Our guide to temporary home working

March 2020

**In a nutshell**

This guide gives you important information on what you, and your manager, need to know if you’re working from home temporarily because of Coronavirus. It doesn’t replace our contractual home working policy and procedure, it’s just for those working from home as a result of the Government’s current guidance.

**Who’s it for?**  
Our UK employees and their managers.

It’s not for agency workers or contractors, who should speak to their own employers for guidance. If you’re a manager who needs to grant third party access for remote working you can find guidance [here](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/services/Pages/index.aspx) (click on ‘My third party contractor needs remote access’).

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1. Our response to Coronavirus

Our business is facing unprecedented times. We’re keen to do all we can do to delay the spread of Coronavirus and to keep you safe, while we continue to provide services to our customers.

These guidelines are designed to help you, at the company’s discretion, so we’ll continue to review them and may change and/or remove them at any time, including in line with business needs and changes to government guidelines.

1. When is temporary home working appropriate?

We’re asking all colleagues to be flexible to help continue to serve our customers and keep our colleagues safe and well. For some, we’ll need them to continue to attend their normal place of work (e.g. key workers) and to potentially flex shifts, working patterns and annual leave. For others, they’ll be temporarily working from home either due to travel restrictions or social distancing measures.

We’ll use a number of factors to assess whether you can do your role from home including the type of work you do, the systems you need access to, and your home set up.

This guidance is designed to ensure anyone working from home temporarily is set up as best they can be. For anyone contractually and permanently home based we have a separate policy. For temporary home working we are asking everyone to be flexible, and to take reasonable steps to ensure they are set up appropriately.

Home working will feel very different to working from your normal workplace, and we’ll do everything we can to support people.

**If you have a medical issue which needs to be considered, you must make your manager aware as soon as possible so you can agree the best approach.**

If home working isn’t possible it’s still important to follow all our normal [Coronavirus guidance](https://www.yourwellbeing.bt.com/coronavirus.html) on Your Wellbeing, and it’s very important that employees who are unwell do not come into work and that the latest advice is followed - there’s more information on Your Wellbeing.

1. Getting set up

Remember, if you’re working from home you don’t always need to use your VPN access. This will help us manage the demand on our network while lots of people are working from home. For other guidance on remote access please use [this site](https://office1.bt.com/sites/DigitalWorkplace/Pages/DWwfh.aspx).

**Examples of considerations/adjustments you and your manager need to discuss to assess the suitability of you working from home:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Issue | Consideration | Options |
| Can you do all the work you need to from your home? | * Do you need to access certain systems? Can you access them remotely? * Do you need to access customer or employee data? Can this be accessed remotely? If so, is sufficient provision in place to protect that data? Customer data should not be taken home without the relevant approvals. * Do you take calls from a helpdesk/external customers? Can you do this at home? * Do you need to physically access anything you can’t from home? E.g. access to a field site, retail stores. * Do you maintain critical services from an operations centre? * Are you up to date on all your mandatory training? | * Is there a way to allow remote systems access? * Is there a way of ensuring secure access to customer/employee data? Does this comply with the [Data Privacy](https://intra.bt.com/bt/lgc/compliance/data/Pages/index.aspx) policy? * Can calls be diverted to another number? * Can you do other duties which don’t involve access to customer data / certain equipment from home? * Can you complete any outstanding training? * Could you ask your line manager if you could work the majority of time from home and go into the office less frequently to complete work that isn’t possible to complete at home (where this is possible and practicable)? * If there are elements of your role you are unable to complete at home, discuss this with your manager. * Remember you must make sure you have a secure WIFI connection and stay alert to phishing attacks both via email and malicious sites. More information can be found on the [security pages](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/Pages/index.aspx) and [avoiding phishing](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/me/howdoi/at_work/Pages/avoid-phishing-scams.aspx) site. |
| Is your home environment suitable to work from? | * You’ll need to review your home environment to make it fit for purpose (if you are concerned speak to your manager and see the guidance above). Tips to consider: * Set up your work area so that you can have a private space and make sure confidential information is kept away from the rest of the household (e.g. by keeping screens away from view, locking screens, putting documents away once work completed). * Review the health and safety guidance [here](https://hr.bt.com/en-wish_3rdParty/safety-wellbeing/safety/health-safety-handbook/home-working) to make sure your working environment meets the minimum health and safety requirements. * Make sure you have the necessary equipment (e.g. laptop, chair and desk or table) (see section on considerations for what to consider). | * If you have an urgent issue regarding your home environment/the equipment that you have at home, make sure you speak with to your manager. You’ll need to check that anything you use at home (such as chair and table) is suitable to work from home however, if it isn’t completely suitable, you’ll need to mitigate this for example by taking additional breaks. * We don’t usually provide equipment beyond a laptop for temporary use at home. However, if you temporarily want to take home your monitor, keyboard and docking station or another piece of equipment you need to be able to do your job you’ll need to ask your manager for permission, and they’ll also keep a record. If you need to go back into an office to pick up equipment speak to your manager first. |

**Other things to consider:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Issue | Consideration | Options |
| Could working from home affect my tax and insurance? | As this is temporary there shouldn’t be any tax implications.  HMRC doesn’t allow work from home tax relief on household expenses you’d be paying for anyway, such as rent or mortgage payments, and it doesn’t cover expenses that relate to both business and private use, like broadband and telephone line rental. | All company property is covered under the company insurance policy. You mustn’t do anything with this property that would invalidate this insurance cover. If you’re not sure whether what you’re doing with company property might affect the insurance cover, you should speak to your manager straight away.  If any company property gets damaged, lost or stolen the company will normally meet the costs of replacing or repairing it, as long as you’ve taken reasonable care of it. |
| What considerations do I need to make about Health and Safety? | Health and safety is just as important at home as in the office, so you’ll have the same health and safety responsibilities. Check out the guidance [here](https://hr.bt.com/en-wish_3rdParty/safety-wellbeing/safety/health-safety-handbook/home-working). You’ll need to make sure that where you work is safe and there aren’t any hazards so there’s no risk to you or anyone who might need to visit you. You must also take reasonable care of your own health and safety and anyone else who might be affected by your actions.  Guidance on how to set up your workstation can be found on the [DSE](https://hr.bt.com/en-wish_3rdParty/safety-wellbeing/safety/health-safety-handbook/display-screen-equipment-dse) pages in the H&S Handbook. Check out the video clips on here for stretching and inactive working and in particular, guidance for portable devices. | Use the guidance for [Laptop workstation set up](https://hr.bt.com/en-wish_3rdParty/safety-wellbeing/safety/health-safety-handbook/display-screen-equipment-dse/laptop-workstation-set-up) and [Workstation set up](https://hr.bt.com/en-wish_3rdParty/safety-wellbeing/safety/health-safety-handbook/display-screen-equipment-dse/workstation-set-up).  You must let your manager know straight away if you have an accident either in your work area or with any company property you use when working from home.  You may find you’re sitting at your desk for long periods of time so it’s important to take short regular breaks. Breaks can be:  a. Formal - meal or scheduled breaks  b. Informal - changes in activities to non-screen based work  c. Exercise - stretching and movement  See the [working time regulations](https://hr.bt.com/en-gb/working-at-bt/flexible-working/working-time-regulations) for more information on breaks and working time.  You should also be mindful of your wellbeing during this time. Perhaps consider separating out your working day from leisure time (e.g. making sure you shut down your laptop at the end of the day). Make sure you take time to talk to colleagues. |

1. Next steps to confirm temporary home working?
2. Employee checklist for temporary home working

Read all the information, and if you have any other questions or concerns discuss these with your manager. Some other practical points to consider are also below:

* Read and understand what this guidance means for you and what you need to do
* If you’re not clear, ask your manager
* Agree how will you keep in touch with your colleagues? Can you put in more regular calls with team members?
* Decide what equipment you will be using / borrowing, and that you can get this home safely?
* Decide how you are going to set up your home working environment. Have you thought about the space you’ll be working in? Will company data be away from windows? Can you make calls privately? How can you adjust your space to make it fit for purpose?
* Raise any concerns you may have about your working environment at home with your manager and agree how you can address these
* Determine how you’ll keep any confidential company information secure. Read the [Data Privacy](https://intra.bt.com/bt/lgc/compliance/data/Pages/index.aspx) guidance on working from home
* Review the [BT Way](https://intra.bt.com/bt/thebtway) and [Acceptable use Policies](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/securitypolicy/acceptable/Pages/index.aspx) and ensure you are up to date with all your mandatory training
* Don’t forget to make sure you have a secure WIFI connection and stay alert to phishing attacks both via email and malicious sites. More information can be found on the [security pages](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/Pages/index.aspx) and [avoiding phishing](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/me/howdoi/at_work/Pages/avoid-phishing-scams.aspx) site
* Define your working schedule and how will you switch off properly once the working day has ended
* If your personal situation changes, you become unwell and/or you are struggling with the home working arrangements make sure you speak to your manager so that you can review the options

1. Final manager checklist

Once you’ve read this pack if you have any queries or concerns discuss them with your manager or HR. Some other practical points to consider are also below:

* Have you read the guidance? Do you understand what this means for you and your team and what you need to do?
* How will you keep in touch with the team to help avoid feelings of isolation? Can you put in more regular calls with team members/more team members? Be mindful of times that will be convenient for others too especially if you’re working alternative days/out of core hours. Turn on the video option on MS teams/skype where possible
* If you’re not clear or have questions have you spoken to your manager/HR?
* Have you contacted all your team members to discuss if they’re able to work from home or not?
* If you’ve team members who can work from home have you emailed them all the arrangements in writing (see step two above)?
* Do you know what equipment the team will be borrowing?
* Have you supported the team with any actions that need to be taken or concerns raised?
* Are you clear how company confidential information will be kept secure? Have you read the [Data Privacy](https://intra.bt.com/bt/lgc/compliance/data/Pages/index.aspx) guidance on working from home?

1. Further information

* [Coronavirus intranet pages](https://www.yourwellbeing.bt.com/coronavirus.html)
* [Data Privacy guidance](https://intra.bt.com/bt/lgc/compliance/data/Pages/index.aspx)
* [Acceptable use Policies](https://intra.bt.com/bt/security/securitypolicy/acceptable/Pages/index.aspx)
* [BT Way](https://intra.bt.com/bt/thebtway)
* [Remote working academy pages](https://myprofile.bt.com/academy/subject/agilework/Pages/landing.aspx)

1. Guideline owner

Employee Relations

1. Review

March 2021

1. Change history

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version No** | **Date** | **Change made by** | **Brief details of change** |
| 1.0 | March 2020 | Employee Relations | New Guidance |
| 1.2 | March 2020 | Employee Relations | Sections on equipment, broadband and tax amended. Sections on working at home with children removed and example email removed. |
| 1.3 | March 2020 | Employee Relations | Format changes. |
| 1.4 | March 2020 | Employee Relations | Sections updated to reflect guidance on key workers, how BT will support, making your home environment suitable and employee checklist. |