Community Counts
Milnbank
Housing Association
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| TO: | Governance Sub-Committee |
| PREPARED BY: | Linda Sichi (Deputy CEO) |
| SUBJECT: | REVIEW OF REMOTE (HOME/HYBRID) WORKING POLICY |
| DATE MEETING: | 24 November 2025 |
| APPROVED BY: | Paul Martin (CEO) |

# REMOTE (HOME/HYBRID) WORKING POLICY

LS/November 2025/Ref: P80

**REMOTE (HOME/HYBRID) POLICY**

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## 1. MILNBANK HOUSING ASSOCIATION (MHA) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MHA's mission is to provide excellent homes and services in a thriving community. We believe that people living in the MHA community should:

- Have warm, safe, and affordable homes, and receive excellent services from MHA.
- Live in neighbourhoods that are clean and well cared for, with real community pride.
- Have access to opportunities and services that promote a good quality of life.

## 2. MHA's VALUES

Working as 'One Milnbank' so that we offer the same quality of services, support and housing to all tenants and residents.

## 3. LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The Management Committee leads and directs MHA to ensure good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. The Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework Financial & Regulatory, Standard 2 states that "the RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities"

MHA adheres to all relevant legal employment requirements associated with this policy.

## 4. POLICY INTRODUCTION

Remote working is where an employee works away from their employer's location for all or part of their working week on a permanent, ad hoc basis or hybrid basis.

**4.1** Remote working can be:
●an original contractual arrangement from when the employee commenced employment
●requested by an employee as part of a flexible working request or a reasonable adjustment hybrid arrangement which provides employees with the choice to utilise the benefits of remote working
●Used as a mechanism for employee and public safety in the event of a public health emergency or other exceptional external circumstances such as extreme weather conditions

**4.2** There are three main types of remote working:
**(1) Occasional**: employees have a contractual work base (i.e. office location), but work remotely on an ad hoc basis, through informal arrangements with their team and line manager.
**(2) Contractua**l: employees that work off-site as defined in their contract of employment for a specified period of their working week.
**(3) Hybrid:** employees work between their office base and remotely depending on the needs or the business and the employees' personal circumstances

Remote working out with the UK is not permitted under this policy.

## 5. POLICY PRINCIPLES

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that MHA's purpose of providing an excellent level of service is always maintained.
- Ensure that remote working is carried out in a safe manner for employees
- Have arrangements in place to promote a work life balance for employees.
- Promote our culture of inclusion.
- Integrate into and complement our health and wellbeing strategy.
- Support and embed our commitment to our environmental sustainability practices.
- Set out the parameters to ensure the above conditions are met.

## 6. OCCASIONAL REMOTE WORKING

**6.1** For occasional remote working, an employee works their contracted hours from the location specified in their contract of employment. However, on occasion, it may be more effective if an employee has an ad hoc day working remotely. This can be effective when managing certain situations such as:

- Disruptions to dependant's care arrangements (allow for alternative arrangements)
- Project work
- Adverse weather
- Commuting disruptions
- An injury where the employee is fit to work but is unable to commute to their contractual work location

**6.2** In all the above situations, work will be carried out effectively and efficiently with the appropriate resources, including an electronic device, e.g. laptop or tablet with sufficient broadband speed and functioning phone.

**6.3** All situations for occasional remote working will be discussed individually with the employee's line manager who will consider the request balancing employee and business pressures and provide a decision.

**6.4** Costs/Allowances

Employees who on occasion work remotely will not have expenses approved for items such as for paper/ink as they can get these items when they are in the office on their normal days of work.

## 7. CONTRACTUAL REMOTE WORKING

**7.1** This can occur by the employee, with the required continuous service, making a Flexible Working Request. It is a statutory entitlement to make a request Flexible Working.

**7.2** Flexible Working Request

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 MHA'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 business needs and requirements at the time of the request and, in line with the Flexible Working Policy. Any change to the employee's working arrangement would be regarded as a permanent contractual change and must be confirmed in writing. Due to the change being permanent, a 3–6-month (depending on the nature of the role) trial period may take place before any permanent change takes effect.

## 8. HYBRID/ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

**8a.** MHA supports a culture of remote working as a permanent contractual arrangement if business and service delivery needs are met and enhanced. MHA trusts its employees to fulfil their contractual obligations concerning their job role. Whether an employee is working remotely or, at the office base, the expectation on performance standards remains the same.

**8b.** This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, therefore, may be updated or withdrawn at any time. If this happens it will be communicated to you accordingly.

**8c.** MHA believes a model of blended/hybrid working can, where relevant, best suit the business needs. This means a mixture of remote and onsite working, which brings the most benefits for both business and employees. It allows for continuing face to face social interaction, collaboration, along with enjoying the benefits of remote working. For this reason, remote working will normally be for between 1-3 days per week (pro-rata).

**8d.** MHA appreciates that remote working won't work for or be available to everyone. It will depend on the job role, the function the employee works in, the level of supervision required for the employees' role, and any minimum levels of physical cover required as well as the technology and environment available to the employee at home.

**8e.** Line managers will discuss with employees how remote working arrangements will work within teams, including any rota for office cover and existing working patterns. Once agreement is reached between employees and the appropriate manager confirmation will be provided in writing. The remote working arrangements will be subject to a trial period of 6 months and will be reviewed at the end of this time frame.

**8f.** Where relevant, any permanent changes to a work location are a contractual change of employment and agreement will always be sought in the first instance.

## 9. CONTRACTUAL CHANGES

If contractual remote working has been agreed, MHA will write to the employee to confirm the change along with any associated terms and conditions which also change.

## 10. COSTS/ALLOWANCES

**10.1** MHA are not responsible for any costs associated with remote working, including the costs of heating, lighting, electricity, broadband internet charges, telephone calls or printing. It is considered that the saving in time and money spent traveling to and from work is a reasonable notional offset to any personal costs incurred working from home.

**10.2** Employees may be able to claim tax relief for any household expenses incurred because of working remotely from home, provided the expenses are solely work related. Employees should refer to the MHRC and/or Scottish Government's website for the latest information. Any claim processed is the responsibility of the employee.

## 11. TRAVEL EXPENSES

Work-related travel expenses will be paid at the rate stated in the terms and conditions of employment, and the expenses policy.

## 12. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

MHA has a culture of trust and respect for all. Performance Management will be carried out in the same way as if employees were in the office. As in the office, if the quality or volume of work while working remotely is not at the required standard, this will be addressed through performance management process, initially on an informal basis. Matters will be managed confidentially with individual employees.

## 13. HEALTH, SAFETY and WELLBEING (HS&W)

**13.1** A HSW assessment will be carried out using the homeworking assessment included in the EVH health and safety manual (*Appendix A*). Domestic electrical supply configurations are out with the control of MHA and are the responsibility of the employee. Employees will perform their assessment, and the Maintenance Co-ordinator (H&S Officer) will then validate results during a discussion or remote visit. Employees are expected to report any changes that may affect the arrangements in the future (in which case another assessment may be necessary).

**13.2** Employees who work remotely have a duty to ensure, in so far as reasonably practicable, they work in a safe manner and MHA H&S instructions are followed. If any issues arise, they must be reported to the Maintenance Co-ordinator immediately.

## 14. CARING RESPONSBILITIES

Remote working is not a replacement for childcare or care for other dependants. While we understand that this can be helpful to support caring arrangements employees must not have caring responsibilities while they are working. If employees do require leave for caring responsibilities, they should speak to their line manager about this.

## 15. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

MHA's IT infrastructure can support remote working and gives employees remote access to calendars, softphones, mails and documents. Employees are required to have their broadband at sufficient speed in place. MHA

will, where practical, provide the appropriate equipment and/or software to allow people to work remotely.

It will be required that employees have the necessary firewall and anti-virus software installed on their remote computers, to protect MHA's office IT system from any harm.

## 16. SECURITY

Employees must not allow members of their household or third parties who are not employed or engaged by MHA to access or use the Association's equipment.

## 17. EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

MHA's is committed to equal opportunities, and we will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals, and we will not discriminate against any individual for any reason outlined in Equality & Human Rights Legislation. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached to this policy.

## 18. DATA COLLECTION

MHA will manage all personal data in accordance with our obligations under the GDPR regulations and the Association's Policy.

## 19. POLICY MONITORING & REVIEW

The Remote (Home/Hybrid) Policy will be reviewed by the Governance Sub-Committee every three years or in line with EVH updates, or as otherwise deemed necessary.

**Appendix 1**

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Checklist for Remote Working
(from EVH/ACS Health and Safety Manual)

| Date | | Assessor | |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Location of Assessment** | |
|---|---|

| **Risk** | **Yes/ No** | **Action Required** |
|---|---|---|
| **Desk Area** | | |
| Do you have adequate space to work comfortably? | | |
| Is there enough space under your desk to stretch your legs? | | |
| Are there trailing electrical cables around your work area that need to be tied up? | | |
| Is your working area warm, well-lit and well ventilated? | | |
| Do you need a desk lamp to improve lighting? | | |
| Is your work area clutter free? | | |
| Do you sit at your desk with good posture? | | |
| Can you reach everything easily without twisting your upper body? | | |
| Do you have a comfortable, adjustable chair that provides back support? | | |
| | | |
| **Display Screen Equipment** | | |
| Has a DSE assessment been carried out? | | |
| Have any actions identified been addressed? | | |
| How regularly are DSE assessments reviewed? | | |

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| | | |
| Have you received training or information on the correct use of DSE and how to set up your workstation? | | |
| | | |
| **Electrical Safety** | | |
| Does any electrical equipment spark or show signs of burns and therefore need to be removed from use? | | |
| Do any wires look damaged or frayed and therefore need to be removed from use? | | |
| Do you regularly inspect your electrical equipment for signs of wear and tear? | | |
| Do you have a process for reporting faults with electrical equipment? | | |
| Do you switch off electrical equipment when not in use? | | |
| Is equipment used for homeworking subject to regular PAT testing? | | |
| Do you have an emergency arrangement in place in case of fire? | | |
| Are smoke detectors checked regularly and in working order? | | |
| | | |
| **Stress, Mental Health and Wellbeing** | | |
| Do you take regular breaks away from your workstation? | | |
| Do you have access to first aid equipment if required? | | |
| Do you have arrangements in place to check in with a manager or colleague every day? | | |

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| Do you have the chance to discuss workload, demands and training needs with managers? | | |
| Do you receive adequate support from managers and colleagues to carry out your work remotely? | | |
| Are you aware of the organisation's Stress Management procedures? | | |
| Has a Stress Risk Assessment been carried out that considers homeworking? | | |
| Have you had Stress and Mental Health Awareness Training? | | |
| | | |
| **Slips, Trips and Falls** | | |
| Are floor coverings, such as carpets and rugs secure? | | |
| Are stairways and corridors clear of trip hazards? | | |
| Is the floor area round your desk clear? | | |
| | | |
| **Lone Working** | | |
| Are you familiar with the organisation's policy on lone working? | | |
| Has a lone working risk assessment been carried out? | | |
| Do you have a system of regularly checking in with your employer? | | |
| Is your home kept secure while you are working there? | | |
| Are important files kept securely when not in use? | | |
| Are measures in place to get help in the case of an accident or emergency? | | |

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| Do you know how to report accidents, incidents and near misses? | | |
| Do you have access to suitable first aid equipment and facilities? | | |
| Have you had/do you require any first aid training? | | |

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| Number of Actions | | Date actions completed | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Signed off by employee | | Date signed off | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Signed off by Manager / HSA | | Date signed off | |