

## Healthwatch Cambridgeshire Home Working Policy

### 1. Introduction

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire recognises that in some instances it is more efficient for staff to work at home. This will depend on the role of the staff member and the needs of the organisation. At present the position is:

- Co-ordinators, Engagement Workers, Communications Manager - Home-based
- All other staff - Office-based

The line manager will agree the work pattern with the employee. Both the line manager and the manager will take into account time spent travelling and the nature of the work undertaken.

This Policy should be read alongside the organisation's other policies, in particular the Health & Safety Policy

### 2. Working Arrangements

Office-based staff will need to notify their line manager if they wish to work at home and for what purpose. For instance when a staff member has to produce a report and the home environment offers less distraction than the office. The line manager will consider the need to provide cover for the service when deciding if a staff member can work at home. The employee can be required at short notice to come into the office if this is required.

Employees must be available by telephone when working at home and check emails regularly.

In the event that the member of staff is sick when they had planned to be working at home the normal sickness reporting rules must be followed. Employees who are sick should not attempt to work from home, but should take the time as sick leave and not jeopardise their recovery in any way.

### 3. Equipment

The employee should ensure that they work at home using safe working practices, particularly in relation to using IT equipment.

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the correct posture for using a computer or laptop, the need for breaks etc. The home environment is entirely the responsibility of the employee.

Employees need to ensure that no confidential data is stored on the hard drive of a Healthwatch Cambridgeshire laptop, PC or USB stick without appropriate encryption and that laptops and PCs have adequate anti-virus protection.

It is the responsibility of any employee working at home using their own IT equipment to ensure that that equipment has adequate spyware, firewall and antivirus protection and that any wireless connection is secure.

#### 4. Confidentiality

The employee must ensure the confidentiality of any material that relates to their work at Healthwatch Cambridgeshire when they are at home. This means that papers should not be left about and that laptops are not left unattended. Other people in the home should not have access to any information relating to Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and the work of the employee. Laptops and other papers should be stored as securely as possible within the home environment.

Confidential information must not be stored on any personal IT equipment, this includes tablets and smart phones.

#### 5. Insurance Cover

Employees are advised that working from home may affect the provisions of any home contents insurance and are advised to inform their insurers prior to commencing working from home. Healthwatch Cambridgeshire laptops are covered by the organisation's insurance. Laptops are insured while in suitable secured premises or on the person. They are not insured when left unattended in vehicles. The employees own computers and equipment remain the employee's responsibility and must be insured through their own insurance policies.

#### 6. Personal Safety and Professionalism

Employees are not to release their home address and telephone number to non-members of staff. Employees working from home who have a Healthwatch Cambridgeshire mobile phone should keep it with them and switched on. Should the office be contacted with a request to speak to a member of staff who is working at home, the member of staff who takes the call will tell the caller that the person is out of the office and will take a phone number from the caller. The office-based employee will then phone the employee working from home so that they can contact the caller.

In order to maintain a professional approach and appearance, meetings with other professionals should not be held at an employee's home. For safety reasons, employees should not meet volunteers or clients at home. Meetings with colleagues or trustees may occasionally be held at home with prior consent of the line manager. Office-based staff need to record all working at home, especially any meetings, clearly in their Outlook Calendar.

#### 7. Travel costs and other expenses

Claims may be made for travel when working from home in line with the expenses policy. Home-based staff may claim the travel distance from their home to any meetings. Journeys to the office base cannot be claimed.

Employees working from home are expected to provide their own furniture, heating, lighting, etc. Healthwatch Cambridgeshire will provide consumables such as stationery and stamps. Broadband or other phone connection is not paid by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire, but individual phone calls from home may be claimed if the employee does not have a mobile phone provided by the organisation. All printing should be done in the office.

**Approved by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire Board of Directors**

Date: 20 January 2016

**Next Review**

Date: January 2017

**Responsible Officer**

Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire