

Hybrid Working Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to hybrid working, which allows you to split your time between attending the workplace(s) and working remotely.
- 1.2 Hybrid working is an important element of both our:
 - 1.2.1 long term strategy for adapting to, and thriving in, the new working environment following the coronavirus pandemic; and
 - 1.2.2 commitment to supporting a positive work-life balance for our employees.

2 Who is covered by hybrid working

- 2.1 Due to the needs and demands of our business hybrid working is only available for some roles as it is not suitable for all. For clarification, please check your primary location of work in your contract of employment and if you have any questions direct them in the first instance to your Line Manager.

3 Split between attending work and working remotely

- 3.1 Your contract of employment sets out your primary location of work and if appropriate to your role it also sets out the days on which you are expected to attend the workplace(s) and the days on which you are expected or authorised to work remotely.
- 3.2 The number of days attending the workplace compared to working remotely will vary depending on:
 - 3.2.1 individual circumstances
 - 3.2.2 your role, and its nature at that and any particular time
- 3.3 We will also consider our needs, including the space that we have available at our work locations.

Taking individual circumstance into account

- 3.4 We recognise the benefits of being flexible and that a specific schedule could be difficult for some employees to follow. For example, you could:
 - 3.4.1 live a significant distance from the workplace and it would be more efficient for you to spend more time working remotely; or
 - 3.4.2 you may have challenges with a home working environment that mean remote working is difficult for you and you would like to attend the workplace more often than this.
- 3.5 Speak with your Line Manager to discuss any concerns that you may have with this and, depending on the nature of the flexibility you are seeking, they may ask you to make a formal flexible working request.

The need for our workforce to be flexible

- 3.6 Given the degree of flexibility that our hybrid working arrangements provide, we expect our workforce to be flexible. You may be required to attend work on particular days at the request of your Line Manager, for example for in-person training and for meetings that your Line Manager has determined are best conducted in person.

- 3.7 Similarly, there may be circumstances in which we ask you to work remotely, or to work from such other place as we may reasonably require, when you would otherwise expect to attend the workplace.
- 3.8 In such cases, you will be given as much notice as possible.

4 Arrangements while attending the workplace

Working hours

- 4.1 For days on which you are attending the workplace, your normal hours of work are set out in your contract of employment.

Safe-working measures

- 4.2 Your safety is our priority. We encourage you to tell us if you have any concerns, have identified any risks, or have any suggestions that we can make to improve the workplace.
- 4.3 You can do this by raising concerns or making suggestions to your Line Manager.
- 4.4 You have a role to play in ensuring we can all work in a safe environment, and you must follow our safe-working instructions. A failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence and dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure.

5 Arrangements while working remotely

Working hours

- 5.1 While working remotely, you must be available and working during your normal hours of work, as set out in your contract of employment.
- 5.2 We ask you to be mindful that you are not overworking – "downtime" from work is essential. To help maintain your wellbeing, please make sure that you take adequate rest breaks:
- 5.2.1 Take your lunch break each day.
 - 5.2.2 Even if you are busy, it is essential that you find the time to take a break of at least 20 minutes during each working day that lasts more than six hours.
 - 5.2.3 Ensure the time between stopping work and beginning the next day is not less than 11-hours.
- 5.3 Please be as clear as possible with your Line Manager about your hours of work for days on which you are working remotely.
- 5.4 As requested make use of tools such as shared calendars and out-of-office messaging. *This can help colleagues to be aware of your availability on these days.*

Sickness

- 5.5 When working remotely, you should not work if you are unwell. If you are sick and unable to work, our Short-Term Sickness Absence Policy applies.
- 5.6 You should notify your Line Manager by telephone as soon as reasonably practicable, preferably before you are due to start work and, in any event, no later than one hour after you are due to begin work.

Technology and equipment

- 5.7 To assist you to work remotely, you are provided with equipment necessary to undertake your role. You must take care of any equipment we provide you with and notify your Line Manager of any faults with the equipment.
- 5.8 If you believe that you need any additional equipment, you should notify your Line Manager who, if necessary and appropriate, will put forward a business case.

Financial assistance

- 5.9 You may be able to claim tax relief for any household expenses incurred as a result of working from home, provided the expenses are solely work related.
- 5.10 If you wish to benefit from this tax relief, see the Government's guide on claiming tax relief for your job expenses at www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home. We can offer no guidance or support with this.

Health and safety

- 5.11 You should liaise with your Line Manager to ensure that your remote working set-up is appropriate and that you are working in a safe manner.
- 5.12 However, you must also take responsibility for your own health and safety and that of anyone else who is affected by your work, for example others in your household when you are working from home.
- 5.13 You must notify your Line Manager if:
- 5.13.1 you feel any discomfort due to working remotely, such as back pain; or
 - 5.13.2 you believe that there are any work-related health and safety hazards;
 - 5.13.3 any work-related accidents occur in your home.
- 5.14 Your Line Manager will escalate the matter to look into what action can be taken.

6 Data protection

- 6.1 Employees who are working remotely are responsible for keeping information associated with our organisation secure at all times. Specifically, remote workers are under a duty to:
- 6.1.1 practise good computer security, including using a unique password for your work laptop and any other devices you use for work;
 - 6.1.2 keep all hard copies of work-related documentation secure, including keeping documents locked away at all times except when in use; and
 - 6.1.3 ensure work-related information is safeguarded when working in public spaces by:
 - 6.1.3.1 positioning your laptop so that others cannot see the screen;
 - 6.1.3.2 not leaving your laptop unattended; and
 - 6.1.3.3 not having confidential/business-sensitive conversations in public spaces.
- 6.2 In addition, the laptop and other equipment provided by us must be used for work-related purposes only and not used by any other member of your household or third party at any time or for any purpose.

7 Requesting flexible working

- 7.1 This policy focuses on how we operate hybrid working, but there are other forms of flexible working.
- 7.2 Examples of other types of flexible working that can be requested are:
- 7.2.1 reducing the number of hours that you are working;
 - 7.2.2 changing your start and finish times;
 - 7.2.3 compressing your working hours into fewer days (for example moving to a nine-day fortnight); and working flexitime.
- 7.3 If you would like to request another form of flexible working, or if we do not currently offer you hybrid working but you would like to request it, please contact your Line Manager who can support you to make a formal request.

8 Review

- 8.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

9 Definitions

- 9.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")
9.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

Document control box

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