**Guidance and Health and Safety Checklist for Homeworking**

**Introduction**

The University has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees, including those working from home. Home workers are defined as those people who have formally agreed arrangements with their managers to work at home or more temporary arrangements. As direct supervision of home workers is not possible, the arrangements for home working must be agreed between the home worker and their supervisor or line manager.

**Responsibilities**

**Line Managers**

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that:

* appropriate risk assessments are carried out for home workers.
* health & safety concerns are monitored.
* Arrangements are in place to manage the risk posed by any equipment provided to an employee to use at home. The University retains responsibility for computers, power packs / chargers etc.

**Staff**

All staff are expected to;

* take responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others;
* co-operate fully with health and safety arrangements made by the University.
* report safety concerns, or unsafe or unhealthy working conditions to their line manager, Head of School or Department.

**Guidance**

The typical hazards expected when homeworking are set out in Table 1. Staff are requested to use this information to complete the checklist at Appendix 1 to confirm these hazards are managed or to identify where further action is required.

The University is required to ensure a suitable working environment, most notably to ensure the workstation meets regulatory requirements and does not pose a significant risk. There are a number of factors to be considered, these are set out in more detail the Workstation Set- Up checklist**.**

**Hazards**

A simple checklist considering typical hazards in the context of a home environment should be completed prior to the work commencing and reviewed regularly. An example checklist is shown at Appendix 1.

The line manager should keep copies of the checklist, and act upon any matters of concern.

**1. Typical hazards associated with home working**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hazard** | **Example** |
| Manual handling | Loading and unloading goods from vehicles  Moving in relatively confined spaces.  Rearranging workstation or equipment regularly |
| Electrical hazards | The capacity of domestic power  supply to ensure it is adequate for the electrical equipment required (the domestic electricity supply is the responsibility of the employee).  Wear and tear of portable appliances including power cables and chargers. |
| Display Screen Equipment (DSE) | Regular or prolonged use of IT equipment/ screens.  Prolonged sedentary or poor posture. |
| Fire and Security | Poor housekeeping leading to fire- loading/ combustibles accumulating  No means of detecting fire or raising the alarm in an emergency.  Obstructed or unsafe exit routes. |
| Lone Working | Feelings of social isolation or anxiety.  Poor communication or feeling of a lack of support.  Lack of support or isolation in the event of an accident or illness. |
| Work Related Stress | Change to homeworking environment and increased or competing domestic demands/ caring responsibilities.  Poor communication or feeling of a lack of support.  Changes to workload.  Increased working hours.  Changes to mental health.  Dealing with critical incident including, illness or bereavement and isolation from family/ friends/ existing support network. |
| New and Expectant Mothers | Considering any work-related/ homeworking hazards specifically to new or expectant mothers including lifting, carrying, working posture, stress, and long working hours.  Considering the risks to an unborn child and children of any breastfeeding mothers. |
| Accidents and Illness | Aggravation or worsening of condition due to an accident at home.  Lack of emergency medical support in the event of serious injury / accident. |

**Record Keeping**

Records should be kept of;

• Work equipment supplied to the home worker

• Maintenance and testing of the equipment

• Monitoring arrangements such as completed checklists

• All risk assessments

Accidents and incidents should be recorded and forwarded to the University’s Health and Safety Advisor.

**APPENDIX ONE**

**Homeworking Self-Assessment Checklist**

This form should be completed initially by the home worker and returned to the line manager. Any matters of concern should be discussed and resolved as soon as possible. The responses should be reviewed regularly, and at the very least, every six months or following any significant changes.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GENERAL** | **YES** | **NO** | **N/A** |
|  | | |
| Have you read and understood the University’s guidance on home working? |  |  |  |
| **FIRE** | | | |
| Do you have working smoke / heat detectors fitted and are they tested regularly? |  |  |  |
| Is the work area tidy? |  |  |  |
| If not, can you tidy it now? |  |  |  |
| Are waste materials regularly disposed of to avoid accumulation of combustibles? |  |  |  |
| Do you know how you would get out in an emergency? |  |  |  |
| Are all exit routes clear? |  |  |  |
| If using portable heaters, are used safely and in a fixed position? |  |  |  |
| **ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT** | | | |
| Are power leads and cables in good condition (e.g. free from cuts, fraying and damage?) |  |  |  |
| Is the socket outlet suitable?  Multi-way plug adaptors should not be used. |  |  |  |
| Does the equipment switch on and off properly? |  |  |  |
| Is all equipment in good condition? (e.g. not damaged, no loose or missing casings etc) and free from signs of overheating? |  |  |  |
| Are the cables securely fixed in all plugs? |  |  |  |
| **DSE** | | | |
| Have you carried out a DSE workstation self-assessment?  **If no, use the Workstation Set Up checklist to do this.** |  |  |  |
| **SLIPS TRIPS AND FALLS** | | | |
| Are walkways and the workstation areas clear of any tripping hazards? |  |  |  |
| **MANUAL HANDLING** | | | |
| Do you have to carry out any manual handling activities that cause you difficulties? |  |  |  |
| **WORKING ALONE** | | | |
| Have you agreed a mode and frequency of communication with your line manager? |  |  |  |
| If you have caring responsibilities that may impact your ability to homework, have you raised this with your line manager? |  |  |  |
| Do you have any concerns in relation to your wellbeing about working from home? |  |  |  |
| Are you aware of support that is available to you to support your mental health while working from home? |  |  |  |
| **SECURITY** | | | |
| Can exit doors and accessible windows be secured? |  |  |  |
| **ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS** | | | |
| Do you have basic first aid supplies available? |  |  |  |
| Do you have a means of contacting the emergency services? |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **TO BE COMPLETED BY HOME WORKER**  List any matters of home working concerns that you believe require attention: |
| **TO BE COMPLETED BY LINE MANAGER**  List any matters of concern which need /action attention as homeworking starts or is reviewed and how these will be achieved: |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Home worker’s name: | Date: |
| Home worker’s signature: | |
| The matters of concern/actions raised above have been addressed and home working is agreed/confirmed to continue. | |
| Line manager’s (name): | Date: |