

# Occasional Homeworking

**This document outlines the Scottish Prison  
Service Policy in relation to Occasional  
Homeworking**

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**Unlocking Potential. Transforming Lives**

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**Corporate Services**

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**All Scottish Prison Service Employees**

**Links to Other Policies:**

**[Flexible Working](#)**

**[Major Disruption to Travel](#)**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This document sets out the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) policy on occasional homeworking and sets out the procedure that should be followed when employees wish to make an application for homeworking. This policy should be read as part of the organisation's overall Flexible Working practices.

Before occasional homeworking can commence approval needs to be obtained from the appropriate line manager as to what type of work could be undertaken from home, and the situations when homeworking would be acceptable. (N.B. It is recognised that many job roles do not lend themselves to this type of arrangement).

Specially encrypted devices may be available to allow employees to carry work out at home. All SPS procedures relating to data security must be complied with.

## 2.0 Aim

The aim of this document is to ensure that employees who homework do work which is appropriate, in a safe environment, and in a way that complies with SPS data security rules.

## 3.0 Policy Statement

Working from home is not a contractual entitlement of any SPS employee, nor a routinely enforceable condition of employment from SPS's point of view. It is anticipated that homeworking will not normally be carried out for longer than a single working day within a working week and will make up the minority of the employee's working pattern.

As no permanent homeworking arrangements are in place, it is not anticipated that there will be any tax implications for employees who undertake occasional homeworking.

Depending on the nature of the job role, there are some circumstances when it may be appropriate for employees to undertake work from home e.g.:

- If there is a need to work free from distraction to complete a specific task.
- If it is impractical or inefficient to return to the office or make use of a 'hot desk' facility after a meeting away from the employee's normal place of work.

- As part of a planned return to work arrangement that has been agreed following Occupational Health advice.
- Where due to adverse weather, it has not been possible to get to the employee's normal place of work or another SPS work location.
- In the case of a disaster where the normal place of work or another SPS location is not available as a working base.

It should be noted that hosting meetings or delivering any kind of service to third parties on behalf of SPS must **not** be carried out from home.

All homeworking arrangements must be approved, in advance, by the relevant line manager. A completed [Homeworking Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#) should be used to record applications. , the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Self-Assessment Guidance Notes must be read, and the Self-Assessment Checklist completed.

## 4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all SPS employees, regardless of the nature of their contract of employment. Failure to adhere to this guidance may result in action being taken under the SPS' disciplinary procedures.

## 5.0 Definitions

For simplification of this document the following terms and definitions apply:

- **Homeworking** - Home working at SPS is an arrangement where the employee spends all or part of a working day at home.

## 6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### *Employees*

Gain approval from the appropriate line manager in advance for occasional homeworking (if appropriate) and complete the [Homeworking Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#).

Ensure familiarity with SPS' policies on data security, Display Screen Equipment and SPIN use if carrying out occasional homeworking.

Decide if there is a need to notify any third parties (e.g. insurers, mortgage provider or landlord) of the intention to work from home occasionally.

On each occasion of occasional homeworking, agree in advance with the appropriate line manager the nature of tasks to be undertaken, and the period of working from home.

### **Managers**

Consider any applications made for occasional homeworking and ensure the [Homeworking Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#) is completed.

Ensure there are no health and safety issues before agreeing any requests.

Ensure the employee understands how to book out a laptop and is fully aware of data security issues.

### **HR**

Advise managers on policy. Ensure copies of [Homeworking Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#) is signed and retained on file.

### **TUS**

Advise members on policy requirements and personal responsibilities.

## **7.0 General Principles**

There are a number of overarching principles that will govern arrangements for SPS homeworking. These are:-

The option to seek approval for occasional homeworking is available to all employees, in line with the organisational commitment to equality of opportunity for all. However, it is recognised that many roles and types of work do not lend themselves to this type of arrangement. Any applications made will be considered taking into account the full circumstances, the needs of the organisation and the needs of the employee. Homeworking is subject to approval by the appropriate line manager.

Once all the requirements have been met and a homeworking application has been accepted, any agreement to work from home on any particular date must be recorded. This might take the form of an e-mail, for example, sent to the appropriate line manager confirming the arrangement reached for working from home on a particular date. This will avoid any future dubiety with regard to the reasons for absence from the workplace on that working day. Working arrangements **must** be agreed in advance, e.g. the nature of tasks to be undertaken, the period of working from home. The manager will remain responsible for ensuring that an appropriate work output is achieved during the time spent working at home.

Employees must be available and contactable during working hours when working from home. Details of the employee's home or mobile telephone number must be provided to the appropriate line manager (or nominated contact) in advance of any homeworking taking place.

It is not appropriate to combine home based working with dependent care. Employees must have separate and effective care arrangements in place for the duration of the homeworking period in order that full attention can be paid to work responsibilities.

Employees who have been assigned SPS encrypted laptops for homeworking (see Section 9), must ensure that laptops are connected to the network, as per Information Systems and Strategy (ISS) protocol, at regular intervals in order that the necessary safety and security checks can be carried out. The local Scottish Prison Information Network (SPIN) Co-ordinator will help make the necessary arrangements in this regard. In addition, employees must take responsibility for allowing the necessary anti-virus up-dates to be run on SPS laptops, when prompted to run these.

Employees provided with an SPS laptop to work from home must adhere to the local procedures for logging in/out the equipment.

Where applicable, employees will be credited with the appropriate Time Off in Lieu (TOIL), Banked or Flexible Working Hours update/debit, for any approved homeworking.

Employees found abusing homeworking arrangements may face disciplinary action.

## 8.0 Approval for Occasional Homeworking

Employees who wish to apply for homeworking are required to complete a [Homeworking Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#) and arrange to meet with the appropriate line manager to discuss the application.

A decision will be made as to whether or not individual requests can be supported and the relevant information will be documented on the form, which is signed by both parties. The completed form (whether supporting or rejecting your request), **must** be forwarded immediately to the local HR team in order that employee records can be updated.

If the line manager has any concerns, for example with health and safety issues or in relation to the type of work that could be carried out at home, then approval will not be granted for homeworking.

Decisions relating to homeworking applications will be made at management discretion. There is no appeal process. However, if after fully reading these guidelines and considering the reasons why a homeworking application may have been declined, employees believe that the decision has been made unfairly or unjustly, then

employees have the opportunity to raise a grievance, following the SPS Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Homeworking arrangements should be reviewed at least annually (for example as part of PPMS discussions) or sooner if circumstances change.

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. in the case of severe adverse weather) it may be possible to obtain remote access to e-mails from a non SPS PC or laptop. This would have to be arranged by the appropriate line manager contacting ISS, who will arrange for the necessary approvals to be gained to allow remote access to be set up on a very short term basis.

## 9.0 Equipment

Some establishments/HQ departments have purchased equipment (specially encrypted laptops/tablets) that can be provided to employees to allow work to be carried out at home on the range of SPS applications they normally have access to in the SPS workplace. Devices are assigned specifically to individual employees for employee use when homeworking.

Employees who have approval to work from home and have been provided with an SPS owned laptop will be subject to the local arrangements for logging in/out this equipment.

Employees must **not** e-mail work to/from a personal e-mail address or use CDs or memory sticks to transfer work to/from a personal PC and any SPS equipment. It should be noted that due to security concerns, remote access arrangements to the SPS network for non-encrypted computers are not available, unless there are exceptional circumstances (see Section 8).

It is expected that any SPS laptops will be used in accordance with any instructions issued and that employees will take reasonable care of any equipment supplied for homeworking purposes. SPS will take responsibility for maintaining and servicing any equipment provided. If there is any problem with the equipment, the local SPIN Co-ordinator should be contacted.

In many cases, employees will not have access to an encrypted laptop and it is likely that any work occasionally undertaken at home will consist of one or some of the following:

- Reading or proof reading documents
- Commenting on draft documents
- Researching (either internet or paper) background information relating to a piece of work that requires to be undertaken



As a general rule, it is not anticipated that those occasionally working from home will require stationery. Arrangements should generally be made for printing and photocopying on SPS premises.

It is not expected that business calls will require to be made when working from home unless a work mobile phone has been allocated.

## 10.0 Confidentiality and Security

Where employees are required to take work related documents into the home environment, it is important that these are stored securely to protect from loss, destruction or damage. If documents require to be destroyed, all documents with e-mail addresses and/or SPS information should be brought back to SPS premises and shredded on site and not placed in domestic rubbish bins. It is important that neither work related documents nor the laptop are made accessible to family or visitors to the home.

Home Faxes must not be used for sending confidential information as the information can be retained on the fax drive.

Employees have responsible for the security of all data in their keeping. Employees should refer to the various SPS policy documents on Information Security and in particular [Governors and Managers Action Notice 47A-10](#) dealing with information security away from the workplace.

## 11.0 Health and Safety

As indicated above, employees must read the [Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\) Self-Assessment Guidance Notes](#) and then complete the accompanying [Self-Assessment Checklist](#) and forward it to the appropriate line manager **prior** to homeworking commencing.

If, whilst working from home, there is an accident that relates to the use of display screen equipment provided by SPS, then the usual procedures for reporting such accidents must be followed – i.e. the electronic Accident at Work form should be downloaded from the intranet, completed and forwarded to the local Health & Safety Co-ordinator.

## 12.0 Sickness

Normal sickness absence reporting procedures must be followed in the event of sickness or inability to work when employees have been scheduled to work from home.

## 13.0 Travel Expenses

When working from home, employees cannot claim for travel between the homeworking environment and their normal place of work (establishment/HQ), as this is ordinary commuting.

However, any business travel expenses whilst working from home may be claimed in accordance with normal procedures, with the following constraint: - mileage must be claimed from the homeworking environment or the home establishment, whichever is the lesser.

## 14.0 Insurance, Mortgage and Tenancy Rights

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify relevant third parties (i.e. house building and contents insurers, mortgage provider or landlord) of any occasional homeworking.

## 15.0 Loss or Damage to SPS Equipment and Loss of Information

Any SPS equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged as a result of homeworking must be reported immediately to the local SPIN Co-ordinator and to the IT Security Officer. If a data security breach is involved (e.g. where a laptop is lost or stolen), then the SPS Information Security Unit must also be informed. Please refer to the [Information Security Policy on Reporting Information Security Incidents](#) for more information.

N.B. It is better for both the organisation and the individual involved if any security issue is raised as soon as possible, rather than be delayed or unreported.

## 16.0 Employee Liability

Employees who work from home, are required to exercise due care and diligence in safeguarding SPS property in their charge.

The relevant ISS reference documents, including:

- *Laptop instructions*
- *Security issues with remote access, and*
- *General SPIN Security & Use*

must also be read and adhered to.

Misuse of SPS property or failure to comply with SPIN rules and procedures may result in disciplinary action.

## Further Information:

The SPS recognises that from time to time employees may have questions or concerns relating to Occasional Homeworking. In certain situations employees' rights and obligations regarding Occasional Homeworking may change. In these circumstances the SPS will abide by any statutory obligations.

The SPS wishes to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. Employees are encouraged to seek clarification on any issues with the appropriate Line Manager in the first instance.

## Sustainability

Improving our environmental performance and doing things in a more sustainable way should be seen as integral to our core business practices.

In line with the SPS Sustainable Policy and to demonstrate compliance with the Scottish Government's commitment to improving environmental and sustainable development performance, please be mindful if printing this document – keeping paper usage to a minimum (print only version), printing on both sides, and recycling.

## Equality Statement

The SPS is an equal opportunities employer where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. We are fully committed to equality, diversity and human rights and to ensuring our culture, working environment, policies, processes and practices are free from bias. This policy applies to all employees regardless of protected characteristics, and, subject to any eligibility criteria, length of service, grade, working pattern or operational status.

## Inclusive Communications

It is our ambition to ensure that SPS documents are readable, accessible and engaging for employees.

In formatting this document, good practice principles around engagement and inclusive communications have been adhered to.

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact Human Resources.

## Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner where applicable to reflect changing business and legislative requirements.

## Human Resources Policy and Guidance in SPS

SPS policies take into account current legislation, rules, regulations and best practice guidance from a range of professional and public bodies, including the following:



UK Civil  
Service  
Management  
Code



UK Legislation



EU  
Legislation



ACAS



CIPD Best  
Practice