



Agile Working Policy

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AGILE WORKING POLICY

1. Introduction

All employees of eir have an assigned office location as their place of work e.g. Bianconi. However, eir recognises and embraces new ways of flexible working to facilitate the balancing of work and personal commitments of our people. This policy has been developed following consultations with the group of unions and is based on survey feedback across the company.

This policy does not apply to employees who are still within their probationary periods

An “agile worker” is a worker who is not based full time (5 days per week) in an eir office but splits their time between working from home and the office depending on business requirements and personal circumstances. The ability to both work from home and the office does not change your contract of employment and your contractual place of work remains as stated in your contract.

Becoming an agile worker is a voluntary decision and operates on an ‘opt in’ basis. However, all opt-ins to becoming an agile worker are strictly conditional on acceptance of this policy and are subject to approval by SMT.

eir aims to facilitate agile working where feasible (subject always to business requirements), to reflect the needs of staff and to create a culture where agile working is a sustainable workplace practice. In that regard, no employee will be treated differently for working from home than those that work in an office and will receive appropriate support from management to assist remote working. Furthermore, all employees will have the same access to training and career development and be subject to the same appraisal policies as comparable colleagues working in the office.

It is important for you to familiarise yourself with this policy as it sets out eir’s approach to agile working as well as practical guidelines. This policy is based on the principles that everyone naturally should focus on performance ahead of presenteeism and that people are the Company’s most valuable asset. It also is based on the principle that trust is a highly rated part of our culture and that those involved will apply common sense in their use of agile working.

It is a condition of your participation in agile working that you maintain appropriate performance standards and any applicable targets or objectives. You must also comply with any reasonable instructions that may be issued by management from time to time. Your participation in agile working is at the absolute discretion of eir, and the Company reserves the right to revoke your participation in agile working on a permanent or temporary basis and on giving you reasonable notice, require you to attend for work at the office for any reason including but not limited to poor performance standards, systems issues or other operational, technical reasons. Where the employee disputes this decision, they will be advised that they can appeal this decision through the agreed grievance procedures as appropriate however, the employee must comply with the relevant management instructions pending the outcome of any grievance process.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and both the policy and any flexible working arrangements which may be agreed remain subject to review by eir at all times.

2. Eir's Expectations

- 2.1 Subject to agreement with your line manager, staff will work from home for a minimum of 1 up to 5 days a week. Days for home working will be agreed in advance however staff will be expected to attend the office on request from your line manager and potentially, when there are team meetings, strategy sessions or business updates.
- 2.2 While all employees have the right to apply for agile working, only certain roles will be suitable to work remotely whereas others will require working from an office or other eir location. For those employees whose roles are deemed to be not suitable for remote working, the business will require that they continue to work from an office or other eir location and they may not participate in agile working e.g. field and mobile management. This will apply to employees who may change roles from one that is suitable for remote working to a role that is not suitable. Should individual circumstances change that would affect an employee's decision these can be discussed on a case by case basis with the relevant line manager.
- 2.3 We recognise that the agile working practices may need to vary from business area to business area. In all circumstances, open dialogue with your relevant line manager is required to ensure that your links with colleagues and the day-to-day operations of the business remains strong at all times.
- 2.4 Company policies e.g. performance management, disciplinary, grievance etc policies will continue to apply to your working from home in the same way as it applies when working in the office. If you are unwell when remote working, the normal sick leave notification procedures and entitlements apply.
- 2.5 Notwithstanding that your normal place of work may be at home, your contractual Headquarters shall remain as an eir office location e.g. Bianconi. Therefore, policies such as mileage and subsistence etc. will not apply to travel from your home to your office location once you are an agile worker as your home is not your HQ. If you need to travel to other locations and you depart from your home, your travel time and/or mileage (if applicable) will be calculated as per standard process.

3. Our Responsibilities

- 3.1 Customer satisfaction remains our paramount concern. When working from home, there should be no adverse effect on the level or quality of service to our colleagues or our customer. Agile workers will be expected to comply with any existing shift patterns, start and finish times as are applicable in the office.
- 3.2 Professional conduct, including data security, confidentiality and compliance with Company policies and procedures, must of course be maintained while working from home. This involves ensuring that there is no background noise audible when taking calls and that your working area is appropriately prepared for dial-in meetings/phone calls.

- 3.3 We all need to be realistic and flexible. Business needs (internal and external) may sometimes require those of us availing of agile working to come into the office or attend meetings. There may also be particular times where you need to receive or provide supervision, either for your or others' development or where particular work that is being carried out, that cannot readily be received or provided outside of the office.

4. Data Security and Equipment

- 4.1 Those of us availing of agile working need to remind ourselves of the contents of our Data Security and Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy and our Acceptable Computer Usage Policy and it is imperative to comply with these policies whether you are working at home or in the office and any other IT instructions that may be issued from time to time.
- 4.2 Arrangements must be put in place to protect confidential information, including that held on remote devices and at home. Particular care must be taken with hard copy documents. All Company documents must be disposed of in-office and not in public or private waste facilities. This is essential so that all Company-related documents, irrespective of their content, are shredded in the office. We all have a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to safeguard computer equipment from loss or damage. Company property such as IT equipment provided by the Company ("Company equipment") for the purpose of agile working should not be left unattended or open in areas outside of the Company. Company equipment must not be used by anyone other than the person who has been designated to do so, must be used for eir business only and is subject to such further operational rules as eir may put in place. Any loss or damage to Company equipment must be reported immediately to your Line Manager and IT Security. Failure to keep equipment or information secure will be considered a very serious matter and may result in disciplinary action being taken.
- 4.3 You are expected to use a secure and reliable broadband connection for all internet usage and you should never use a public Wi-Fi network for work purposes. Work should only ever be completed on a secure internet connection.
- 4.4 You should not avail of hot-spotting for your mobile to work from home.
- 4.5 Any suspected data or confidentiality breach must be reported immediately to your Line Manager, IT Security and Data Protection in accordance with existing protocols.
- 4.6 As an agile worker, you may qualify for certain tax relief on your utility bills. Further information is available from the Revenue website at <https://www.revenue.ie/en/jobs-and-pensions/eworking/index.aspx>. Please note that all taxation matters including claiming of reliefs are dependent on your personal circumstances and are entirely between yourself and Revenue. eir do not have any remit in relation to submission of such expenses.

5. Health and Safety

- 5.1 The Company is aware that it has specific duties under Health and Safety Legislation to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all employees. These duties include the employee's workspace where employees are required to work from home.
- 5.2 You must continue to follow eir's health and safety rules and regulations (<http://comet.eircom.ie/human-resources/health-safety/health-and-wellbeing.aspx>) when you are working from home and ensure that your home workspace is free of potential risks and/or hazards. Any equipment used in your home workspace, whether it is your own equipment or provided by eir, must be used in a safe and appropriate manner. If you require any assistance with the set up of your home workspace, please contact your line manager. All employees seeking to work remotely must complete the Remote Workspace Self-Assessment at Appendix 1. The company will rely on the information contained in this form in assessing your suitability to be an agile worker.
- 5.3 Any accidents or incidents that occur while you are working at home must be reported to your line manager and/or eir Health and Safety as soon as practicable.
- 5.4 It is a condition of your participation in agile working that you will engage and cooperate with eir in relation to any health and safety assessments (whether online or in person) and training that may be required from time to time.

6. Working Hours

- 6.1 You should be mindful of your working time and ensure that you take appropriate rest breaks throughout the work day and have the usual start and finish times that you would operate in the office.
- 6.2 It is imperative therefore, that each staff member working remotely sets up boundaries appropriate to them around the use of electronic communication after working hours to achieve a sufficient work life balance. You are encouraged to discuss these matters with your line manager and agree on appropriate communication times. Managers are strongly encouraged to respect normal business hours and to, as much as possible, keep communication outside of these hours to a minimum.

7. Mental Health and Stress

- 7.1 The Company acknowledges that employees working remotely may become anxious or stressed as the change in work environment may make it more difficult for employees to switch off or they may feel under increased pressure to carry out their duties

7.2 The three main psychological effects of working remotely are

- Loneliness and isolation
- Anxiety Stress and Pressure
- Depression

7.3 It is important to create a routine around your daily work schedule. This includes organising tasks and goals to mentally prepare you for the day. In consultation with your line managers, employees should set boundaries in relation to what can be achieved for the day and try not to extend their workload beyond that.

7.4 You should ensure that you take scheduled breaks including breaks away from all forms of digital screens. This also includes time for physical activity such as going for a walk or bicycle ride. Exercising for 20 or 30 minutes a day can significantly reduce anxiety levels.

7.5 Any employee working remotely who feels anxiety, stress, loneliness or depression can contact the EAP services for advice and assistance.

8. Policy Review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in line with changes in the law (including but not limited to public health guidance in relation to the workplace), relevant case law and other developments such as government guidelines through public consultation.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

1. **Communicate**

The agreed approach to agile working must be signed off with your line manager.

2. **Be organised**

Plan your work and make sure you have secure access to necessary documents.

Make sure work is kept confidential.

You will need a suitable workspace which is secure and free from distraction

Forward your office phone to your mobile or home number

Actively communicate your whereabouts to those you work with

3. **Customer service remains paramount**

Treat as a normal working day - if you work shifts, this means following the required shift times as you would have if you were in the office.

There should be no reduction in customer service standards or in your obligations to your team and colleagues.

Don't leave your teams short staffed, or expect colleagues to cover your matters

4. **Be as available and flexible as if you were in the office**

There may be times when you may have to come into the office on a pre-planned work from home day either for team meetings or other unexpected events

5. **Make it work for you and your team**

It is a collective responsibility to make sure that teams are adequately represented in the office at all times

Be a role model in how you use this opportunity

6. **Above all, use your judgement**

Trust is the single most important factor to make this work for everyone

