

Example Home Worker Health and Safety Questionnaire

NB This example is provided for guidance only.

HAZARD CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYEES WORKING AT OR FROM HOME

Employees working from home are required to complete a hazard checklist. The following questions give a good indication to potential Home workers (and their managers) of the areas that should be covered. For further guidance refer to the appropriate HSE information or check with H&S Officer.

Home worker Details

Name

Address where homework is to be carried out:

Telephone No.

Job Title:

Line manager name

Telephone No.

Fax No.

Description of homework task(s). Include any work equipment that will be used:

Part 2 Hazards Checklist (Please answer questions YES/NO or NOT APPLICABLE)

1. WORK AREA

(a) Is the work area a separate room/building at the Homeworking address?

(b) Is there sufficient space (at least 40sq. feet) in the work area Currently being proposed to use for Homeworking,? Is there adequate storage?

(c) Is the Homeworking area accessed by loft ladder?

2. FLOORS

Are the floors/floor coverings in the area where the workstation is located, and the access routes to it, sound and free from tripping hazards such as rucks, tears, holes, trailing wires/cables, stored materials etc?

3. LIGHTING

(a) Is there adequate lighting for all the workstation / work area tasks? Where possible, good natural lighting is preferable.

(b) Is the access route to the work area sufficiently well lit to enable The Home-worker to see any potential slipping or tripping hazards?

(c) If necessary, have you got task lighting such as a desk lamp?

4. VENTILATION

Is the work area adequately ventilated to enable a supply of fresh air to circulate the work area?

5. NOISE

Is the noise from work equipment likely to be a distraction?

(The type of equipment used by home workers is unlikely to cause a noise hazard. However, if there is difficulty hearing someone speak to you over a distance of two metres when your equipment is running, then this should draw this to the attention of the line manager.)

6. TEMPERATURE

Is the temperature of the work area maintained at a comfortable level?

(Generally speaking, people undertaking sedentary type work feel most comfortable in the temperature range 19 – 23 degrees centigrade)

7. EQUIPMENT

Is any non-electrical equipment or tools that may be used in a state of good repair and is it secure and stable (e.g. shelves, cupboards, cabinets)?

8. FIRE RISK

If a fire should break out affecting the workstation or work area, has an alternative route out been considered should the normal exit be blocked?

9. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

- (a) If the Teleworker has installed their own DSE equipment, have they followed the manufacturer's instructions regarding assembly and connection of equipment?
- (b) Are any wires or cables safely tucked out of the way, for example, under a desk or table to prevent tripping accidents?
- (c) Are electrical leads/connections free from obvious signs of damage and/or wear?
- (d) Are there sufficient plug sockets to accommodate all leads without the need for adaptors?
- (e) Has the organisation provided any electrical equipment for Homeworking purposes?
- (f) If you have answered 'yes' to (e) above, have you been told about the arrangements for inspection and testing?

10. HANDLING LOADS

Do the home working tasks require any significant heavy lifting of materials or equipment from one level to another, up or down stairs or over long distances or involve excessive bending, twisting or stooping?

(If 'yes', it may be necessary for a separate manual handling risk assessment to be carried out. Discuss with the line manager).

11. SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH

(It is highly unlikely that any home worker will be dealing with, or using in sufficient quantities, any substances, materials or chemicals that are hazardous to health or safety.)

Please indicate below what products or substances are used in relation to the home working tasks.

12. VISITORS / CHILDREN

- (a) Is the home working area segregated from more general areas where other people / children may circulate / congregate?
- (b) Does the home worker have an effective strategy for separating young children from the work area whilst working?

13. FIRST AID

Has the home worker been made aware of the first aid arrangements for the homeworking task?

14. REPORTING ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

- (a) Does the home worker know the procedure for reporting accidents that arise out of or in connection with the home working tasks?
- (b) Is the home worker a new or expectant mother?
- (c) If no, is the home worker aware that they should inform the line manager if circumstances change?

15. COMMUNICATION / CONSULTATION

- (a) Is it possible to contact the line manager / colleagues easily and quickly in the event of problems / queries arising from Home working tasks?
- (b) Is the home working address included on the circulation list for information bulletins / newsletters etc?
- (c) Does the nature of the home working task enable the individual to keep in touch with 'the office' e.g. through personal visits?
- (d) Has the line manager discussed the problems and pitfalls of homeworking, as well as the advantages?
- (e) Does the Home worker have a copy of the Health and Safety Law leaflet for reference in the home working work area?

16. PERSONAL SECURITY

- (a) Have any concerns regarding personal safety / security if working alone at the home working address been raised?

HOMEWORKING HAZARD CHECKLIST **PART 3:**

17. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE)

- (a) Is there use of a fixed display screen or,
- (b) A laptop computer for the bulk of the home working task?
(NB Laptops are generally not suitable for prolonged frequent use).

18. EYE TESTS

(A DSE (Data Screen Entry) 'user' is someone who uses DSE for one third or more of their time for a continuous period of one Month).

- (a) Has the home worker been designated as a DSE 'user' by the line manager?
- (b) If designated as a DSE 'user' has the Home working workstation been the subject of a separate DSE Risk Assessment. Discuss with the line manager.
- (c) If designated as a DSE 'user', has the home worker been made aware of the entitlements to free eye and eyesight tests and a contribution towards the cost of a basic pair of spectacles for use with display screen work if required?
- (d) Has the home worker been made aware of the procedure for obtaining your entitlement to the above?

19. REFLECTION AND GLARE

- (a) When using a VDU, are there distracting reflections or glare on the screen from windows / light fittings?

(Home workers should be given guidance and information about how to set up or adjust their workstation to eliminate / reduce reflections and glare)

20. MONITOR

- (a) Can the home worker/does the line manager know how:
 - (i) To adjust the brightness and contrast of your screen?
 - (ii) Tilt and swivel the screen?
- (b) Is the screen at a height that is comfortable?
- (c) Is the screen image clear and free from flicker?
- (d) Is the home worker able to take a 'natural' break free from the screen at least once every hour (e.g. to answer the phone or do some paperwork)?
- (e) Has the home worker been given a screen cleaning kit?
- (f) Have they been given instructions about its use?
- (g) Have they been told how to get replacement supplies?
- (h) Have they been shown how to check for electrical hazards, e.g.?
Damaged sockets and plugs, worn or improperly connected leads or cables. Etc.
- (i) Are cables from the workstation kept tidy and prevented from trailing across the access to your workplace or other areas that you need to access?

21. FURNITURE – CHAIR AND WORK SURFACES

- (a) Can the home worker easily adjust the height of the seat and the height and angle of the backrest?
- (b) Is the chair in use in a good state of repair?
- (c) If the chair has arms, do they get in the way of achieving a comfortable sitting position whilst at the workstation?
- (d) When sitting in the chair when it is correctly adjusted, can the the floor or footrest if you have one be touched with your feet?
- (e) Is the desk /work surface in a good state of repair and of adequate size for your homeworking task?

- (f) Is there room under your work surface to adjust the seating position and maintain a comfortable posture?
- (g) Is your desk work surface large enough to allow you to place all the work equipment where you want it and still allow enough room for working?
- (h) Does the desk have a non-reflective work surface?
- i) If necessary, does the home worker have a document holder?

22. KEYBOARD

- (a) Do the home worker know how to adjust the height of your keyboard?
- (b) Are the key characters legible?
- (c) Is there enough space for you to position your keyboard comfortably, with room in front of the keyboard to rest the hands during keying pauses?

23. SOFTWARE

- (a) Has the home worker been shown how to use the software relevant to the home working job?
- (b) Is there access to assistance should a problem arise with the software application(s)?
- (c) Has the home worker been shown how to use any other equipment that makes up the workstation i.e. modem, document stand etc?

24. HEALTH

If you experience recurrent discomfort / pain in the neck, back, arms, or hands, or eye strain or headaches have you been advised to draw these to the attention of your line manager?

To be completed by individual

Signed Date

To be completed by the home worker employee's line manager.

I have checked the responses to this homeworking hazard checklist. The following action(s) will need to be taken to reduce/eliminate any identified risks and/or comply with health and safety legislation

Signed Date

Copy to be given to and discussed with the employee. Original to be retained by line manager.

Date when this assessment will be reviewed: