

## Occupational safety and health and homeworking

The Authority is responsible for the occupational safety and health (OSH) of employees and for any others that may be affected by the work we do. This applies wherever that work may take place.

The following guidance applies in respect of OSH and homeworking:

- Generally, the type of work identified by the Authority for being undertaken at home is *office-work* which is considered to be low risk. For this reason a self-assessment of any significant risks and the measures that need to be taken to control those risks, is all that is required. The guidance summarised here and further information such as for DSE (workstation) assessment guidance available on the HUB is provided to help you. In case of any doubt with respect to any OSH concern or for further guidance on carrying out a suitable risk assessment you should contact your line manager or the Occupational Safety and Health Adviser (OSHA).
- You should seek to set up a home working arrangements which minimises risks including suitable working patterns and appropriate breaks from display screen work. While working at home you may have less cause to leave your workstation to undertake alternative tasks such as retrieving records or attending meetings. Consider setting limits for time spent at your computer and ensure you take regular short breaks if only to pause and change your position.
- Laptop computers are generally less suitable for extended periods of use. Consider if you can use a standard-sized desktop monitor and keyboard with your laptop, if available. Alternatively you may be able to use a laptop stand that will bring the screen up to a more suitable position for longer periods of use. A separate keyboard may also be necessary in this case.
- You may not have a workspace at home that is comparable to an office environment. While any suitable, stable, standard-height table is generally acceptable, try to also ensure that your chair is providing the correct support to allow a good posture. Working in soft chairs or with your computer on your lap should be avoided for all except the briefest of tasks. Also arrange good levels of lighting and avoid glare.
- You should arrange to have regular contact with colleagues and/or your line manager. Ensure you have agreed how and when this will happen and who you can contact in case of any emergency. If you are alone at home then consider also the *Lone Working* guidance on the HUB and what arrangements you should make for routine contact.
- Any work-related incidents, near-misses or accidents should be reported in the normal manner.
- While carrying out your work for the Authority, insurance arrangements for staff will provide cover wherever that work takes place.

If you have any questions regarding OSH while homeworking contact your line manager, OSHA or HR.