

# Northamptonshire Police



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## Agile Working (Including Home Working) Policy

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Department Responsible	Enabling Services		
Author	[REDACTED]		
Senior Owner	C1497 Paul Bullen		
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# 1. Introduction

Northamptonshire Police are committed to seeking to enable opportunities for agile working in accordance with community, public and business need.

Northamptonshire Police recognise the business and work-life benefits agile working can offer in enabling a flexible and diverse workforce that reflects the diverse communities that we serve.

Many roles enable different types of agile working. Inevitably some posts lend themselves more easily to agile working than others. There may be genuine and practical difficulties in adapting certain posts to agile working. In all instances the business needs of the relevant organisation, department or team will take precedence over any other considerations in considering agile working arrangements.

Whilst the following lists are not exhaustive, benefits to agile working include:

For the individual:

- Work-life balance
- Reduced levels of stress
- Improved personal health, wellbeing /wellness
- Less time spent commuting to and from work
- Greater autonomy
- Greater flexibility to accommodate work, personal and family needs
- Increased motivation and job satisfaction

For an organisation:

- A competitive edge for attracting and retaining highly skilled individuals through access to a wider pool of applicants
- Reduced levels of individuals stress coupled with a greater work life balance that in turn benefits staff wellbeing
- Higher levels of productivity, efficiency and reduced absenteeism
- Higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation and innovation
- A more satisfying work environment
- Improved staff retention
- Reduced overheads, office space and car parking pressures; workplace utilisation
- Reduce carbon footprint

The impact of agile working arrangements can also reach beyond the benefits derived by an organisation and contribute to the development of a sustainable society. For example, opportunities for reducing traffic congestion and air pollution and for supporting regional economic development can be realised.

Northamptonshire Police recognise the need to develop modern work practices and the opportunities that an agile working environment can present and therefore encourages departments to enable agile working arrangements where it is economically and operationally feasible to do so, and in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

## **2. Legislative Compliance**

This document has been drafted to comply with the principals of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the individuals and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with current Equality Legislation and policies and are detailed within the associated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health Safety issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all legislation and internal policies.

This document has also been created under the authority of the Chief Constable, pursuant to section 2 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. It does not replace any previous policies.

## **3. Policy Statement**

### **What is agile working?**

Agile working is a work style that allows flexibility within the workplace, and enables individuals to work at an appropriate alternative location, to their designated place(s) of work, in order to complete their tasks in the most effective and efficient manner to meet the needs of an organisation.

### **Who is an agile worker?**

An agile worker is an individual who performs their duties across a number of workplace locations, without any impact on their ability to deliver their tasks. Workplaces could include: their designated workplace(s), alternative workplaces in the field or from home.

### **Guiding Principles**

Work is an activity not a place. Agile working provides the ability to focus on performance and outcomes rather than presenteeism. Relationships are based on trust between managers and staff. People are untethered from a designated work space and freed from bureaucracy; allowing them to have the ability to be innovative and deliver more effective outcomes.

Northamptonshire Police are committed to enabling agile working for individuals.

This will be achieved by embracing the principles defined below:

#### **1) People**

- Focus on performance and outcomes rather than presenteeism
- Encouraging internal and external collaboration
- Trusting individuals to work flexibly

## 2) Space

- Enabling a flexible and productive environment
- Providing easy access to workspace, equipment and tools
- Promoting 'what you do is more important than where you are'
- Providing space which is shared rather than individually personalised

## 3) Technology

- Providing software and hardware to enable agile working
- Continuous attention to technical excellence and design
- Easy access to systems and information regardless of location

## 4) Process

- Simple and lean processes
- Reduced bureaucracy
- Removal of duplication

## **Procedure**

Line Managers will determine whether agile working is appropriate for each individual within their department. All working arrangements must operate in line with the agreed working pattern and contractual working hours. Individuals undertaking any working such arrangement are eligible to apply for flexible working (under flexible working policies) and / or partake in any agreed flexi-time schemes.

Any decision to adopt a form of agile working will be based on the needs of our communities, the public and Northamptonshire Police. There is no automatic entitlement to participate in any particular working arrangement or to continue within a nominated working arrangement.

Agile working individuals can undertake work in any location when conducting a role (or part of a role) that generally does not require specialist equipment/functional space.

Some roles may be such that a lot of the work carried out can be done on the move or from any location including a vehicle/remote site/partner site. These individuals will have access to agile working spaces to enable them to check emails, upload or download information, work for a few hours / the day etc. These individuals will be provided with appropriate equipment that enables them to work electronically at a desk, in meetings, or in a location other than their designated place of work.

A list of agile working spaces can be found on ForceNet.

Agile working spaces should be cleaned after use in the interests of health and safety.

Individuals using agile working spaces are asked to be considerate of others who may also want to use these spaces at all times, including when no free space is available.

## **Considerations**

Agile working will normally be driven primarily by the organisation's operational delivery needs and strategic objectives and not by the individual's personal circumstances or needs.

The nature of agile working means that any decision taken within an organisation is based on the following:

- Community/public needs
- Organisational need
- Requirements and suitability of the role
- Facilities in place to support the individual
- Information security
- Service being delivered by the individual's department, and the organisation
- Welfare of the individual

### **How to Request Agile Working**

An individual can request to work agilely either in person, over the phone or via email with their line manager.

Mutually agreeable agile working arrangements are classified as an informal agreement between an individual and their line manager, and subject to regular (not less than an annual) review. An individual's designated place(s) of work will remain as detailed within their terms and conditions.

An individual or the organisation can request amendments to an agile working arrangement at any time. Any changes made must be by mutual agreement.

An individual or the organisation can terminate an agile working arrangement subject to 28 days' notice. However where necessary and justified, an agile working arrangement can be terminated with immediate effect.

Where a line manager is unable to agree to a request to work agilely, individuals will have no right to appeal, subject to the rejection being due to one or more of the considerations cited within this policy or one or more of the criteria detailed within the responsibilities section of this policy.

Individuals do however retain the right to raise a Fairness At Work, if deemed appropriate, once they have been advised by their line manager of the justification for the refusal.

### **Responsibilities**

The manager and individual must consider the following criteria before permitting agile working:

- Is the work suitable for agile working and is it clear what output is required?
- Does this meet the needs of the organisation and its customers (our communities / the public)?
- Does it have the agreement from both parties (manager and individual)?
- Is the individual's agile work place suitable? Does it have suitable connectivity?
- Is the individual able to attend their designated place of work/other locations if required by the manager?
- Does this impact upon other team members working in the office – there should not be an increase in workload for those colleagues as a result of an individual working agilely.
- Where applicable, are there sufficient team members working in the office to

provide appropriate office cover?

- Does the individual have the personal qualities required to work agilely e.g. self-motivation, self-discipline and self-reliance, the ability to work without close / direct supervision, the ability to complete work to set deadlines, the ability to plan and prioritise work effectively, and the ability to manage their own workload and daily pressures?
- Is the individual able to deal with potentially conflicting demands of work and home / family?

### Departmental Heads

Departmental Heads are responsible for monitoring performance of their teams and for monitoring adherence to this policy within their teams/workplaces and taking action when compliance issue arises.

### Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for managing their individuals by outputs and outcomes, not merely by attendance. Outputs of individuals working agilely should be managed by Line Managers in the same way performance is monitored in the work place.

Agile workers will have a Performance Development Review (PDR) like any other worker. Performance objectives should be set on the PDR for the individual and regular reviews of progress conducted. Line Managers should ensure that regular 121s are conducted with individuals to provide guidance, encouragement and feedback on work and performance as well as check on welfare and any further training or support required. The 121 discussions and progress reviews against objectives should be recorded on the individual's PDR.

### Individuals

Individuals are responsible for the security and confidentiality of equipment and data in their possession and must comply with all relevant legislation and organisational policies. The potential for security breaches or loss of data increase outside of the formal Northamptonshire Police estate. At all times, individuals must ensure:

- No other individuals have sight of or access to organisational data and that individual passwords are kept secret to prevent unauthorised access
- All documents are properly marked and stored
- They log out of business systems and lock their work station when not in use
- Any loss of Northamptonshire Police data or property is immediately reported

When using any business supplied ICT equipment, whether in the office environment, at home or in an approved agile location, individuals must comply with Northamptonshire Police computer systems rules for usage, in addition to the following legislation, policies and specific guidance to meet compliance:

- Code of Ethics
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Practice and Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for Management of Police Information (MoPI)
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 2002
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Government Security Classification (GSC) Policy

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Official Secrets Act 1989
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Systems Misuse Policy
- Information Security Policy (and supporting documents)
- Updated advice and guidance from Force Orders/Daily Orders

All individuals are personally responsible and accountable for the correct handling of Northamptonshire Police information in all environments in any format.

If individuals have to leave work to manage unplanned childcare or caring responsibilities, there are a number of support options available.

In the first instance individuals should speak to their line manager, who will be able to discuss the options available.

Working from home should not normally be combined with childcare or other caring responsibilities. However it is accepted that in exceptional circumstances this may be necessary for a short period of time. In such instances individuals should speak to their line manager in order to determine the most appropriate course of action. Where possible line managers are asked to support short term flexible operating approaches in order to accommodate individual needs. Long term variations will however invoke a review of the exiting agile working agreement in place.

Individuals working from home must ensure they do not undertake personal tasks or duties that would take them away from their work role during working hours.

Northamptonshire Police will not pay for the following and the individual will be responsible for:

- Any additional costs incurred in terms of energy and other utilities at their home should they operate from this location.
- Internet connection and rental charges
- Any additional costs in home insurance
- Furniture and equipment required to enable the individual to conduct duties at home except when this is required under s20 Equality Act or as identified through a DSE / General Health and Safety Risk Assessment.
- Cost of moving or installing any equipment in their home except when this is required under s20 Equality Act or as identified through a DSE / General Health and Safety Risk Assessment.

Where necessary, under appropriate circumstances, and upon consideration of all available facts, all three organisations may suspend agile working in respect of an individual:

- ❖ Whilst investigations into conduct is undertaken
- ❖ Misconduct proceedings are concluded
- ❖ Where performance concerns are highlighted
- ❖ Under organisational capability procedures

Individuals remain subject to the standard requirements in respect of sickness absence reporting.

Upon leaving a particular role or department, all equipment supplied to conduct the role as part of agile working must be returned to ICT if a) leaving an organisation  
b) new role requires different equipment.

Should there be any disruption to the network connection to an individual's home, when they are working from home, individuals may be required to work from another location. Individuals should speak to their line manager and agree the most appropriate course of action.

Individuals have a personal responsibility to manage and look after all organisational owned and personal issue equipment. Damage to equipment will be assessed by ICT before re-issue of kit. Continuous damage to equipment through lack of care may result in not replacing devices for a set period and could lead to agile working arrangements being terminated.

## **Expectations**

When agreeing agile working arrangements, the line manager and individual should be clear on:

- Hours of working and earliest start and end times in line with the Working Time Regulations 1998
- Core hours the individual is expected to work
- How agile working will operate and how success and performance will be managed and measured by having clear goals / objectives aligned to the force priorities set on their PDR so that they can see how they are contributing and making a real difference, giving them a real sense of belonging and shared purpose
- Expectations around communication and how regular contact will be maintained. The frequency of 'check ins' should be agreed in order to avoid feelings of isolation and these should be recorded under check ins on the individual's PDR
- Expectations around attending the workplace and how the wider team will stay connected, engaged and motivated
- Access to the Employee Assistance Provider Health Assured ([Helpline 0800 030 5182](tel:08000305182))
- Access to Mental Health Advisors / Wellbeing Advisors
- How an individual's work life balance will be managed e.g. taking regular breaks and switching off from work at the end of the day
- Rules around storing information and GDPR

Agile working individuals are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the needs of their role from any location deemed fit for purpose in conjunction with security and safety compliance (suitability may be subject to management agreement or prior inspection as necessary). It is expected that an individual working agilely will still be available to attend their normal designated place of work if required during their agreed working hours.

All organisations will ensure adequate space, storage and facilities are provided within organisational owned or co-located premises to support an agile working environment.

Office space will be provided by recommendation from the Estates and Facilities Team and in conjunction with organisational requirement. Personal office space will not be an automatic entitlement. Senior managers and Line Managers will be expected to share space with colleagues.

Fixed workers will be provided with designated work settings/zones and specialised equipment as required.



There will be no personal issue designated work stations for agile workers; with the exception of agile workers who require a designated work station as a reasonable adjustment.

Roles that require fixed functional space will be provided with dedicated space to conduct work-based activities.

Agile workers will be expected to use the organisations estate in line with the agile working principles. Provision for agile working spaces, access to specialist equipment, meeting and collaboration areas, video conferencing and connectivity will be provided to enable agile working without personalised space. Storage areas will be provided for personal and work items.

When in the office everyone will be expected to adhere to a clear desk policy; fixed and agile workers, with the exception of specific specialist equipment / provisions. Line Managers will be expected to ensure a clear desk policy throughout their organisations estate in order to facilitate shared working spaces.

## **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

Organisations have a duty of care towards the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff and this extends to agile work spaces.

Wherever an individual is working, they require an appropriate work station and as such a DSE / General Health and Safety Risk Assessment should be carried out.

Prior to commencing agile working arrangements, individuals should familiarise themselves with Northamptonshire Police Health and Safety policies and procedures.

Where an individual will be working from home, a Working from Home Self-Assessment must be completed (**see Appendix A**).

**It is the manager's responsibility with the individual to ensure that the appropriate Health and Safety Risk Assessments are carried out prior to any arrangements being agreed or commenced.**

Where specific equipment is required through reasonable adjustments as a result of a Health and Safety Risk Assessment being carried out, these it will be provided. However where specific specialised equipment is required, it may not be feasible for the equipment to be provided within an agile space. In such instances the individual will have access to this equipment at their designated place of work.'

Where equipment is removed from the workplace in order to enable individuals to work from home safely, this will be facilitated on the understanding that its removal is logged and it is returned upon on request.

Northamptonshire Police may visit an individual's home in order to carry out a DSE / General Health and Safety Risk Assessment. Line managers will arrange a suitably convenient time with the individual ahead of any visit.

A specific risk assessment will be carried out with agile workers who become pregnant.

Individuals must be fully aware of potential health and safety risks and be properly trained in the handling of any equipment and materials that are required for their job as a result of agile working.

Individuals who work agilely are required to report accidents and incidents to their line manager / organisation in the same way as they would should they be on organisational premises.

## **Confidentiality and Information Security and Data Protection**

Everyone has a legal obligation to appropriately handle the information that they deal with.

Wherever an individual works, they need to be aware of the requirement of maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive information. They should not discuss sensitive information anywhere they will be overheard by people that should not hear this information.

Individuals must lock their computer screen when they are away from it.

Hard copy information must be stored securely including when working at home and from other locations.

Hard copy information should not be taken out of the office and any exceptions require a risk assessment to be undertaken, documented and accepted by the Information Asset Owner along with the DCC as appropriate.

When working from home or other locations individuals must ensure that confidential/sensitive information is disposed of in accordance with Government Security Classification (GSC) terms. For more information please contact the Force Information Security Officer.

Individuals should not normally use their homes for meetings, e.g. individuals should attend their designated work place or another specified work location in order to meet with their line manager or colleagues. Individuals must never meet with clients or service users at home and should not use their home phone number or personal mobile phone for work purposes.

Prior to an individual commencing agile working, they must be fully trained in the requirements of information security and data protection; the protection of data and its safe destruction.

Individuals are also expected to keep up to date with relevant legislative changes and associated training packages.

Individuals must not allow third parties to have access to or use business equipment and materials. Individuals are responsible for keeping all documentation and organisational data secure at all times e.g.

- Keeping filing cabinets and drawers locked when they are not being used
- Use of a unique password for the computer and other digital equipment
- Organisational equipment and material should only be used for work related purposes and must not be used by a third party at any time or for any purpose
- Individuals have a duty to ensure that proper care is taken of all equipment and materials supplied.

An agile worker is at all times **personally** responsible for their use of organisational information, in particular, ensuring that data is not viewed or disclosed to any

person who does not have a legitimate reason to view it. This includes; other family members, friends, visitors or any other member of the public.

Some duties will involve the use of certain information that it is not appropriate for field-working. Management advice and guidance should always be sought where data of a sensitive nature is involved.

## **Information Communication Technology**

Individuals will be provided with a laptop and other ICT equipment appropriate for their role, and should use the remote access system to connect to their organisations network.

Up to date anti-virus software and operating system security patches must be applied to all equipment issued. Individuals should apply all updates, as soon as they are dispatched. In order to do this, individuals are required to shut down their device in order to enable encryption, triggering security updates to be run.

Copying of any provided software, including mail software onto a private PC/laptop is strictly prohibited.

Individuals are expected to return equipment to their ICT department for updates, repairs and replacements.

Access to business systems and the internet may be done directly through hard wiring within organisational approved premises. Wi-Fi is only to be accessed in organisation approved areas within the county. Locations that allow individuals to log into their Wi-Fi through the provision of a code are considered acceptable providing individuals are considering the restrictive or sensitive nature of the material individuals are planning on accessing in that environment.

Where an individual works from home they may connect to the Internet to access business systems via Ethernet cable or Wi-Fi using a secure virtual private network (VPN). Individuals should protect their own Wi-Fi with a password. Support and advice on how to protect a personal device should be obtained from the individuals own internet service provider.

All of the equipment supplied will be subject to agile working and ICT device allocation approval. Individuals should **ONLY** use equipment supplied and supported by their organisation to facilitate business activity.

Force owned equipment will be issued based on the role requirements, individual needs, with organisational benefits and cost considerations. Equipment is centrally managed through ICT Departments and therefore requests to change or purchase additional equipment will need to be ratified; it is not possible to change or purchase additional equipment through local departmental budgets.

Individuals issued with a mobile device such as a tablet, hybrid or laptop will not have a designated desktop computer. Access to keyboards, screens and docking areas will be provided to attach and link devices for use in a suitable work setting. All agile working individuals will be provided with telecommunications equipment for work use.

Headsets to access remote telephony will be provided and desktop phones will be available in some fixed and agile working locations.

Personally owned devices which are recognised by Force software (Safend) are not supported by the ICT Department and do not comply with the organisation's security requirements. Use of such personal devices by individuals is not permitted at any time. Use of personal equipment may be subject to a conduct investigation.

## **Insurance**

Northamptonshire Police insurance policies cover individuals working from home and other locations.

All equipment and material provided by Northamptonshire Police in order to enable an individual to carry out their role agilely are covered by business liability insurance. Equipment held at an individual's home address for the purposes of carrying out work duties is insured by Northamptonshire Police (with the exception of theft from unattended vehicles).

Individuals should inform their household insurer if they work from home and confirm to them that there is no liability on the household insurance for any equipment stored at their home address. They should also inform their mortgage provider or landlord.

## **Costs and payments**

All business mileage will be reimbursed in accordance with the Travel and Subsistence Policy and paid with reference to an individual's contractual work base. Pool cars / service vehicles should be used where possible.

Any costs associated with working from home will be the responsibility of the individual as individuals are doing so by mutual agreement. Northamptonshire Police will not fund any costs associated with working from home - it is permitted on the request of the individual subject to the terms of this Policy and on the understanding that any facilities required (i.e. heating, lighting, insurance) are the responsibility of the individual.

## **4. Monitoring and review**

The senior owner will review the content of this guidance annually to ensure that this is relevant and up to date. The author has agreed that this document will be reviewed within 12 months of the effective date.

## **5. Related Documents**

Policies may be linked to each other via the policy library.

Supporting materials can be found on ForceNet.

## 6. Appendices

### Appendix A

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Description of room/space to be used for work (e.g. small, first floor office)</b>	

**This checklist should be completed for the location you propose to work in.**

**Your line manager will use the information provided to determine if further risk control measures need to be put in place before they agree to you carrying out work at home.**

	<b>Yes</b> ✓	<b>No</b> ✗	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Work space</b>			
Is there enough space for you to work efficiently and safely?			
Are walkways clear of trailing leads and other tripping hazards?			
Is the lighting adequate for you to read documents and view the computer screen?			
Is the temperature and ventilation suitable for the work being undertaken?			
<b>Workstation &amp; computer</b>			
Is the workstation, chair, screen etc., suitable to allow you to work effectively without causing discomfort?			
If you use a laptop or tablet, have you considered the use of separate mouse, keyboard or screen combinations to enable you to work more effectively?			
What additional equipment would you need to work agilely?			

<b>Electrical Equipment</b>			
Is the domestic electrical system adequate for the equipment being used?			
Are plugs and cables in good condition and without signs of damage?			
<b>Work Practices</b>			
Can you arrange work or alternate tasks to ensure you take regular breaks away from keyboard work?			
Do you have regular supervision or one to one's with your line manager?			
Are there arrangements for regular contact with team colleagues?			
<b>Emergencies</b>			
Is your home smoke alarm in working order?			
Is there a simple and safe means of getting to and from your workspace at all times?			
Do you have suitable arrangements in place to deal with emergencies?			
Do you know how to report accidents or incidents?			
<b>Training and Support</b>			
Will you require additional training and or support to work agilely or to use remote working systems?			

**Do you have any other comments about your working conditions or any other health and safety concerns?**

**I understand that if any of my responses change I must inform my line manager immediately.**

Individuals Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Line Manager Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please detail any risk reduction actions that need to be addressed before working from home is agreed.**

**Completed: YES / NO**                      **Signature & date**

**7. Document Control History**

DATE	VERSION	INDIVIDUAL	CHANGES MADE
07.07.2021	14	[REDACTED]	New format