

HFTF home-working/ hybrid-working policy

1. Introduction

At Hope for the Future, we're committed to supporting flexible, modern ways of working that benefit both our team and the organisation.

Our **Home-Working / Hybrid-Working Policy** sets out how we approach remote and hybrid work so that expectations are clear, fair, and consistent across the team. The policy also ensures that HFTF protects and supports staff to work remotely in an effective and inclusive way.

For employees – it offers:

- **Clarity & consistency** – so everyone knows what's expected when working from home.
- **Safety & wellbeing** – through guidance on safe home working environments, equipment, working hours, health and safety, protection of personal data, and regular check-ins with line managers.
- **Fair access to support** – whether staff are based in the office or at home, they are included in team communications, performance reviews, and wellbeing support.

It helps HFTF to:

- **Support a geographically dispersed team** – with consistent practices across offices, remote staff, and hybrid workers.
- **Ensure productivity and accountability** – by aligning expectations around communication, availability, and performance.
- **Protect staff and data** – by making sure sensitive information is handled securely.
- **Manage resources fairly** – including desk space, equipment, and travel costs.
- **Stay legally compliant** – by following health and safety, data protection, and employment law requirements.

2. Purpose and Scope

- This policy applies to all current employees, whether full-time, part-time, temporary or fixed-term.

- Provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employee can be met, all staff are eligible for home/hybrid working arrangements as defined in this policy.
- It provides guidance for both the employer and employees in implementing consistent working practices across a geographically dispersed team.

3. Definitions

- 'Main office' refers to the Hope for the Future office at The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield.
- 'Sheffield office employees' refers to staff whose contracts state they are based at the Sheffield office.
- 'Staff' and 'employees' refer to all individuals employed by Hope for the Future, regardless of work location.
- 'Main place of work' is the employer's normal working location, as stated in their contract of employment.
- 'Home-working' refers to an arrangement where an employee carries out some or all of their contracted duties from their **residential home on an agreed basis**, rather than from an HFTF office or other work-related location. The employee must have a safe and suitable environment to perform their role effectively.
- 'Hybrid working' refers to a working pattern where an employee splits their working time between home and an HFTF office or other HFTF-related site, with additional travel to other premises as required.

4. Eligibility and Commuting Distance

- Each employee's contract states their usual place of work which has been agreed between the employee and the employer at the time of commencing employment with HFTF.
- The location of the staff members' normal place of work depends on the location of their home address and its proximity to Sheffield.

4.1 All staff who live within reasonable commuting distance of the Sheffield office (normally considered up to 60 minutes one way by public transport):

- Will be deemed as being based at the main Sheffield office. This reflects the fact that HFTF provides a suitable and permanent working environment for these staff at the main office. Travel to this location is considered part of the employee's normal commute.

- Can work all of their contracted hours at the office, and a desk space will be available for them or they can opt to work from home.
- Are encouraged to make use of the Sheffield office as part of our commitment to collaborative and flexible working.

4.2 Staff who live beyond a reasonable commuting distance of the Sheffield office may be classified as home-based staff. This should be agreed with their line manager prior to the commencement of employment. The address of their working location (e.g. their home-address) should be clearly stated in their contract of employment.

4.3 Sheffield office based employees may work from home:

- As part of a regular working pattern – where employees routinely split their time between home and their designated office base.
- Occasionally or on an ad hoc basis – for example, due to short-term personal circumstances or specific project needs.
- On a full-time basis – if they have arrangements in place in advance which have been agreed with their line manager.
- Subject to the same principles and expectations outlined in this policy (e.g. safety, communication, data protection).

Home working is a personal choice, the Sheffield office will remain their designated place of work and it will not affect the availability of a workspace at the Sheffield office.

Employees are expected to fulfil contracted hours unless a flexible arrangement is agreed in advance in line with the Flexible Working Policy through a **Flexible Working Request** and approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

5. Travel Expenses and TOIL

HFTF recognises that travel to the main office or other locations may be required for work or training purposes. In these cases all employees may:

- claim travel expenses for journeys between their designated place of work and any other location where they are required to attend for work or training.
- claim TOIL for time spent during outside of working hours while travelling to and from such locations, in line with the TOIL Policy.

However

Employees whose main place of work is designated as the Sheffield office **may**:

- **not** claim expenses for commuting between their home and the Sheffield office.
- **not** claim TOIL for travel time to and from home to the Sheffield office.

Sheffield based employees who choose to work from home for the majority of their working hours must have agreed arrangements in place with their line manager.

6 Employees' Responsibilities

All staff, regardless of whether they work from home full-time or part-time, are expected to:

- Attend meetings, training sessions, or other in-person commitments at the Sheffield office or other locations as required.
- Follow all relevant sections of this policy, including communication protocols and health and safety requirements for home-working.
- Discuss their preferred home-working or hybrid-working arrangements with their line manager as part of regular check-ins or 1:1s. These arrangements must have been agreed with the employee's line manager and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain satisfactory (notes of any review must be recorded in supervision documentation).
- Ensure they have a safe, private, and adequately equipped working environment at home, including a suitable internet connection for work use.
- Fulfil their contracted hours within normal working patterns unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance via a flexible working request.

(See ACAS Home-Working Arrangements guidance for more details.)

6. Communication

Regular communication between employees working from different locations is expected and encouraged. Where practical, meetings and conversations between employees working from different locations should take place using video call technology including Google Meet, WhatsApp video call and Zoom.

At least one team meeting including all employees working from different locations should be scheduled monthly.

At least one call between a line manager and their direct report should be scheduled every 1-2 weeks.

All staff are expected to respond to non urgent internal emails within 2- 3 working days.

7. Health and Safety Requirements

Employees working from home must complete a [Working From Home Self Assessment form](#) to ensure their work environment is safe and to identify any equipment needs (see section 5 below).

Staff are required to follow HFTF guidance on working hours, working time and rest breaks to ensure team members only work their scheduled working hours and that they take adequate breaks

8. Equipment

HFTF will provide essential equipment for home workstations, for the sole and exclusive use of the employee for professional purposes only. These are listed on the Equipment Request form.

- Employees working from home are required to conduct a workstation self-assessment to identify their equipment needs.
- Following completion of the Self- Assessment, requests should be made using the [Equipment Request Form](#), approved by a line manager, and submitted to HR.
- Equipment funded entirely by HFTF remains the property of HFTF and should be returned in the event of the employee leaving the organisation.
- Part-funded items may be kept by the employee upon agreement and repayment of HFTF's contribution. This will be agreed on a case by case basis depending on the cost of the item and the length of service of the employee.
- HFTF will fund equipment for reasonable adjustments for disabled and/or neurodiverse staff.
- Disabled employees are encouraged to apply to the Government's Access to Work scheme.

9. Expenses

Staff will not be able to claim for heating, lighting, phone bills or broadband costs whilst working at home. Employees are encouraged to claim tax relief of £6 per week from HMRC towards their extra heating and lighting expenses as per the Government Guidelines in force at the time. See <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

10. Mortgage and lease issues

Employees are responsible for checking any restrictions in mortgage or rental agreements related to home-working.

11. Performance Management

All employees, regardless of the location they are working from, will be managed in line with the [Performance Management Policy](#) of HFTF and reviewed as required.

Employees should work on the days and hours outlined in their contract of employment unless they have completed a Flexible Working request to alter these by formal request.

All employees will be required to attend some meetings or events in-person, at HFTF's premises or other locations, when requested to do so.

12. Raising health concerns

Employees should maintain regular contact with line managers to discuss any health (including mental health) concerns or issues resulting from their work or working arrangements, including discussions during 1:1 supervision meetings, and ensuring their Wellness Action Plan is up to date.

Support and resources are available online and through the HFTF resource library.

13. Security including data protection

Employees should follow the guidance in the HFTF Data Protection Policy [link needed] regarding the storage, retention and disposal of electronic and paper based information which contains sensitive information, regardless of work location.

HFTF ensures that all office equipment and workspaces are covered by adequate insurance.

Linked/Other useful policies/procedures

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the:

1. [Information Governance - Acceptable use of Information Systems](#)
2. [Information Governance - Access, storing and sharing of HFTF information](#)
3. [Information Governance - Classification of Information types](#)

4. [Information Governance - Data Retention Guidance](#)
5. [Information Governance - Use of HFTF email, messaging tools and apps](#)
6. [Information Governance - Use of internet](#)
7. [Information Governance - Working from HFTF Office](#)
8. [Information Governance - Working away from the Office](#)
9. [Lone Working](#) Policy
10.  Expenses Policy.pdf
11.  Flexible Working Policy.pdf
12.  Performance Management Policy.pdf
13. [Time off in Lieu](#) Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if significant changes are needed.