

Hybrid Working Policy

Here at Ore Valley Housing Association (OVHA) we want to support our colleagues to do their best work, have a good work life balance, work flexibly whilst staying connected, and get the job done.

We know that for many of you, where, how, and when you work has changed radically because of the pandemic. Your expectations about what work looks like have also changed. Choice and flexibility are important to you and what works for some won't work for others.

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for keeping the good bits of working flexibly whilst looking at how our office space can support everyone to stay connected and work in their best way.

What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working gives you more choice over deciding how, when and where you work best in a way that balances the needs of The Association, your team and yourself. It's about giving you more choices about how you do the right work, in the right place, at the right time. It offers a mix of working remotely, at home and working in an office environment. Where, when and how you choose to work might depend on the task you are doing and the kind of role you have.

OVHA appreciates that not all employees would like to work remotely, some employees may prefer to attend the office for their working week. Any employee who wishes to continue to come to their original work location can continue to do so.

Key principles of Hybrid Working:

- It's based on trust. We trust you to choose the best times, places and technology to match the work you do, your personal preferences and to balance this with your own needs and the needs of your team.
- It is open to everyone from the start of their employment.
- We commit to making sure that you have the right technology and equipment to support you to work in this way.
- Work is an activity and not a destination. Your performance will be evaluated on the impact you have and the outcomes you deliver.
- Hybrid working should not impact the level or quality of service to customers or your colleagues.
- OVHA [Code of Conduct](#) and [Social Media](#) policies apply in every location you work from.
- Community and connection are part of who we are at OVHA and we know they are important for your wellbeing. We will continue to provide a safe office space for you to collaborate and connect with each other.
- We know that there might be times when being onsite is crucial, such as when you first start working at OVHA or have started a new role. At these times we would encourage you to make the most of visiting the office to familiarise yourself with the facilities and onsite support we have available.

Some key things to remember about hybrid working at OVHA:

- OVHA supports a culture of remote working as a permanent contractual arrangement as long as business and service delivery needs are met and enhanced.
- The expenses you can claim will be unchanged
- Employees wishing to request remote working as a contractual arrangement can discuss the request with their line manager and follow up with a formal request in writing following OVHA's Flexible Working Policy. The process outlined in the policy will be followed. Any decision to accept or reject the application

will be based on OVHA's business needs and requirements at the time of the request and, in line with OVHA's Flexible Working Policy.

- Hybrid working may be considered as a reasonable adjustment.
- Your manager will work with you to explore how hybrid working could work for you and your team based on your preferences, the needs of your role and the needs of the business.

Working Hours and Keeping in Touch

We want to empower you to flex the times you work so you can balance your home life around the needs of your role. We trust you to manage your own time and make sure you do the hours you are contracted to do. However, there are some important things we would like you to be aware of:

- You should expect to make yourself available to others during reasonable working hours when you are needed by your team.
- We may ask you (with enough notice) to be available at certain times to meet the needs of the business, to physically be in the office to collaborate or attend training.
- Flexing your working times should not result in extra work for other members of the team or compromise the objectives of your team.
- If you choose to work late during unsociable hours, please be courteous and respectful to your colleagues. Your colleagues are not expected to respond during unsociable hours.
- Just so you know you won't be entitled to any overpayments or overtime if you choose to work unsociable hours or more hours than you are contracted to do.
- We know that modern life is complicated and that working in this way can help you balance your home and work life. However, Hybrid working is not suited as a way of managing Emergency Leave or for long term childcare if it has a significant impact on your ability to carry out your day to day role.

Equipment and Environment

It is important for us to know that wherever you are working from, you have the equipment and environment you need to do your job well and that you are safe, well and comfortable.

Display Screen Equipment

If you are setting yourself up to working remotely or at home, you will need to have completed the Display Screen Equipment learning which takes you through a workstation self-assessment to help you make sure that your place of work is safe, supportive, free from risk and that any access to confidential information or data is treated with care.

Colleagues working remotely or at home must ensure they have a secure, private and appropriately lit and heated space to work in, with a reliable and secure internet connection. For more information about Display Screen Equipment policies and keeping yourself and the Association safe please refer to our [Display Screen Equipment Policy](#)

If you are working from home or a public place, please be mindful of any potential confidentiality or IT security risks. To read more about keeping any OVHA information safe and confidential please refer to our [Confidentiality Policy](#)

If you have a disability and need any reasonable adjustments to be made to your workstation whether in the office or in another location, please let us know.

Just so you know, if any equipment gets lost, damaged or stolen, you will need to let your line manager know as soon as possible

If you are working from our offices please make sure that you know how to evacuate the building in the case of an emergency and that you have completed the fire safety training assigned to you.

How to order Equipment

If you need any extra equipment to help you do your job, or any technical or supportive equipment requirements please discuss these with your line manager.

Your Wellbeing

We know that for many of you, working in this way can boost your wellbeing, however there are still some important things for you to be aware of:

- It can be easy to lose track of time and work more hours than you usually would when working remotely. It is important to remember to take regular rest breaks; at least 20 consecutive minutes if working for 6 hours or more and make time to switch off. Working in this way should not significantly change how many hours you usually work.
- Hybrid working should not be used as a way of carrying on working when you are sick. If you are ill, then you would need to take time off until you have recovered.
- Where working for long spells at a screen make sure you take regular breaks away from your screens.
- We know that collaboration, connection and having a sense of belonging can help you stay well. We encourage you to think about what this means for you and to actively make time to connect with your colleagues.

Confidentiality

Working from home policies and procedures reviews will be ongoing to mitigate the risk of confidentiality issues and potential security breaches. By adopting and enforcing well-documented remote work procedures we will ensure that employees protect confidentiality and continue to maintain the integrity of an OVHA's business.

Guidance on ensuring confidentiality while remote working can be found [here](#)

Costs and Expenses

Your contractual normal location of work won't change when you adopt a hybrid way of working so your entitlement to claim will remain the same.

We will provide you with workstation and IT equipment that you need to be able to do your job. Just so it's clear, you won't be able to claim expenses for any equipment that you buy yourself. All workstation and IT equipment needs to be ordered through OVHA's channels.

Any costs for wifi, heating, lighting and electricity and commuting costs to your designated place of work will always be a personal expense in line with HMRC guidelines.

We would advise that you check that there isn't anything that would prevent you working from home, for example in your mortgage agreement, lease or insurance. You should also get confirmation of cover from your home insurer should work equipment cause any damage to your home.

If you are an Essential Car User and your business mileage reduces significantly as a result of hybrid working, we may review whether you continue to be eligible for a car. If we do make any changes, we will always give you plenty of notice.

Written by: M Elder

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