists thrive in situations of change and the COVID-19 situation will result in an increased risk of potential criminal offences being attempted. Fraudsters will know the pressure firms are under and will find a way to manipulate the system.

You must adhere not only to all usual procedures in relation to accounts matters but must give additional consideration of enhanced procedures where possible. This is the time to double check and triple check all instructions and information to ensure the Company does not succumb to an attack.

**Professional Conduct**

Employees who work from home are subject to the same rules, procedures and expected standard of conduct and performance as all other employees. Contractual obligations, duties and responsibilities remain in place, as do the Company’s usual policies and procedures. Of particular importance is ensuring the firms Data Protection and Anti Money Laundering policies are fully adhered to. These are available from [insert name / position] if you require a copy.

Whilst never intentional, it’s all too easy to let standards slip in times of change, but all Company personnel regardless of employment status or role are reminded that they are obliged to ensure compliance with usual policies procedures and high standards of the Company regardless of their current working environment.

If anyone has any concerns in this regard refer to [insert name / position] for advice.

All usual systems must be adhered to and if they cannot be for logistical reasons for example please bring it to the attention of your supervising partner or Tracy directly.

**IT**

Where an IT or other problem prevents you from working effectively from home, you should contact [insert name]

**Information Management & Security**

You must ensure continuing consideration of Data Security. Client / Customer data is one of our greatest assets and is something (along with client money) that cyber criminals seek to obtain.

The Company has ensure we are technically secure, however everybody must play they their part in keeping clients’ data secure. Now is the time to be extra vigilant when considering opening emails and attachments etc.

You must ensure you are connected to a personal secure password protected internet/Wi-Fi connection. If this is not the case, you must immediately inform [insert name].

It is good practice to change this password periodically – now would be a good time to consider doing it – regularly.

[You **must only** work within the Company’s Terminal Server.]

Do not create or save documents/notes outside the system (i.e. you must not work on or save anything to your desktop)

Do not email your personal account with any work related documents. This is not something the Company will allow however if you feel it unavoidable please seek prior permission from [insert name] who will guide you further.

Do not print to a printer at home. If an exceptional circumstance requires you to do so you must ensure the security of the client data. Any rubbish should not be placed in bins at home but instead should be kept to one side with a view to being brought back into the office or collected from you at a later date for secure destruction. This also applies to handwritten notes etc.

Client conversations must be conducted in a manner which does not breach client confidentiality. Whilst it may be difficult in your home environment with family members present or in the vicinity, this is an important consideration.

**Health and Safety**

The Company has an obligation to ensure you remain working in a healthy environment even when at home and you will have been provided with the equipment needed to carry out your usual job. If there is any further equipment which you need please email [insert name] to advise.

You also have a personal responsibility to take reasonable care. If you have any health and safety concerns or needs, or if an accident or incident takes place, you must immediately report this to [insert name / position].

[Insert Company name]

This policy was implemented on [insert date].