

Employee Wellbeing

The Isle of Man Government recognises that many employees may now be working from home; this could be a sudden change to their working arrangements to exercise flexible working or a long term arrangement.

For those who are working from home, employees are encouraged to regularly engage with your manager and fellow workers – where possible make use of systems such as Microsoft Teams/email and WhatsApp.

Employees are discouraged from working longer hours – regardless of the temptation. Gaining a good work-life balance is important.

To make sure your work-life balance is not compromised. Making use of your calendar, to do lists and apps such as WorkHours will help you manage a good work-life balance.

Remember, if working from home is not working for you, make sure you discuss it with your manager.

1. Maintain a Regular Work Schedule

Set up a work schedule that includes work and rest periods. You may need additional rest breaks if your working set up now includes looking after family members or the workstation set up encourages discomfort.

Discuss with your manager if you need to work flexibly during this period to achieve a good work-life balance. This may mean extending your day or starting earlier than normal and adjusting your finish time accordingly.

Use your calendar or download a working hours app to help support you in working and maintaining a regular work schedule by understanding how you are working.

Your work schedule should include a morning routine. Setting a time to sit down isn't always guiding you to the chair. A routine would guide you better and this may be making a hot beverage, getting out of the shower, once your dressed, once washing is hung out or after you have washed the breakfast plates. Integrating this into your working routine can be more powerful than a clock at helping you get started each day. It allows you to become less distracted by house chores.

Example Schedule

06:45am	Get up Shower Dress Washing onto line
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	Bins out
08:00am	Prepare family for morning Dressing Breakfast and Itinerary for the day
09:00am	Log onto begin work
10:30am	Break and Stretch Review Itinerary for the rest of the morning
10:40am	Log on and continue to work
12:30pm	Lunch Exercise / stretching Review Itinerary for the afternoon
13:30pm	Log on and continue to work
15:00	Break and Stretch Review Itinerary for the rest of the afternoon
15:10	Log on and continue to work
17:30	Log off for the day

2. Set up a Designated Work Space

In an ideal scenario you would not only have a dedicated office but also separate computers for work and personal use.

If possible, try to have some dedicated time and space where you are able to focus on your work activities. Having separated space from other household activities and occupants will help you create a barrier between home and work. It will also help to manage your work time away from domestic distractions and maintain professional standards when you're working from home.

You may be able to make use of some peripherals that you already have at home – for example, mouse, keyboard and monitor.

3. Establish Ground Rules with other People in Your Work Space/Home

Set ground rules with other adults in your home, particularly if you are sharing your work space.

If you have children whilst you're working, it will help them if they had clear rules about what they can and cannot do during your working time. This is where a schedule will help.

4. Schedule Breaks into your Day

Make sure that you schedule breaks and stretches into your day and make sure that you take them. Working from home during this period may require more frequent breaks to support poor ergonomics, the current situation and change.



Make sure that your break allows you to walk away from the computer, screen and phone. Take at least 1 hour for lunch along with 2 breaks.

Apps such as Time Out for Mac and Smart Break for Windows will help ensure that you don't miss your break.

If possible, leave the home for a break into the garden – fresh air and natural light will do you good.

Add these breaks into your calendar and share times with your manager and colleagues. This will ensure that they are aware of how you are working during the day and will be able to schedule any calls around your schedule.

5. Phone calls

To support your role it may be necessary to take phone calls. Your desk phone may be on divert to your work or personal mobile number for colleagues to contact you. Staff are discouraged from sharing their personal phone number to support work activities.

6. Maintaining contact with Colleagues

Loneliness, disconnect and isolation are common problems in remote working. You should establish ways to connect with your colleagues during the working day.

You should maintain regular contact with your colleagues and with your manager as much as possible. Where possible this should be by phone as this level of contact is better to you than e-mail as it helps the feeling of isolation.

For example, a frequent departmental teleconference for all to check in and correspond with each other. Use systems that are in place such as Microsoft Teams, email, phone and WhatsApp.

It is important to not allow this type of socialising to become a distraction for the team.

If contact isn't maintained then you can become feeling isolated which can have negative impacts on your health and productivity. If you do feel that isolation is becoming a problem you should speak with your manager about can be done within the team to help.

Working remotely should involve you communicating more with your colleagues as they may need to understand your schedule and availability more often than when you are in the office. You don't need to write a lengthy paragraph to explain your every move, but it does mean repeating yourself.

7. Meetings

Encourage meetings to continue through means such as teleconference and video conference. Microsoft Teams allows a team video conference and teleconference function.



8. Give Yourself Time to Adjust

It can take time to adjust into working from home.

Don't be hard on yourself, there is discipline to learn when working from home as there are many distractions and attention will drift sometimes.

It is also important that you don't over work, reduce breaks or extend your hours to deliver as much or as more work than you usually produce to avoid any thoughts of suspicion of colleagues that you are not actually working.

Regular contact with colleagues helps to overcome such suspicions and you may find that you are actually more productive.

By achieving well organised daily schedules, work space, rules with family, organised breaks and contact with your colleagues then you should be able to maintain a good work-life balance and better workload

9. Take Advantage of Working from Home

Because you are working from home you can have dinner on whilst working, the washing machine can be left and washing dealt with, turn and judge your child's masterpiece drawing and you can listen to your music. It is about achieving a good work-life balance and delivering what is expected within a reasonable time frame.

10. End Your Day with a Routine

Just as you start the day with a routine, create a habit that signals the close of the working day. It may be placing dinner on and closing the workstation down 15 minutes before its ready or the time that you need to leave for domestic chores or turning on for a podcast or evening news.

