

# Glasgow Life: Interim Homeworking Guidance



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# Purpose of this document

This guidance sets out Glasgow Life's interim arrangements, responsibilities and expectations for continued homeworking during the coronavirus pandemic.

It should be read in conjunction with Glasgow Life's Homeworking Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessment, which must now be completed by all members of staff who are working from home during this interim period, with support from their line manager.

We'll continue to be led by the Scottish Government's guidance on coronavirus in terms of our duty of care to all our staff. For more information, visit the Frequently Asked Questions section of our staff web portal:  
<https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/emergency-information>.

Version 1: 20 October 2020

Updates to this guidance will be reissued to all staff as necessary.

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# Our continued approach to homeworking during Covid-19



To support public health and reduce the spread of the virus, Glasgow Life is continuing to follow the Scottish Government's guidance on homeworking. The government's position throughout its route map out of Covid-19, including to the end of phase four, is for employers to maximise homeworking where feasible.

As we continue to reopen venues and restart services, we expect that working from home, for those staff who can do so, will remain our default position.

We are asking staff to be adaptable, as there may be a need, or opportunity, for greater flexibility in any new work patterns introduced during this temporary period; for example, balancing attending your workplace on a rotational basis or working more often at home.

Your line manager will ensure decisions are discussed with you and, wherever possible, take account of your individual circumstances. This will include agreeing your working arrangements with you and the work plan you're able to carry out at home. We continue to welcome your ideas and input about new ways of working and encourage you to share these with your line manager.

Successful homeworking must include the following considerations from line managers:

- Clear and achievable work plans and objectives.
- Regular communication, discussion and review, both on a one-to-one basis and with team colleagues.

- Recognition of the importance of looking after our health and wellbeing, particularly our mental health, during these challenging times.

Line managers will review all temporary homeworking arrangements within their teams regularly. If you're unsure as to what you should be doing, you should speak to your line manager to clarify this. Glasgow Life will consider any long-term or permanent requirement for home or flexible working at the appropriate time, in consultation with our trade unions.

## Our office spaces

In line with government guidance, our office spaces remain closed. If you work in an office, you should not visit your workplace unless it is absolutely necessary and you must agree this in advance with your line manager and Head of Service.

A small number of staff and teams are working from offices, including our head office in Albion Street, carrying out business-critical tasks that are essential to our continued recovery and reopening planning.

All other staff should continue to work from home until they are contacted by their line manager to make arrangements for a return to work, once government guidance allow.

## Who can work from home?



Through returning to work discussions with staff individually, line managers will determine who can continue to work from home for an extended interim period, as part of their operational planning.

Your line manager will take into account:

- The nature of the work being delivered
- The availability of any necessary equipment
- Any individual circumstances
- The needs of the team/service

## Conditions of service



Your conditions of service remain the same (with any temporary homeworking arrangements) and you should continue to work your contractual hours.

You will be required to make yourself available within these hours for calls or meetings, and you should request annual leave and report any absences as you normally would.

However, working from home can lend itself to different working patterns and your line manager may be able to offer you greater flexibility. You can discuss and agree any adjustments which may suit your individual circumstances better at this time whilst maintaining the needs of your team or service area.

Any temporary arrangements to support your individual circumstances will not attract any additional payments and your working hours must continue to comply with the requirements of the **Working Time Regulations**.

## Your responsibilities and any additional costs



- You should check with your insurance company to ensure you have appropriate cover to work from home during this temporary period. (Any equipment in your home that is owned by Glasgow Life will be covered by our insurance provider).
- You should check whether there are any restrictions in your mortgage, lease or tenancy agreement that might prevent you from working from home.
- We recognise that home workers may incur additional costs, but similarly there may be reduced travel and other expenses that offset these. For this temporary arrangement, your manager will discuss any equipment or materials which can be provided to ensure you don't incur further unnecessary costs.
- It's unlikely that there will be any individual **tax implications** of temporary home working, but if you're in any doubt regarding your own situation you should contact your local tax office to check.

# Homeworking Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessment



Glasgow Life has the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any of our venue-based staff.

During this temporary period, Glasgow City Council's Health and Safety team has developed a risk assessment template for use across the council family, which should be completed by managers with staff who are currently working from home.

It has been designed to help managers and staff assess existing arrangements and identify any actions which can be taken to support continued homeworking.

Your line manager will agree a suitable date and time with you to complete the assessment, which will check that your home set-up is working well for you and that you have the equipment and ICT connectivity you need.

If your homeworking assessment finds that you require your office chair, footrest or any other DSE or ICT equipment, such as a mouse, keyboard or monitor, in order to work safely at home, your line manager will support you with this.

We will also continue to keep managers and staff updated on any developments which allow for the increased use of personal IT equipment while working from home.

If you're working from home, you may find it useful to complete the online Display Screen Equipment Awareness e-learning course on GOLD. You can **login to GOLD** from home on any device.

**Managers should be aware that individual DSE Assessments for all team members who are working from home must be completed by no later than Monday 30 November. Managers should keep a copy of each DSE Assessment on file and staff members should also retain a copy.**

# Personal safety data protection and security



For your own safety, while working from home you should not give your address or personal contact details to service users, customers or representatives from external organisations.

Any mail should be addressed to the Glasgow Life location where you would normally be based and arrangements made to forward this on. You should also not meet with anyone at your home for any business related purposes.

With more people now working at home, there is an increased risk of phishing scams and other cyber-attacks. Criminals will use any opportunity they can to steal from people including a global pandemic.

You should ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect the security of any information or equipment you have at home and you must report any lost or stolen information or equipment to your line manager immediately giving an accurate account of the circumstances.

**Don't open attachments or click on any URLs** within any emails you receive that you think are suspicious.

If you have received a suspicious email and clicked on the link or opened an attachment, please contact the CGI service desk immediately on **0141 287 4000** or via **GCCServiceDesk@cgi.com** – **do not forward it to CGI or your colleagues** as it may be harmful.

If you receive a warning of an ICT security threat from someone other than the CGI service desk, do not forward it on to anyone as it may be a hoax. Report it immediately to your line manager and to CGI.

# Looking after your health and wellbeing



There are many reasons why working from home can suit some people more than others. However, continued homeworking can be challenging for everyone and we have a collective responsibility to be open and honest about these challenges to protect our physical and mental health.

Working together, we can help to take care of one another through some simple steps:

- Make a wellbeing check the first action in any one-to-ones or team briefings. Take time to talk about your health, wellbeing and personal interests outside of work.
- Recognise any changes in mood or tone from your colleagues that might be unusual or prolonged and ask them if everything is okay.
- Show compassion and kindness through our daily interactions, recognising that we're all doing the best we can and that homeworking and being isolated from friends and colleagues can be difficult at times.

If you're feeling anxious, concerned or that you might just need some additional support, please speak to your line manager.

The **health and wellbeing** section of our staff portal also hosts links to a variety of support and resources aimed at helping you to look after your mental health during this challenging period. All of our resources are recognised as best practice and are recommended by the Scottish Government to support employee wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Workplace Options Free support 24/7



Glasgow Life's employee assistance provider, Workplace Options, also offers round-the-clock support to you and your family members. This service is free, confidential, independent and available to you 24/7. They provide information, resources and counselling on any of the challenges that life may bring, including:

- Anxiety or concern about the current situation
- Managing change
- Emotional wellbeing
- Bereavement and loss
- Debt and money management
- If you require legal assistance.

You can contact them on **0800 247 1100** or email [assistance@workplaceoptions.com](mailto:assistance@workplaceoptions.com).

Services can also be accessed at [www.workplaceoptions.com](http://www.workplaceoptions.com) with the user name **GCC** and the password **Employee**.

Dedicated helplines are available for employees who require support with LGBTi issues on 0800 138 8725 or BME issues on 0800 288 4950.

# Hints and tips while working from home

Many people already work from home regularly and are well set up to do so. There are various equipment options to support people who are working away from their office or workplace, but these may not always be readily available if homeworking is needed to be implemented quickly or temporarily.

However, there is a lot that we can all do to look after our physical health and prevent discomfort while homeworking.

Plan your day and take regular screen breaks (at least five mins every hour). Avoid awkward, static postures by regularly changing position, and move frequently or find the time to do some light stretching exercises.

Tasks like conference calls, reading documents, making notes or just having some thinking time can all be done on a sofa, easy chair or even lying on your bed or floor. We all get so used to staying in one place, but the worse your position is, the more you need to move!

While working from home, you're likely to fall into one of these four categories:



## 1. Good equipment already provided or in place

**Sturdy desk, adjustable office chair, screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse**

- Take the time to set up the equipment you have to support your position.
- Adjust your chair so your elbows are keyboard height, forearms are level and lower back is supported.
- The top of your screen should be roughly about eye level.
- Keep your keyboard and mouse close so your arms are relaxed by your body and you're not overly stretching.
- Make sure you move regularly whilst working; look away from your screen at least every 20 minutes and try to get up at least every hour.



## 2. Some equipment provided

**Screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse**

- Be creative to achieve a well-supported and good seated position.
- Use towels, cushions, pillows or a wedge to get your seated height to a suitable level.
- Make sure your back is supported with a cushion.
- If you need foot support, consider using an old book, file or box as a foot-rest.



## 3. Separate keyboard and mouse only

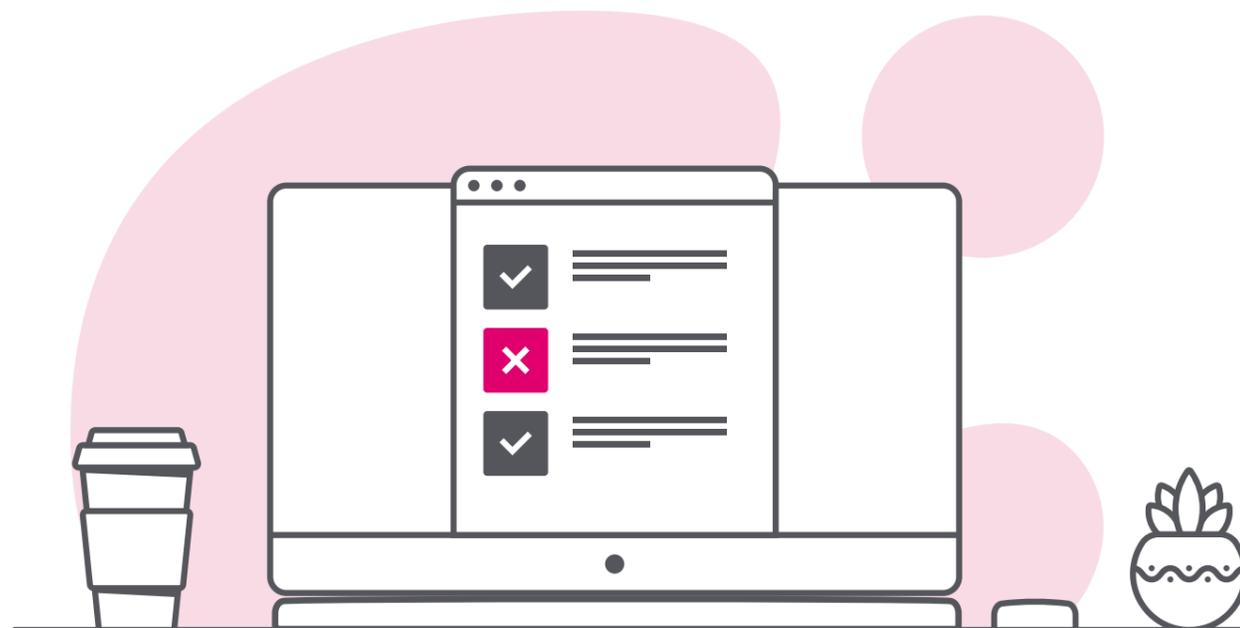
- Follow the above advice and find a way of raising your laptop. A tin, plastic box, books or file can do the job.
- However, if any of the items you use are flammable, make sure you use a sturdy mat or tray between the laptop and the item.



## 4. No additional equipment

**If you only have your portable device you can still take care of yourself**

- Use the tips above to get a better position and support from a chair.
- Ask your line manager about the availability of a separate keyboard and mouse as well as the option of bringing your work chair home.
- Try to move at least every 20 minutes if your posture is compromised and factor in time for some simple stretching exercises.
- If you have any concerns, let your line manager know as soon as possible.



**Glasgowlife™**

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