

Occasional Homeworking Policy

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

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Unlocking Potential. Transforming Lives

Policy Number:

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Directorate Owners:

Corporate Services

Policy Scope:

All Scottish Prison Service Employees

Links to Other Policies:

[Flexible Working](#)

[Major Disruption to Travel](#)

[Absence Management Policy](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Protecting the Personal Data of Staff Members and Others](#)

Approved by:

Head of Human Resources

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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 occasional 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 aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that employees who occasionally work from home, do work which is appropriate and is carried out in a safe and suitable environment.
- Comply with SPS data security rules.

3.0 Policy Statement

- SPS recognises the importance of balancing work and home life and aims to accommodate a range of working arrangements, where operationally feasible, to help employees achieve this balance. This policy provides the opportunity to temporarily address such needs.
- Occasional 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. MAAPP link
 - 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. MDTT Link
 - In the case of a disaster where the normal place of work or another SPS location is not available as a working base. MDTT Link
- 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' code of conduct.

5.0 Definitions

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

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Governors and Managers

Have the responsibility to:

- Consider any applications made for occasional homeworking and ensure the occasional homeworking [Request and Declaration of Responsibility Form](#) is completed.
- Seek advice from HR where appropriate.
- Ensure there are no health and safety issues before agreeing any requests.
- Ensure that the task being undertaken at home is appropriate.
- Ensure the employee is fully aware of data security issues and suitably trained.

6.2 Employees

Have the responsibility to:

- 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.
- Notify any third parties (e.g. insurers, mortgage provider or landlord) of the intention to occasionally work from home if there is a requirement to do so.
- 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.
- When working from home employees are required to exercise due care and diligence in safeguarding SPS property in their charge. This includes any SPS documentation and data.
- The relevant training and reference documents, including:

- MyLo - Protecting Information Level 1
- Laptop / tablet instructions
- Security issues with remote access, and
- General SPIN Security & Use must also be read and adhered to.

6.3 HR

Have the responsibility to:

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

6.4 TUS

Have the responsibility to:

- Advise members on policy requirements and personal responsibilities.

7.0 General Principles

- There are a number of overarching principles that govern arrangements for SPS occasional 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.
- Occasional homeworking is subject to approval by the appropriate line manager.
- Once all the requirements have been met and an occasional homeworking application has been accepted, any agreement to work from home on any particular date must be recorded.

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- 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 occasional 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 / tablets for homeworking, must ensure that laptops/ tablets 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 / tablets, when prompted to run these.
- Employees provided with an SPS laptop / tablet 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 be subject to SPS code of conduct.

8.0 Approval for Occasional Homeworking

- Employees who wish to apply for occasional homeworking are required to complete a Homeworking [Request Form and Declaration of Responsibility](#) 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 to the local HR team in order that employee records can be updated.
- Decisions relating to homeworking applications will be made at Line Managers 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, as part of PPMS discussions or sooner if circumstances change.
- In the event of severe weather being forecast those employees with an SPS laptop/ tablet may seek permission from their line manager work from home, alternatively some employees may be able to work from an alternative SPS location if approved.
- In all cases it is deemed unlikely that permission will be retrospective.

9.0 Equipment

- SPS have a number of devices suitably equipped for the purpose of homeworking. These devices allow appropriate access to SPS applications.
- Employees should follow the correct approved log in procedure to access the SPS network

- It is expected that any SPS laptops/ tablets 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.
- 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.
- In many cases, employees will not have access to an encrypted laptop/ tablet 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.
- Misuse of SPS property or failure to comply with SPIN rules and procedures may result in action being taken under the SPS Code of Conduct.

10.0 Confidentiality and Security

- Where employees are required to take work related documents into the home environment, the following should be applied
 - 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/ tablets are made accessible to family or visitors to the home.

- Employees have responsible for the security of all data in their keeping. Employees should refer to the SPS Policy on Information Security (hyperlink) when 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.
- Employees should as far as reasonably practicable ensure that the homeworking environment is suitable for the purpose.
- 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 SharePoint, completed and forwarded to the local Health & Safety Co-ordinator.

12.0 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.

13.0 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.

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.

GDPR

This Policy has been subject to a Data Protection Impact Assessment to ensure compliance with GDPR.

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