

# HOME WORKING POLICY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

EONI recognises that there may, on occasion, be circumstances when it would be more beneficial or flexible for staff to work at home during normal office hours in order to complete a particular task or special project. This policy will only deal with situations for occasional home working, in exceptional circumstances, and is separate from the statutory right to apply for flexible working from home on a regular or permanent basis. Exceptional circumstances may include the need for no interruptions to meet an important deadline, severe weather disruptions which prevent travel to work, or to meet a one-off specific short-term organisational need.

This policy has been developed in accordance with NIO Code of Practice which sets out principles and working practices on security in respect of working away from the office on paper and electronic documents which have a protective marking and those which are not protectively marked. The Code is available on TRIM Ref: 2009/003304 and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## 2. APPLICATIONS

Prior permission is required before an employee can work at home. The employee should make the request to their appropriate line manager on the form at Annex A. If the line manager is EO1 or below, the application must be counter-signed at SO or higher. HR will validate the authorisation from weekly attendance sheets which will record home working.

## 3. MANAGING PERFORMANCE AND OUTPUT

Arrangements for monitoring will be agreed between the employee and their line manager within the normal performance management procedures ie, setting targets, workload to be completed, the precise project or task which must be completed. The key to a successful arrangement will be establishing objectives at the outset to ensure

that the expectations of both parties are met. In particular, line managers will need to consider:

- Suitability of the type of work/task for homeworking;
- Employee's ability to work without direct supervision;
- Employee's track record in meeting deadlines including their self motivation and discipline;
- Impact on the rest of the team/Area Office.

#### **4. SECURITY**

Staff are only authorised to process protectively marking material on equipment provided by EONI which has the appropriate security controls. Staff are required to take strict care of any EONI laptop, to keep it secure and to use it in accordance with IT policy - security operating procedures, email and internet etc. Staff must also ensure they sign the IT log book to acknowledge responsibility for the equipment.

Non protectively marked documents must be transferred between EONI PCs and personal pc/laptop by email only - this will ensure data is scanned through EONI's layered security mail system. EONI does not permit the use of USB devices.

#### **5. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

##### Direct Access to Network

Staff may be provided with an EONI laptop which may be connected to the EONI network, for authorised home working. All laptops must be returned at the end of the home working arrangement. Laptops must NOT be left unattended in any vehicle at any time and must be locked away within the house when not in use.

##### Non-Direct Access to Network

Staff without broadband access or who will be working on material that is not protectively marked, sensitive or personal are permitted to work on a personal laptop/PC which must be secured with a password. This can only be used to process non protectively marked data – please refer to NIO Code of Practice on using a Home PC for Work Related Purposes [Section 11] which details points staff should consider including anti-virus programs, personal firewalls etc.

## **6. DATA PROTECTION**

Staff working from home are responsible for complying fully with the Data Protection Act, and must ensure that any personal or sensitive information is held securely eg Iron Key, EONI encrypted laptop to ensure electronic information cannot be accessed by anyone else who may reside in the premises.

## **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Whilst working from home, the duties under the health and safety legislation are still applicable to staff and EONI. Staff must take reasonable care of their own health and safety ie, using electrical equipment, working with VDUs, lighting, heating etc. Although it is expected that homes are suitable for the purposes of work, EONI reserves the right to carry out a risk assessment to ensure that work can be carried out safely and that personal equipment and information used for work purposes is held securely.

## **8. EXPENSES**

Employees who work from home are expected to provide their own heating, lighting, desk, software etc. IT will provide details of the official source of any software required. EONI will not pay any monthly rental broadband fees, connection costs or provide any software requirements. EONI will pay for all business telephone calls providing that a clear record of calls and an itemised bill is produced and submitted that clearly details calls made for home working purposes.

## **9. COMPLIANCE**

Failure to comply with any aspect of this policy or related policies such as health & Safety or IT policies may constitute a disciplinary offence. EONI will consider all requests for occasional home working but reserve the right to withhold or withdraw approval if it is believed its use has, or will be abused, or for any other lawful business reason.

## 10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The HR Section will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and provide information to the Board as required. This policy has been agreed with NIPSA and will be reviewed every two years, or more frequently, at the request of either party.

**Signed:** *Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate*  
*Chief Electoral Officer*

**Signed:** *Robin McClelland*  
*NIPSA*

**Dated:** *11th February 2010*

**Dated:** *11<sup>th</sup> February 2010*

**ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**  
**HOME WORKING REQUEST FORM**

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Grade</b>	
<b>Home Working Location</b>			
<b>Direct Contact Number(s):</b>			

<b>Date(s)/Time(s) Requested:</b>	
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<b>Reason for Request:</b>

<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT</b>			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Signature:</b>	
		<b>Date:</b>	

**TO BE COMPLETED BY LINE MANAGER:**

<b>APPROVAL:</b>	<b>PLEASE TICK</b>
The post/task is suitable for home working	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear and achievable outcomes have been agreed for performance	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have reminded employee of security provisions in Section 4 of the policy and I am satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made for the care and supervision of any dependents likely to be present whilst home working is ongoing.	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>NOT APPROVED:</b>	
The post/task is not approved for home working:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The reason is as follows:	

<b>Line Manager:</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Counter-signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	(SO Grade/Above)

*Countersignature only required where line manager is EO1 or below*

**PLEASE FORWARD TO THE HR SECTION**

