

 West Mercia POLICE		POLICY/ PROCEDURE
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY TITLE	Agile Working
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP213
Version	1.0

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	BUSINESS SERVICES
BUSINESS AREA	PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	August 2023
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	August 2024
RISK RATING	LOW
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy.
Please e-mail policiesandprocedures@westmercia.police.uk

1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

This policy and procedure set out the approach by West Mercia Police to agile working for our police officers and police staff. It is intended to cover informal, discretionary working arrangements which may be varied and/or withdrawn by the force at any time. For formal and permanent changes to working arrangements, please see the separate Flexible Working policy.

Any form of agile working must meet the operational and business needs of the organisation.

Where agile working is permitted, officers and staff must be available to attend their workplace at any time as required.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

Here at West Mercia Police, we recognise the need and support for the development of our agile working to provide the best possible service to the public whilst delivering our force plan and our organisational values and priorities.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure a fair, consistent, and timely approach to our agile ways of working in accordance with force policies and current legislation. It sets out the conditions on which agile working will be allowed and the rules that apply to all officers and staff who must comply with this policy.

Breach of the rules set out in this policy is treated as a misconduct matter in accordance with the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 (as amended from time to time) and the Police Staff Misconduct Policy and may result in formal disciplinary action being taken. A serious breach of this policy may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

3.0 DEFINITION

Both agile working and flexible working are becoming more common in organisations. We recognise that they are similar in many ways and often interchangeable. Therefore, we want to clearly define what we mean.

Agile working: An agile working arrangement is an informal working arrangement which allows an individual to split their working time between the workplace and an agreed remote working location, which may include their home.

Flexible working: Eligible officers and police staff may request permanent flexible working arrangements. This may involve changing the number of hours they work, the times they work, the location or a combination of all three.

Both agile and flexible working can enable individuals to better manage the changing demands of work and to balance this with personal commitments and interests.

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 Introduction

Through the provisions of agile working West Mercia Police will ensure individuals are skilled, equipped and enabled to work smarter, safer, effectively, and efficiently together in support of the organisation and putting our public first.

4.2 How Agile Working will work in West Mercia Police

- Agile working arrangements will differ depending upon the nature of the individual's role, their team, duties, and responsibilities and so are discretionary and subject to agreement in writing with their line manager.
- Any agile working arrangement is subject to the individual spending a minimum number of days of their working time each week working from their workplace. The individual's remaining working time may be worked from their workplace or an agreed remote working location. This is necessary to ensure that service delivery has the required site coverage for the relevant days that their services are provided for example Monday to Friday.
- The days and times worked from the individual's workplace and their remote working location are subject to agreement with their line manager and may vary to accommodate the needs of the organisation and providing a service to the public.
- All agile working arrangements are subject to a requirement for the individual to attend the workplace when required/agreed to do so. West Mercia do not have any contracts where there is purely 'Home working'. This may be for a meeting, to attend training or to be part of the team environment.
- All agile working arrangements are subject to ongoing review and may be modified at any time for reasons such as a change in service needs or performance concerns.
- Agile working arrangements agreed in accordance with this policy are discretionary and may be terminated at any time. If the individual wants to permanently change their contractual working arrangements so that they work from a remote working location for part of their working week, they must make a flexible working request in accordance with the Flexible Working policy.

4.3 Who Agile Working applies to

To support this policy and our agile working all job profiles have been categorised into one of three roles. Whilst roles have been classified, the roles make up the team. As such managers need to adopt a team approach in considering agile working to ensure an effective service delivery to our public and to our officers and staff. The classification has been endorsed by the relevant Head of Department, the lead Chief Officer, and ratified by all Chief Officers. The same process will apply to new roles and any subsequent changes. Please find the three role definitions and information in the following table.

Ensure you are aware of your current job profile – role category and use the following table to understand how agile working may apply to this. Please note there may be exceptions and managers should ensure their teams always operate to provide an effective service delivery. If further clarity is required, please discuss with your line manager in the first instance.

Role type	Hybrid	Fixed	Field
All roles must consider our organisational priorities, putting our public first and their colleagues/team.			
Example	Finance Assistant, Business Change Officer, Corporate Communications Officer, HR Officer, IT Business Partner.	Call Handler, Customer Services, Vehicle Technician, Digital Forensic Technician, Staff Officer.	Patrol, SNT, Driver, Crime Scene Investigator, Special, PCSO.
Definition	Offers opportunity to work in an agile way i.e., to work remotely from a variety of locations.	Due to the tasks undertaken in these roles there is a requirement for fixed roles to be based at a WMP location and therefore will offer minimal opportunity to work remotely.	These are deployable roles requiring attendance out in the communities we serve or at a WMP location.
Conditions	Will still attend to their designated WMP location for part or all of their working week. This is to support working as a team and health and well-being. If working elsewhere can be recalled to this location at any time during working hours. Managers will be responsible for designing the most effective way to deliver the service and to ensure business needs are met. The proportion of time spent remote working must be discussed and agreed with line manager and this may vary from week to week depending on service delivery. If working from home, there must be a safe workspace and individuals will be responsible for this (see Agile Working Assessment Tool for further information).	Will have access to a dedicated WMP workstation and access to role specific equipment and systems. For example, if an IT system cannot be accessed remotely, evidence management or printing and/or franking/post room facilities, because the role is directly public facing. Circumstances may mean the roles are performed across other WMP sites e.g., to manage demand or as part of contingency plans. Please note, this role does not preclude the individual from occasional remote working.	Typically, this role will require being available to be deployed into the community to serve the public. Attendance will be required at WMP locations to undertake certain tasks for example to store and collect equipment and/or paperwork, to attend briefings, or custody or to interview suspects, victims, and witnesses.

4.4 Approval of agile working

Not all roles and not all jobs are suitable for agile working. An agile working arrangement is unlikely to be agreed if:

- The individual needs to be present in the workplace to perform their job (for example because it involves a high degree of personal interaction with colleagues or third parties or involves equipment that is only available in the workplace).
- Their most recent performance development review identifies any aspect of their performance as unsatisfactory.
- The individual's line manager has advised that their current standard of work is unsatisfactory.
- They have a live warning, whether relating to conduct or performance.
- They need training or supervision to deliver an acceptable quality or quantity of work.

4.4.1 The Agile Working Assessment Tool

The Agile Working Assessment Tool acts as an informal agile working arrangement and must be completed by all individuals who may work from a remote location. Please note generally this will apply to those in a hybrid role but this is not exclusive and there will be exceptions. For example, this may include occasional working from home, if on restricted duties and working from home or if this forms part of a return-to-work agreement.

The form will be completed by the individual and then submitted to the line manager to assess their suitability for working from home balanced with operational need. It will help support a fair and consistent approach to what is agreed or not agreed.

Please see the Agile Working Managers Guidance and Agile Working Employees Guidance on the intranet in Force Documents, for further information.

4.5 Health and Safety

West Mercia Police will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees while they are at work.

When working from their remote working location the individual has the same health and safety duties as other staff. It will be the duty of the employee to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, and to comply with the safety measures described in this policy / procedure; the Force Health and Safety Policy and its arrangements; and any reasonable instruction given for the purposes of ensuring safety.

4.6 Security and Confidentiality

When working away from the workplace, the employee is responsible for ensuring the security of confidential information in the remote work location and when travelling to and from the workplace. The individual must comply with all force policies/procedures, including:

- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Incident Management Procedure

When working from the remote location, the individual must:

- Comply with all relevant legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018, Computer Misuse Act 1990, Official Secrets Act 1989 or UK GDPR.
- Ensure the security of equipment, software, files, and any other information in their possession, including that information either on-screen or in paper form cannot be overlooked or accessed by third parties, and that conversations are not inadvertently overheard.
- Ensure that any official papers or information (this accounts for most of the information created or processed by the police) is secured away when not in use and that passwords and cards are kept secure.
- Shred or otherwise dispose of securely all confidential information when it is no longer required and at all times comply with the force document retention policy.

Force equipment is supplied for West Mercia Police use only and therefore must not be used for personal use by the individual (beyond what is permitted under the Reasonable Use policy) or any family members.

4.7 Appeals and termination

All decision rationales within the Agile Working Assessment Tool must be clearly documented in the form. If an individual does not agree with the outcome of the assessment tool process, the line manager will document this within the form. The form will then be sent to the second line manager for review and a decision taken and fed back to the line manager. If a further appeal is required it will need to be sent to the relevant HR Business Partner and/or Health & Safety team, where it will be reviewed, and a decision taken and fed back to the line manager.

We reserve the right to terminate the agile working arrangement, for example due to a change in organisational and service needs, performance concerns or changes to the employee's role so that agile working is no longer suitable, subject to reasonable notice.

If the employee wishes to terminate their agile working arrangement, they must give their line manager reasonable notice.

4.8 Employee obligations

When working under an agile working arrangement the individual must:

- Have a suitable working environment at their remote working location that enables them to carry out their role effectively. Please use the Agile Working Assessment Tool.
- Continue to work the hours required by their contract of employment, this may include specific core working hours that are in place to ensure effective service delivery and comply with all force policies and procedures.
- Work from their workplace as required by their line manager to ensure that service delivery has the required site coverage for the relevant days that services are provided for example Monday to Friday
- Work independently and manage their workload effectively and complete work to set deadlines.

- Adapt to new working practices, including maintaining contact with their line manager and colleagues at work.
- Ensure they attend the workplace when requested to do so.
- Identify and resolve issues or related pressures created by agile working.
- Make arrangements for the care of any children or other dependants when they are working from their remote working location.

The Agile Working Manager's Guidance and the Agile Working Employee's Guidance should be consulted for further information.

4.9 Arrangements

4.9.1 Equipment

The force will provide a laptop to enable individuals to work from their remote working location. The force will make all necessary arrangements for and bear the cost of maintaining, repairing, or replacing (where necessary) the laptop, and removing it from the Individual's remote working location. Where any equipment is provided, it remains the property of the force and individuals must:

- Ensure it is only used by them and only for the purposes for which the force have provided it
- Take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and force policies and procedures
- Make it available for collection by the force or on our behalf when requested to do so
- Not use any personal device or computer for work.

It is the Individual's responsibility to ensure that they have all other sufficient and appropriate equipment for working from their remote working location. The force are not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement or repair of any personal equipment used by the individual when working for the force.

4.9.2 Allowances

Where the individual has agreed with the line manager to work a pattern that would normally attract an allowance or enhancement, to support an individual's work/life balance, which is different from the core requirements of the role and the individual's contractual hours (for example, a local agreement that would attract irregular hours payment or night rate) individuals will not be entitled to receive the increased allowance or enhancement, unless otherwise stated in the original contract of employment and required due to business need. Any formal changes to working hours should be submitted via a Flexible Working Request.

4.9.3 Personal security

When travelling between locations or working at non-police or partner locations, the individual should be vigilant when carrying force equipment, such as laptops etc., and not display or use them in circumstances where they may be putting themselves at risk.

If the individual is working on their own at any police site or other location, they must make sure someone is aware of their location and always be vigilant to ensure their personal safety.

If working from home, the individual must not give out their home details (address, telephone number), to people they interact with through work related activities. This is important to ensure their personal safety and security. It also plays an important part in promoting a healthy work/life balance and in projecting a professional, corporate image.

4.9.4 Property Risks and Liability Insurance

Computers, telephones, and any other items of equipment supplied by the force for the purposes of our roles will be covered by the force's insurance policy including circumstances where the equipment causes damage to the employee's home. West Mercia Police will replace equipment if it's broken, lost, or stolen, except, in circumstances where the individual is found to have been negligent; for example, (i) a laptop computer stolen because it was left on the back seat of a car (which it shouldn't be) (ii) equipment or property is damaged caused by children/pets or other non-West Mercia Police personnel whilst in the individuals possession. In this instance the individual may be required to replace the equipment on a like for like basis.

The force's assets (both IT and information) should not be at any greater risk in the individuals' home than those housed at police premises. Therefore, the individual must ensure that the general security of their home is adequate to store police assets issued to them and they should consider identifying a secure drawer or cabinet in their home in which assets can be stored when not in use.

If the individual is regularly working from home, it is their responsibility to ensure their own home building and insurance policies are valid. Although unlikely, the individual will be responsible for any additional premium incurred as a result.

4.9.5 Utility bills and tax

The force will not reimburse individuals for utility costs incurred whilst working at home such as heating, lighting, and broadband. It is anticipated the individual will make savings in travel costs by adopting agile working and reducing the number of times they travel to and from their normal place of work.

4.9.6 Mileage

It is important that individuals manage their travel and limit this in order to promote the environmental benefits of agile working.

The default base will be the individual's contractual base location, and this is the base that needs to be used in relation to mileage claims. Further details can be found in the [Travel and Subsistence policy](#)

5.0 CONSULTATION

The following have been consulted during the formulation of this document:

Business Lead/ Chief Officer Consulted	Date Consulted
P&OD BP	16 November 2022
Health & Safety	17 November 2022
Legal	25 November 2022, 6 & 20 March, 26 April 2023, May and

UNISON	17 November 2022
Federation	17 November 2022
Information and Security Manager	18 November 2022
Information Compliance Manager	1 December 2022
Future Ways of Working Strategic Lead - RHL	March 2022
Critical Friends	3 April 2022

6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Date of Approval / Adoption
Jul 2023	E.Knowles	New Policy – Delay in publishing due to minor amendments being made	JNCC 09/05/2023

7.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

This policy has been assessed with regard to an Equality Impact Assessment and H&S, Risk assessment.

Under the Equality Act (2010) reasonable adjustments will be made, as outlined in this procedure.

8.0 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a DPIA required – Yes
- If Yes – Stage 1 (this is covered as part of the DPIA for Future Ways of Working)
- Date DPIA signed off

West Mercia Police will hold data in accordance with our Records Review, Retention & Disposal Policy – Records Review, Retention and Disposal.

We will only hold data for as long as necessary for the purposes for which we collected. Victims/public should be reminded that West Mercia Police take the protection of personal data seriously as described in the privacy statement.

9.0 MONITORING / EVALUATION

This protocol will be reviewed annually by or on behalf of the owner to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

10.0 GOVERNING FORCE POLICY

This details the related force policies or related procedures:

- Flexible Working policy and procedure
- Flexible Retirement
- Flexible Working Request
- Flexi-time Working Hours
- Clear Desk and Screen procedures
- Force Health & Safety policy
- Health & Safety.