**Home working: hints and tips**

**Practical steps**

* Please take your laptop and charger home today.
* Check you can log in, access the intranet and applications and systems you need. If you need help, contact the IT help desk on 0800 917 5148
* If you have a workplace adjustment at your main place of work, and require a workplace adjustment to work remotely, you should discuss your individual needs with your manager and decide on the best way forward together.
* The chances are you will need access to wifi to keep in touch with your teams and manage email. Again, if you do not have wifi access please speak with your manager regarding other options available to you. Some of you will be able to use your work smart phone to create a secure hotspot that can be used to connect remotely. A Personal Hotspot lets you share the mobile data connection of your phone (Wi-Fi) when you don’t have access to a Wi-Fi network. Typically, you can tether to your work or personal phone by going to your settings and opting for a password protected option

For line managers, a few reminders and recommendations:

* As is the usual policy for managing staff working from home, there is an expectation to contact each of your staff at least once a week by telephone or Skype.
* We advise putting in a team telephone call once or twice a week. This will give everyone a chance to catch up with the progress of work across their team.
* To support your team’s wellbeing when working from home (see the Be Well section below), we recommended dedicating time during these catch up calls for your staff to share more personal or social updates, given your team won’t have the opportunity to keep in touch as easily.

**Making the most of Skype and telephone calls**

Many of us have Skype on our laptops, which means we can join meetings remotely, have video calls and ‘chat’ with colleagues through instant messenger (also available on Google based systems). However some colleagues do not have access to Skype and you may need to set up a teleconference with dial in details for everyone instead.

There’s lots of information, videos and guides on the [Smarter Working intranet page](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-us/smarter-working/) to help you get the most from Skype including:

* [‘Top 10 tips’ for using Skype](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/documents/2017/10/top-ten-tips-for-using-skype.docx)
* [How to set up a meeting](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WUe59-aWI8&feature=youtu.be)
* [How to share content with meeting attendees](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MpqcXAdx0k&feature=youtu.be)
* [Managing participant roles in a meeting](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQpQEDYskrc&feature=youtu.be)
* [Using interactive features](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8xbgad2q_Q&feature=youtu.be)

For teleconferences, you will also want to think about how the format of your meeting may need to change to work best. For example you might want to shorten the length, reduce the cast list and be really clear about the agenda for discussion. Please try to avoid having unnecessary calls with large groups where appropriate.

**Be Well**

Working remotely can be great, it allows you to work flexibly and avoid your commute. But it might also feel lonely if you’re on your own, and can be awkward if your remote working location is not set up as an office.

Here are a few tips to help you take care of your wellbeing.

* Use Skype/instant messenger/telephones to keep in touch with your colleagues. It doesn’t need to be for any reason other than to say ‘hi….how are you getting on?’. If **you’re feeling a little down, let your manager or colleagues know**
* If you’re working at home, if you can take a short walk before you start (subject to wider guidance as it develops) and when you finish to separate your work and personal lives.
* Take regular breaks, and, whilst taking into account wider advice on social distancing, you may want to take a short walk to get some air.
* Make sure you set your computer up safely and comfortable to support your back. You can find the Display Screen Equipment posture check [here](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/guidance/fire-health-safety/display-screen-equipment-workstation-support/).
* Just because you have your laptop at home, doesn’t mean you need to answer emails into the night! Set boundaries for your working day, decide in advance when you’re switching your laptop on and when it will go off.

**What about security?**

When you’re working in a non-office environment, it’s even more important to take care of your equipment and information.

* Look after your laptops and smartphones at all times. They contain sensitive data, so don’t leave them unattended in a public space. It’s annoying, but not as awkward as explaining why you lost your equipment. Always lock them or turn them off when you aren’t using them, and store them as securely as you can when at home
* Don’t accidentally share sensitive material – conversations are easily overheard, so be aware of your surroundings and who might be listening when you’re on the phone
* Don’t keep any passwords written down with your devices

In the unlikely event that you’re involved in a security incident, lose any work materials or equipment, please email security for help, let your line manager know straight away and [report a data loss using this form](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/guidance/security/report-a-security-incident/reporting-a-data-incident/).