



## Hybrid Working Policy (formerly Homeworking Policy)

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# **Osprey Housing**

## **Hybrid Working Policy**

### **Statement**

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in our roles as a housing provider and landlord, an employer and in all areas of our business.

We believe that effective and efficient management of flexible working options is vital to the success of maintaining good quality services for all our tenants and providing value for money.

This is encompassed in our Core Values:

- **Ambition and Achievement** – we are a high performing organisation delivering through innovation and challenge
- **Equality and Respect** – we recognise and celebrate the unique value in everyone
- **Quality and Professionalism** – we strive to deliver high standards
- **Agile and Responsive** – we are flexible and quick to deal with change without diminishing our delivery

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## **1. Introduction**

Osprey are committed to supporting and facilitating our staff team members to enable them to undertake their work to the best of their ability. This is set in the wider context that the needs of the business are paramount. As part of this, we are committed to the principle of flexible working.

In order to meet this broad principle, we support hybrid working arrangements. The basic presumption is that all Osprey team members will be in the office for some of their working time (precise split of time to be agreed with line manager) and the rest of the time will be working remotely.

This policy aims to ensure that hybrid working is carried out safely and in accordance with our policies and current legislation. It sets out the conditions on which hybrid working operates and the terms that apply to all staff. All team members must comply with this policy. Requests for any other form of flexible working should be made under the Osprey Flexible Working policy (HR5.14).

Any reference to 'workplace' in this policy is a reference to the place of work specified in the contract of employment, which will normally be one of our two offices.

Any authorisation required under this policy means written authorisation, to ensure that the position in individual cases is clear and so that records can be kept.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

## **2. Hybrid Working Arrangements**

A hybrid working arrangement is an informal flexible working arrangement that allows a team member to split working time between the workplace and an agreed remote working location, such as their home, or another suitable location that supports remote working in terms of access to necessary services and security (e.g. a community hub). Individual hybrid working arrangements will differ depending on the nature of the role, duties and responsibilities, and so are subject to authorisation in writing from the line manager. The days and times worked from the workplace and the agreed remote working location are subject to agreement with the line manager and may be varied as necessary to accommodate the needs of our business, which may change from time to time.

It is recognised that any agreed hybrid working arrangement is subject to the requirement for team members to attend the workplace on our reasonable basis to accommodate the needs of our business. It is expected that all staff will attend the office for at least two days a week. Failure to do so will result in further action being taken which may include action under the Disciplinary policy.

### **3. Procedure**

All team members are eligible to make a request to participate in hybrid working from day one of their employment with Osprey Housing. This should be done through discussion with the line manager and completion together of the Hybrid Working Agreement attached as Appendix 1.

Each individual Hybrid Working Agreement will be reviewed at no more than three yearly intervals with all staff members by their Manager.

### **4. Appeals**

Any appeal against a decision made on hybrid working should be lodged through the Osprey Grievance policy.

### **5. Equal Opportunities**

Osprey shall strive to ensure equality of opportunity, and by definition, that all individuals are treated fairly regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We oppose, and shall adopt a zero tolerance stance towards, all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. In this regard, Osprey acknowledges the protected characteristics and types of unlawful behaviour defined within the Equality Act 2010. As a minimum all practices shall aim to ensure compliance with the legislative provisions therein.

### **6. Monitoring & Reporting**

We will monitor this policy in conjunction with our other policies and procedures to ensure that it is being adhered to.

### **7. Review**

This policy is reviewed every three years unless an earlier review is required due to:

- changes to applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance, both those which affect Osprey directly and those which affect the resources available to significant numbers of our customers to enable them to sustain tenancies,
- changes in the organisation,
- continued best practice.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Hybrid Working Agreement**

This agreement sets out the conditions agreed between Osprey Housing and you with regard to your hybrid working arrangements. This agreement will be reviewed on a regular basis of not more than three year intervals. In order to facilitate this, you agree to:

- Ensure that there is a suitable working environment at your remote working location that enables you to carry out your role effectively,
- Continue to work the hours required by your contract of employment,
- Work independently, motivate yourself and use your own initiative,
- Manage your workload effectively and complete work to set deadlines,
- Identify and resolve (where appropriate, with input and guidance from your line manager and/or the Business Manager) any new pressures created by working from a remote working location,
- Adapt to new working practices as required, including maintaining contact with your line manager and work colleagues,
- Exercise flexibility to make changes on our reasonable request to the hybrid working arrangement, including to the days, times and location from which you work (as between your workplace and your agreed remote working location), to meet the needs of our business,
- Make arrangements for the care of any children or other dependants when you are working from your remote working location,
- Make all reasonable efforts to minimise disruption, distraction and interruption (e.g. from other family members or housemates) while working from your remote location,
- Maximise environmental efficiency in working remotely (e.g. minimising energy usage, avoiding printing documents where possible, and using recycling facilities),
- Determine any resulting tax implications for yourself.

We recognise that from time to time, circumstances may arise that present short-term difficulty in delivering one or more of the elements set out above. As in all matters, we commit to behaving reasonably where such difficulty is promptly drawn to our attention.

In order to facilitate this hybrid working arrangement, Osprey agree to:

- Confirm with you your normal working hours, with clarity that you are not normally expected to work outside these hours, other than by prior agreement,
- Maintain regular contact with you while working remotely,
- Arrange meetings in such a way as to facilitate your attendance, whether remote or in-person, save that we will make reasonable judgements as to which is appropriate, in accordance with section 7 below,
- Provide appropriate support to help you maintain your health and wellbeing,
- Provide information on how to put in place safe and healthy working

- arrangements,
- Provide guidance on energy efficiency while working remotely,
- Provide other appropriate access to facilities and support as reasonably required in order to facilitate these working arrangements.

## **1. Location**

Your primary remote working location is to be agreed with your line manager in advance. It must be within commuting distance of and within the same country as your workplace unless written approval has been given by the CEO.

If you wish to designate a different remote working location at any time during your hybrid working arrangement, this will need to be agreed with your line manager in advance. If we agree to you working from a different remote working location at any time, this will be subject to our right to require you to return to your primary remote working location on one month's notice. Failure to comply with such an instruction could lead to disciplinary action.

If you wish to work from a remote working location abroad at any time during your hybrid working arrangement, this will require separate approval from the CEO and there is no guarantee that this will be possible.

## **2. Management, Training and Workplace Attendance**

Your line manager will remain responsible for supervising and assessing your performance. Your line manager will regularly review your hybrid working arrangements and take steps to address any perceived problems. They will ensure that you are kept up to date with any changes to the workplace or information relevant to your work.

You agree to attend the workplace or other reasonable location for meetings, training courses or other events which we expect you to attend.

You understand that when you do attend the workplace, you will have to hot-desk or share a desk with someone else. It will be your responsibility to ensure that any workstation you use is sanitised before and after you use it.

## **3. Health and Safety**

When working from your remote working location, you have the same health and safety duties as other team members. You must take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by your actions and omissions. You must continue to abide by our Health and Safety Policy, attend our usual health and safety courses, and undertake to use equipment safely. You must also complete the Osprey Remote Working Health and Safety Checklist attached to this policy as Appendix 2.

To identify any potential health and safety hazards at your remote working location and take appropriate steps to minimise risk, we reserve the right to carry out a health and safety risk assessment, either remotely or by arranging a home visit. We will contact you in advance to arrange completion of the risk assessment. The need for such inspections will depend on the

circumstances, including the nature of the work undertaken.

You should have access to a fully stocked with up to date items First Aid kit in your location.

You must ensure that your working patterns and levels of work when working from your remote working location are not detrimental to your health and wellbeing. If you have concerns about your health or wellbeing arising as a result of your workload or working pattern, you should inform your line manager without delay, so that we can discuss measures to deal with this.

You must use your knowledge, experience and training to identify and report any health and safety concerns to your line manager.

In the event of you becoming unwell while working remotely, the provisions of our policy for dealing with sickness absence continue to apply, including the requirement to obtain a sick note from your doctor when appropriate.

The Corporate Services team will be available to advise on how to put in place safe and healthy working arrangements at your remote working location.

#### **4. Equipment and Workspace**

We will provide PAT tested equipment that we consider you reasonably require to work from your remote working location. We will make all necessary arrangements for and bear the cost of installing, maintaining, repairing or replacing (where necessary) and removing equipment from your remote working location. Where equipment is provided, it remains our property and you must:

- Ensure it is only used by you and only for the purposes for which we have provided it,
- Ensure it is safe to use at all times,
- Take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and our policies and procedures,
- Keep the equipment secure at all times, including when travelling between your remote working location and your workplace,
- Make it available for collection by us or on our behalf when requested to do so.

The equipment that we will normally supply is:

- laptop or PC, including screen,
- keyboard and mouse,
- relevant software.

Equipment that we may supply where required, subject to approval by your line manager, includes:

- mobile telephone, including rental and cost of work calls.

- office chair,
- other equipment reasonably required to enable you to meet your normal work requirements.

To arrange installation or service of any equipment that we provide, you should contact the IT team, who can guide you through the process remotely. If this is not possible, we may need to arrange a visit to your remote working location and will contact you to arrange this where necessary.

Office supplies required when working remotely will normally be available for you to collect when attending the workplace. Where this is not practical, we will liaise with you over arrangements to access relevant supplies locally from environmentally preferred suppliers.

On termination of your employment, you will return all equipment and supplies provided by us. Where necessary, we may need to arrange a visit to your remote working location to reclaim equipment and will contact you to make the appropriate arrangements.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a suitable workspace at your remote working location with adequate lighting for working.

If you have a disability, you should inform us if you require any special equipment to work comfortably from your remote working location. We will bear the reasonable cost (or reimburse you for the reasonable cost) of providing any special equipment or making any necessary adjustments to your remote working location to enable you to work from there.

We are not responsible for the associated costs of you working from your remote working location, including the costs of heating, lighting, electricity, telephone landline rental or non-work calls.

## **5. Insurance Requirements**

Osprey shall be responsible for taking out and maintaining a valid policy of insurance covering any equipment we provide against fire, theft, loss and damage throughout your employment. You shall not do, cause or permit any act or omission which will invalidate the insurance policy.

We are not liable for any loss, injury or damage that may be caused from any equipment that is not provided by us but is required by you to work from your remote working location.

If your remote working location is your home address:

- you are responsible for ensuring that working from home will not potentially invalidate the terms of your home insurance. You should ensure that you check your home insurance policy before commencing hybrid working and inform your home and contents insurance provider of your working arrangements as required.
- if your remote working location is your home address, you should check the terms of your mortgage, lease or rental agreement before commencing working from home

to ensure this does not breach any of the terms. It is your responsibility to inform your bank, mortgage provider or landlord that you are working from your home address and seek any necessary approval before commencing hybrid working.

When you are working from your remote working location, you are covered by our employer's liability insurance policy. Any accidents must be reported immediately to your line manager or the Corporate Services team in accordance with our health and safety policy.

## **6. Data Security and Confidentiality**

Your line manager must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are being taken to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with our Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies. You are responsible for ensuring the security of confidential information in your remote working location and when travelling to and from your workplace.

When working from your remote working location, you undertake to:

- Comply with our instructions in respect of password security,
- Use our designated VPN or multi-factor authentication,
- Comply with our instructions relating to software security and implement all updates to equipment as soon as you are requested to do so,
- Keep work data and personal data separate on any personal devices used for work purposes,
- Send work-related emails and messages through our designated communication facilities,
- Share data only through our designated secure messaging application or online document-sharing system,
- Make all work-related videocalls through our designated video-conferencing software,
- Maintain a private space for confidential work calls,
- Ensure that any display screen equipment is positioned so that only you can see it or a privacy screen is used,
- Lock your computer terminal whenever it is left unattended,
- Ensure any wireless network used is secure,
- Change your wireless network passwords regularly and ensure that your wireless network router has software security updates applied,
- Keep all papers containing confidential information in a locked cabinet, and ensure that no one else in your remote working location has access to such papers,
- Shred or otherwise dispose securely of confidential information when it is no longer required, and at all times comply with our instructions on document retention.

To comply with data protection legislation, we retain the right to conduct a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) to assess the risks involved with data processing in your remote working location. Where this is necessary, we will contact you to arrange the DPIA.

You confirm that you have read and understood our Privacy Policy and other relevant policies from time to time in force regarding the retention of personal data, electronic communications and data security, and that you will regularly keep yourself informed of the most current version of these policies. You will also attend any training on data protection and confidentiality, whether online or in person, when requested to do so.

If you discover or suspect that there has been a data breach or an incident involving the security of information relating to us, our clients, customers or anyone working with or for us, you must report it immediately to your line manager.

## **7. Attendance at Office**

You will be expected to visit the office for at least two days (or pro rata equivalent) per week. There may be occasions when you are expected to visit the office on more occasions than agreed. Examples of circumstances where you may be required to attend the office more than normal will include the following (note these are not exclusive).

- During your induction period as a new team member, and particularly for your first three months in a role, you would be required to attend on site more frequently. Once you have successfully completed your initial three months in the role, this can be varied, and once you have passed your full probation, your normal hybrid working arrangements will be confirmed.
- Where your line manager has concerns regarding your performance, you may be required to attend the office for a specified number of days or over a specified period to receive closer instruction or training.

## Hybrid Working Signed Agreement

To be completed by team member and line manager and then sent to Corporate Services for retention on personal file.

If there are any changes a new form must be completed.

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Designation</b>	
<b>Line Manager</b>	
<b>Hours of Work per week</b>	
<b>Agreed Working Pattern (At least 2 days per week (or pro rata equivalent should be in the office)</b>	
<b>Designated Remote Working Location</b>	
<b>I agree to the above requirements</b>	
<b>Signed (Team Member)</b>	
<b>Signed (Line Manager)</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## **Appendix 2**

### **Hybrid Working: Health and Safety Assessment Checklist**

Osprey will use the HSE Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist available here:

[Display screen equipment \(DSE\) workstation checklist \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/dse-workstation-checklist.pdf)

This checklist can be used to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. It can be used as an aid to risk assessment and to help comply with the Schedule to the Regulations. It lists risk factors in six areas, with 'yes'/'no' tick boxes: keyboards, mouse and trackball, display screens, software, furniture and work environment. It lists issues to consider and gives space to record planned action.

## Appendix 3

<b>Osprey Housing</b> <b>Equality Impact Assessment Tool</b>  <b>PLEASE READ THE GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETION: <a href="#"><u>Equality Impact Assessment Guidance.doc</u></a></b>			
Name of the <b>policy / project proposal</b> to be assessed	Hybrid Working Policy HR 5.24	Is this a <b>new policy / proposal or a revision?</b>	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	DCS		
3. What <b>outcomes</b> are <b>wanted</b> from this policy/proposal? (e.g. <i>the benefits to customers</i> )	This Policy sets out how Osprey provides and manages Hybrid working for our staff team.		
4. Which <b>protected characteristics</b> could be <b>affected</b> by the proposal? (tick all that apply)			
Age	Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Gender Reassignment
Sexual Orientation			

**5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the **protected characteristics** listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.**

This Policy does not impact (positively or negatively) on any protected characteristic. Section 6 of the Policy sets out that in implementing this Policy, Osprey will strive to ensure that it does not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of any of the nine Protected Characteristics stated in the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

6. Describe the <b>likely positive or negative impact(s)</b> the policy/proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)
	Gives a fair, consistent process to allow home and hybrid working for our staff team	Decisions on cases may be inappropriately influenced by individual's protected characteristics through unconscious bias.
7. What <b>actions</b> are <b>required</b> to address the impacts arising from this assessment? <i>(This might include; collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).</i>	SLT members have been made aware of unconscious bias and how to mitigate it. Areas of particular import would be discussed within the group before a decision is made.  Policy gives framework to manage these issues fairly and consistently	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Clare Ruxton \_\_\_\_\_ (Job title): \_\_\_\_\_ Director of Corporate Services \_\_\_\_\_

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed: \_\_\_\_\_ 7 October 2024 \_\_\_\_\_