

Agile working - information for employees

The next few weeks will see those of us who can, spend significantly more time working from home. It's really important to make sure that you take steps to look after your mental and physical wellbeing during this time.

- **Keep in contact:** During this period of social distancing, remaining connected is incredibly important. Whilst many of us have partners, families and strong social networks, some colleagues will also be facing social isolation and loneliness. Keep in regular contact with your manager as you would at work, and check in with your colleagues now and again to ask how they're feeling.
- **Take breaks:** Sitting for long periods staring at a screen can be tiring and you should factor regular breaks into the working day. Time away from the computer is proven to increase productivity and improve wellbeing so factor in a few short breaks throughout the day. 5-10 minutes is recommended every hour or a change in activity, like walking around while you're on the phone. You should also make sure to give your eyes a break by changing focus or blinking from time to time.
- **Separate work from home:** While it can be tempting to stay in your pyjamas, get dressed and ready for work at the same time you normally would to signal the start of the working day. Some of us might have a separate room to work from at home but some might be working from their kitchen work top or the sofa. Regardless of where you're working from, separation is really important. Find a box or use your work bag to tidy away all your work items at the end of the day to return your space to your home.
- **Set boundaries:** When we work from home, it is easier for the lines to be blurred and more important than ever to set boundaries. Be clear about your working hours with colleagues and just as you might need to leave the office to run for a train, make sure you are disciplined enough to stop working when you need to engage with your family or partner again. We all work hard and strive to our best, but it's important to make time for yourself too.
- **Look after yourself:** Be aware of the things that can cause you anxiety or stress and the activities and resources that can help you address this.
- **Keep active:** In line with Government guidance, take some time during the day to exercise, even if this is just to take a stroll around your neighbourhood or stretch in your garden. For useful tips on how you can keep active when you're at home visit [sportengland.org/news/how-stay-active-while-youre-home](https://www.sportengland.org/news/how-stay-active-while-youre-home)

It's also important to follow good health and safety practice in terms of your work station and display screen equipment (DSE) set up. You should review and complete the Health and Safety Executives (HSE) Display Screen Equipment Workstation checklist via www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf to ensure that your home workstation is correctly set up.

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