

Tusla Child and Family Agency

Blended Working Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Blended working in Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, reflects the implementation of government policy that home and remote working should be the norm for 20% of approximately 350,000 public sector employees. It will also enable the Agency to provide for the proposed statutory entitlement of every employee to request the right to work remotely. The approach to implementation of blended working arrangements in TUSLA will reflect our values and behaviours of trust, respect, kindness, and empowerment.
- 1.2. The implementation of blended working in TUSLA will at its fundamental starting point focus on the organisational needs of the Agency. At its core, the provision of services by Tusla is by public facing service delivery. Tusla is committed to excellence in the delivery of our broad range of services to children and families and to the quality of our service. In this context, the Tusla Blended Working Policy sets out how we can implement blended working while maintaining our commitment to the delivery of the highest standard of public services directly to citizens who need our services.
- 1.3. Blended working will now become part of the flexible working policies such as job sharing and the shorter working year scheme, which have been successfully implemented. Similar to existing policies, it will be a matter of choice for the employee if they wish to apply for blended working and similar to these policies, be reviewed on a specific period basis.

2. Blended Working Definition

- 2.1. Blended working is a combination of office based/on-site and remote working which can be undertaken at home, in a hub or alternative office-based location.
- 2.2. Blended working, where consistent with the organisational needs of the Agency and where a role is deemed suitable, enables Tusla (subject to certain criteria) to offer a choice to an employee of the location where their role will be undertaken. While it does not change the nature of the role or the substantive duties to be carried out by the employee, it will require all employees to be more flexible in the undertaking of their duties both in the remote and office-based environment.
- 2.3. Unless otherwise specified, a blended working agreement does not alter the fundamental employer/employee relationship. In accepting a blended working agreement, the employee accepts the criteria and rules applying in the Tusla Child and Family Agency Policy.
- 2.4. Blended working does not alter the right of Tusla to assign employees to their roles and grades. Unless otherwise specified, all existing HR policies continue to apply to employees who are approved for blended working

3. Policy objectives

3.1. The key objectives of this Blended Working Policy are to:

- Ensure, as the primary objective, the continuity and further development of high-quality services to Children and Families served by the Agency.
- Enable Tusla to formulate tailored blended working approaches that best meet service needs and the needs of their employees.
- Reflect the importance and benefits which accrue to all employees through attendance in the workplace which facilitates teamwork, mentoring, coaching, induction, sharing knowledge and socialising with colleagues.
- Ensure that Tusla remains an employer of choice by widening talent pools with potential access to blended working options.
- Support employee engagement, innovation, and productivity by providing options for additional flexibility, complementing the existing suite of flexible working options the Agency currently provides (e.g. Shorter Working Year, Career Breaks, Job-sharing etc.), and by offering options for reduced commutes and improved work life balance for all employees.
- Further leverage the roll-out and implementation of digital technology in the way we work, thereby supporting government and EU policy in relation to digital public services.
- Support the new Public Sector Decarbonisation Strategy, which has set a public sector decarbonisation target of at least 7350% by 2030.
- Deliver economic benefits by aligning with some of the aims of *Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025*, and wider Project Ireland 2040 objectives for sustainable regional, rural and urban development.
- Take a holistic view and focus on rethinking the three components of **Process, People and Place**, within the overall objective of service delivery, by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.
- Examine the suitability of services to be delivered, reflecting the need for attendance at existing workplaces and/or remotely, in a blended working environment.
- Examine the people aspects of blended service delivery.
- Examine infrastructural and systems support required to enable blended service delivery.

4. Key Principles - Supporting Tusla Organisational Needs and Service Delivery

4.1. The blended working model will have as its core the delivery of high-quality services by Tusla the Child and Family Agency and should not, in its implementation, affect the delivery of services but should seek to improve service delivery.

- 4.2. Blended working presents an opportunity to meet organisational needs in a new way of working; to enhance service delivery; build upon the 'digital first' approach to service improvement; enhance Tusla as an employer of choice, improve staff engagement, underpin business continuity, and improve the performance of our Agency.
- 4.3. Access to blended working will not be an automatic entitlement, nor will an employee be entitled to retain a blended working arrangement where the role, function, or task and/or individual is no longer deemed suited to blended working.

5. Employer of Choice

- 5.1. Within Tusla, the Child and Family agency we have regard to wellbeing, work-life balance/integration and the need for a safe and productive working environment. TUSLA continues to be an inclusive and progressive employer that is responsive to the needs and preferences of its workforce, through its employment policies and practices. Implementing blended working aligns with our strategic priority to 'Be an Employer of Choice', offering an environment where talented people choose to work and choose to stay.

6. Safety, Health and Welfare

- 6.1. The health and safety of all employees is of paramount importance. Both the employer and employee have responsibilities in this area.
- 6.2. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, we have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of our employees. This applies regardless of the location where the work is being carried out, whether it is at the employer's premises, a hub or shared workspace, other remote locations or the employee's home. Line Managers need to consult with their employees to satisfy themselves that the employee's workstation and equipment are suitable for their work, to determine if there are any specific risks regarding working remotely and to provide any information, training, support, or instruction required. This includes that a risk assessment, including an assessment of equipment and ergonomics, is to be carried out (details of this process are outlined in Appendix III). Tusla must take appropriate protective and preventative measures following on from that risk assessment, including following up to ensure the necessary amendments have been made to mitigate any identified risks.
- 6.3. Tusla's obligations to our employees in relation to the facilitation of blended working are set out in this Blended Working Policy. Tusla will comply with our obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act.

- 6.4. In approving any application for blended working, line managers must be satisfied that a home/hub work location, so far as is reasonably practicable, meets the safety, health and welfare obligations for their employees.

7. Supports

- 7.1. Supporting and managing employees in a blended working environment

- 7.2. Flexibility on the part of both Line Managers and staff are central to blended working policies.

- Blended working provides line managers and employees with the benefits of office based and remote working. It should not, of itself, require changes in existing approaches to managing employees. Blended working will require greater support from line managers for employees to enable them to understand procedures and expectations.
- The arrangements will need to work with business cycles, work priorities, performance achievement and management of services.
- Employees who have been approved for a blended working arrangement will be required to attend the office at regular intervals. In addition, employees on blended working arrangements will attend the office, if requested to do so by their line manager.
- As an application for blended working is assessed in the context of a specific role, should an employee move roles, it is not guaranteed that they will be afforded the blended working arrangements in their new role and an employee will have to reapply, in respect of their new role.
- Shared workspace arrangements will be part of the blended working environment and dedicated offices/desks/workspaces may no longer be provided.
- Work carried out remotely must be capable of being measured and be based on deliverables/outputs so that performance can be effectively monitored. The move to blended working will require line managers to assist employees in prioritising work and a more focused set of key performance indicators to support teams operating in a blended working environment.
- The Performance Achievement System in Tusla underpins our management approach and the development of Tusla's People Strategy will further enhance our Performance Achievement System implementation to meet the different challenges presented by the implementation of blended working.
- Senior management and line managers are expected to facilitate blended working where practical and ensure that employees are suitably equipped through the relevant training and supports to effectively carry out their role remotely and to successfully manage distributed teams.

- Tusla leadership must continue to drive an inclusive ‘digital first’ approach for employee communication, training and service delivery in order to increase flexibility, overcome logistical challenges and ensure equitable access and treatment for employees whether working from work premises or remotely.
- Line managers have a central role in ensuring the implementation of an effective system of blended working and in supporting and developing employees through strong communications and employee inclusivity; the role of the line manager is key in overseeing and ensuring individual accountability and effective performance management.
- To facilitate task coordination, employees are asked to engage in proactive availability whereby each employee takes responsibility for identifying difficulties and notifying others on the team; this ensures that time management and scheduling can be effectively organised within the team.
- Greater use of project and task management tools will be provided to assist employees and line managers assess progress in the achievement of key work elements.
- Regular, targeted, effective and personalised two-way communication is essential so that line managers can keep employees informed and ensure issues are identified and addressed in a timely manner.
- Line managers and employees will be kept fully informed and enabled to seek clarification or provide feedback in real-time. Corporate Employee Relations will be available to provide clarification and guidance at: Corporateemployeerelations@tusla.ie
- Meeting participation rules and guidelines for blended workers, including expectations and etiquette around remote meetings must be clearly defined.

8. Health and Wellbeing

- The health and wellbeing of all Tusla employees is paramount. HR and line managers will consider issues that may be impacting employees while working remotely, such as the feeling of isolation, maintaining a work-life balance etc. Employees also have a personal responsibility to manage their own health, both physical and mental. Supports, including those available through the Employee Assistance Programme, should be provided as required. Employees will be made aware of the supports available to them. Communication tools to reach all employees whether office, remote or hub based should be deployed.
- For many, blended working is a new concept. It is important to keep structures and routines in place so that employees stay motivated and productive. For those who are not used to working remotely, it can take some time to adapt to the new work environment.
- Sustaining working relationships is extremely important. This will require additional effort, both by line managers and employees, to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to ensure all members of the team are kept fully informed and kept up to date on issues that may impact on them. Line managers must be attuned to the variances which may occur in the level of engagement by

team members and facilitate those working remotely to maintain a sense of belonging.

- Employees should access the Employee Health & Wellbeing section in the hub. The EAP service is available 24/7 1800 817 435 and eap@tusla.ie
[Health, Wellbeing and EAPTusla - Child and Family Agency eap@tusla.ie](#)

9. Learning and Development and On-line Learning Platforms

- A key focus will be placed on learning and development as an enabler of effective performance in a blended working environment.
- The ability to manage teams effectively in a blended working environment will be a critical skill. Recognising this, learning and development programmes will be prepared and provided to line managers
- Customised training and development supports will be developed to support line managers in adapting to the changing environments and assist them in talent management and supporting their employees through performance management processes. This will be further supported through design and implementation of our People Strategy.

10. Infrastructure and support

- One of the key objectives of the Tusla Blended Working Policy is to further leverage, over time, the roll-out and implementation of digital technology in the way we work, thereby supporting government and EU policy in relation to digital public services.
- Where the costs of facilitating blended working are prohibitive Tusla will reserve the right to refuse same.

11. Expenses

- 11.1. There is no provision for the payment of expenses relating to working remotely. However, it is open to employees to make claims directly from Revenue in respect of actual costs incurred in working from home at the end of the relevant tax year, in accordance with the relevant tax laws. Any claim in this regard, is solely a matter for the individual concerned.

12.Travel expenses

- 12.1 Revenue rules regarding travel expenses continue to apply. An employee's base, for the purposes of travel and subsistence, continues to remain their office location. For avoidance of doubt, no payment of travel expenses will be made for travel from home to normal office location and the terms and conditions set out in the National Financial Regulations for travel and subsistence will apply.

13.Equipment

- 13.1 All equipment, provided by Tusla to support a blended working arrangement, remains the property of Tusla and should only be used for work purposes. Employees will be expected to safeguard this equipment and return same immediately to the Agency should the blended working arrangement cease. The equipment/resources required can be identified as part of the risk assessment process detailed in Appendix III.

Such equipment may include:

- IT equipment for example monitor, keyboard, mouse.
- A headset if dealing with frequent phone calls.
- Suitable and appropriate office furniture as identified during the employee's ergonomic assessment. Ergonomic assessment should be carried out by a competent and trained party.
- Work phone.
- Adequate stationary.
- Desk/ Chair
- Printer where deemed applicable

14. Implementing Blended Working

14.1. Scope

In developing the balance of workplace attendance and remote working, in either a hub or at home, Tusla will consider a consistent application across the organisation but will also obviously have to reflect the objective individual functional and operational requirements of each role, reflecting roles where physical presence is

essential. On an individual basis, the capacity of each employee to undertake blended working, will also have to be objectively assessed, in addition to suitability of the role. This will include an assessment of logistical requirements including the quality of broadband connectivity and the need to ensure full compliance with data protection and health and safety requirements. In addition, such an assessment, will include the capability and experience of the employee, and for employees who are new to the organisation and still need to build relationships and learn about the organisation itself. Each application for blended working will be for a maximum period of 12 months and will be subject to a half yearly interim review.

15. Attendance Patterns

- 15.1. Where a blended working application is approved, it is considered that the number of office working days, in any single week, will be (three) days or as agreed with your line manager. However, each application and the appropriate office attendance will have to be considered on an individual basis giving due consideration to functional and team requirements. Flexibility on attendance days can be applied i.e., different days of attendance can be rotated, on a weekly/fortnightly basis.
- 15.2. Where employees are already engaged in work sharing or similar policies, an application for blended working must be considered, in conjunction, with the agreed office attendance requirements.
- 15.3. Specific days of workplace attendance and remote working will be determined by line managers and will be fixed for a minimum period of six months (or earlier if required) and agreed with the employee. Any change to this will be the subject of four weeks' notice and subject to discussion and agreement between the employee and employer. An exception to this would be where an emergency or exceptional circumstances arise and dictates that it is necessary for the blended working arrangement to be terminated with immediate effect. The manager will consult with the employee in such circumstances.
- 15.4. The move to blended working will not, of itself, change existing hours of attendance.

16. Blended Working Agreement

- 16.1. Blended Working Agreement will be put in writing. A sample template document will be developed (available from Tusla HR). Dedicated HR support will be

provided by regional HR managers and by Corporate Employee Relations at Corporateemployeerelations@tusla.ie

- 16.2. Terms and conditions of employment are not altered by virtue of blended working.
- 16.3. Existing contractual arrangements will continue to apply to employees under blended working arrangements, including the application of all policies and procedures.

17. Location

- 17.1. It will be solely a matter for Tusla to determine the locations from which blended working will operate. The application of blended working requires that the employee must remain available, whilst working remotely; to attend the workplace at short notice, therefore the remote working location must facilitate this and working remotely outside of the island of Ireland will not be permitted. Where remote hubs are utilised, these will be determined by Tusla.

18. Assessing Blended Working requests

- 18.1. Objective assessments will be undertaken to provide advice to all employees on those services and functions that are required to be carried out on-site or in the office. All applications for blended working will be considered in a fair and equitable manner.
- 18.2. **Right to request** – employees will have the right to request the option of blended working within Tusla. Decisions around access to blended working, should be based on objective and clearly defined eligibility criteria to determine whether both the role and the individual applying are suitable for blended working.
- 18.3. **Right to refuse** - employers will have the right to refuse blended working arrangements and will retain the right to require employees to attend the workplace having regard to service needs and or ‘business grounds’. as set out in Heading 12 of the Draft Scheme of the Right to Request Remote Working Bill 2022. However, it is important to note that the list of these grounds are not exhaustive. The employer has full discretion to rely on grounds that are specific to their business.
- 18.4. vices and specific tasks and activities cannot be delivered remotely. Availability and patterns of blended working will be based on service needs and the suitability of the role at any point in time, which may be subject to change should needs dictate. Access to blended working, will not be an automatic entitlement, nor will an employee be entitled to retain a blended working arrangement where the role, function, or task and/or individual is no longer deemed suited to blended working.

- 18.5. **An evolving policy** – blended working policies will continue to develop to reflect the impact of new ways of working across the Agency and the development of our Tusla People Strategy.

19. Process for Applications

- 19.1. Tusla employees will have the right to apply for blended working within Tusla Applications for blended working will be assessed by your line manager and based on the suitability of a role, function, task and applicant for blended working.
- 19.2. Existing approaches to Personal Development Plans can be modified, to allow for blended working assessment, within the existing planning and review processes.
- 19.3. Further to the agreement by the employee and the line manager to the feasibility of a blended working approach, as part of the PDP, the employee will need to submit a Blended Working Application Form to their line manager.

20. Assessment

- 20.1. Requests for blended working will be assessed and approved by your line manager on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to the operational needs of Tusla. Decisions will consider the role and the employee's suitability for blended work. At all times the needs of the Agency are primary in the decision.
- 20.2. The following factors should be considered by line managers in their evaluation of the appropriateness of a blended working arrangement.

21. Suitability of Position

- 21.1. Criteria to be included in the assessment of position suitability may include, but shall not be limited to:
- The organisation and service needs continue to be delivered to the same level and capacity as the existing on-site workplace environment.
 - The role must have responsibilities that can be, at any given time, conducted from a remote location without affecting service quality or organisational operations.
 - The operational needs of Tusla can be met regardless of the location of the employee.
 - The role can be undertaken off-site without disruption to the flow of work and communication (e.g., availability by phone and email, websites, shared servers can be accessed remotely).

- Full and effective participation in meetings can be done, via phone and corporate tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams) without hindering in-office employees' ability to conduct meetings and communicate efficiently and effectively.
- The need to access physical files, specialist equipment, customer facing services, requirement to attend physical meetings, etc.
- The need to access technologies/equipment accessible only on-site.
- Front facing service delivery, which requires, attendance at the employer premises.
- Performance of tasks that are more efficiently carried out on-site.
- Ability to ensure that remote working can be undertaken in a cyber and data secure environment.

22. Suitability of Applicant

22.1. Criteria to be included in the assessment of individual suitability may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Satisfactory performance.
- Ability to prioritise and manage time/workload effectively with minimal direction/oversight.
- Satisfactory compliance with time and attendance policy and procedures.
- Demonstrates delivery of results.
- Is not the subject of an ongoing disciplinary process or hold a live record of disciplinary action on file (e.g. no current disciplinary sanction in place or in process)
- Has successfully completed induction.
- Meets health and safety requirements as detailed in Appendix II.

23. Suitability of Location

23.1. Blended working is not solely limited to working from home. Consideration should be given to remote working hubs and suitable alternative office bases for blended working. Remote working hubs will also provide opportunities for socialisation with colleagues. For employers, remote working hubs offer the chance to have their employees working closer to their homes but still within an office environment.

23.2. Criteria to be included in the assessment of location suitability may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Home, hub, or alternative office-based location.
- Availability of reliable high speed broadband accessibility (see Appendix II).
- Health and safety risk assessment, as detailed in Appendix III.

- Equipment requirements etc.
- Costs associated with the provision of equipment and workstation setup.
- Insurance.

24. Designated Workstation

- 24.1. Tusla will provide office-based shared facilities and equipment for blended workers with shared workstations and hot desks for employees to use when they are required to attend the office.
- 24.2. Equipment and electronic network requirements for any blended working arrangement shall be decided upon, on an individual basis, prior to undertaking a blended working situation.

25. Health & Safety Assessment

- 25.1. Each employee's remote working environment will be different, whether it is the individual, the type of work to be carried out, workstation location or equipment required. Employers are required to ensure an assessment of an employee's workstation is carried out. The process for this is outlined in Appendix III.

26. Decision Making

- 26.1. The approval of each blended working situation shall be at the discretion of management. Decisions, around access to blended working, should be made based on objective and clearly defined eligibility criteria, to determine whether both the role and the individual applying are suitable for blended working. Decisions on applications for blended working, including the grounds for refusal, should be provided in writing to the applicant by their Line manager within 6 weeks of date of application.
- Blended working arrangements, should be facilitated, where it is economically and operationally feasible to do so. Service delivery and performance must be maintained. All blended working must be balanced with the requirement to provide the most effective and efficient services to the public.
 - The wider impact of blended working on team performance and the business needs of the organisation must always be considered.
 - To ensure, fairness and equity to all employees on an ongoing basis, blended working will not be indefinitely guaranteed to any employee, as rotation may be required, in order to support employee mobility, career development and the overall needs of the organisation.

- Blended working is not a replacement for other flexible working arrangements to meet caring responsibilities. Blended working must not be used in place of annual or sick leave.

27. Refused Applications – Employee’s Right to Request a Review

- 27.1. Where an application is refused and unsatisfied with the outcome of a request for a blended working arrangement, they may address it through the relevant grievance procedure.

28. Review of Blended Working Arrangements

- 28.1. Regular reviews will be used to monitor the effectiveness of blended working arrangements and any impact on service delivery standards for the organisation and individual employees undertaking blended working. All blended working arrangements will be reviewed on a half yearly basis, or more frequently should a need arise, to ensure that such arrangements continue to meet Agency needs, while also ensuring, such arrangements are fairly distributed amongst the team as far as is practicable.

29. Relevant Legislation

- 29.1. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005)
- 29.2. Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act (2005), employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees. This duty includes the employee’s workspace where employees, are working remotely.
- 29.3. Key duties that apply to the work activity and workspace include ensuring that:
- Managing and conducting all work activities to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare of employees
 - Providing safe systems of work that are planned, organised, and maintained
 - Assessing risks and implementing appropriate control measures
 - Providing safe equipment including personal protective equipment, where necessary

- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees
- Having plans in place for emergencies

29.4. Employee Duties

Employees, have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by the work they are doing.

Employees must:

- Co-operate with their employer and follow their instructions.
- Protect themselves and others from harm, during the course of their work, for example, take care of any equipment provided and report any defects immediately to the employer.
- Report any injury arising from work activity to their employer immediately.
- Follow procedures that have been put in place by their employer.

29.5. Employer Duties

As an employer there are a number of duties set down in this regulation, the key requirements are to:

- Carry out an analysis or risk assessment of employee workstations
- Provide information to employees in relation to measures which have been implemented
- Provide training to employees in the use of workstations before commencing work with display screen equipment and whenever the organisation of the workstation is modified
- Perform a further analysis or risk assessment where an employee transfers to a new workstation or significant new work equipment, change of equipment or new technology is introduced at an individual's workstation
- Ensure that the provision of an appropriate eye and eyesight test is made available to every employee

- 29.6. Regulation 72 of the above regulations outlines the minimum requirement for all display screen equipment which is outlined :
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/General_Application_Regulations/Display_Screen_Equipment_.html)

30. The Working Time Directive and the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997

- 30.1. The Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 places a duty on the employer to maintain full working time records and in the absence of those records and properly monitoring

working time; the employer will be liable for any breach - not only start and finish times but includes recording breaks and rest periods. Therefore, for remote working employees, Tusla will ensure we have and maintain the usage of adequate systems for recording working time across all employees through IT systems. (including a record of people's working patterns, including their breaks and rest periods.)

31. Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Right to Disconnect (2021)

- 31.1. On 1 April 2021, the Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Right to Disconnect came into effect. Tusla will implement a Right to Disconnect Policy, to encourage and support employees in balancing their working and personal lives. The policy, will include best practice guidance around wellbeing, working hours and the use of technology.

32. Appendix I – Draft Blended Working Application Form

Prior to Application

Employees are asked to read and familiarise themselves with Tusla's Blended Working Policy.

Employees are asked to confirm that they have access to reliable high-speed broadband in the proposed blended working location(s).

Employees are asked to complete the Blended Working Application Form attached and submit to their line manager.

Employees are asked to confirm that they are aware that they will be required to complete health and safety training and assess the suitability of their blended working location, via the Health and Safety Risk Assessment.

Post Application Submission - The employee may be asked to clarify certain items/issues.

Post Application Response - The employee must complete health and safety training and assess the suitability of their blended working location, via the Health and Safety Risk Assessment.

Line Manager Decision - The line manager is required to communicate the decision to the employee.

Post Application Decision (following health and safety assessment) -The employee has the right to request a review of a decision.



Blended Working Application Form

Step 1: Employee Action. Complete information **and** send to your Line Manager (via email).

Employee Name:	enter name
Staff Number:	enter name
Proposed Start Date:	enter a date
Proposed End Date:	enter a date
Proposed Blended Working Arrangement	
Number of Days:	enter number of days
Days of week: (please note if any half days are requested)	enter days of the week
Health and Safety Risk Assessment	
Confirmation that I have completed Health & Safety Risk assessment and I am aware that before I proceed with remote working, I must discuss outputs of this with my Line Manager.	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

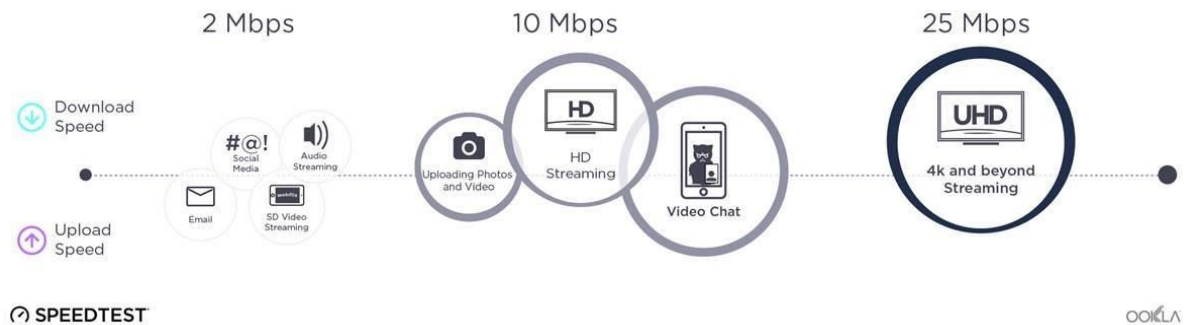
Step 2: Following Manager and Employee discussion, Manager completes and emails to employee.

Self-Risk Assessment completed and discussed: (if no, application cannot proceed)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Request Approved	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed Review Date:	enter a date	
If the above request for blended working cannot be facilitated, please state reason why: enter reason		

Step 3: Manager and employee should retain a copy of this form.
Manager provides information to Regional HR for central recording.

33. **Appendix II - Broadband Connection & Speed**

A reliable broadband connection is vital for effective home working. The following chart shows suggested capacity for common data types. In general, Microsoft Teams requires 5Mbps and email requires 2Mbps.



A wired Router connection is preferable to a Wi-Fi connection for data intensive tasks like uploading large files. Online speed tests may help identify any shortcomings and staff should contact their provider if broadband capacity does not meet requirements. TUSLA may supply a 4G SIM/phone if no adequate broadband coverage is available. If poor broadband capacity negatively affects Business operations the employee may be requested to work from their normal work base.

34. **Appendix III - Safety, Health & Welfare**

[HSA Guidance for Employers and Employees Working from Home.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

- Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees. This duty includes the employee's workspace if employees work from remotely

Key duties that apply to the work activity and workspace include:

- managing and conducting all work activities to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees
- providing safe systems of work that are planned, organised, and maintained
- assessing risks and implementing appropriate control measures
- providing safe equipment including personal protective equipment, where necessary
- providing information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees
- having plans in place for emergencies

If you are an employee working remotely, you have a responsibility to take reasonable care of yourself and other people who may be affected by the work you are doing.

Employees must:

- cooperate with their employer and follow their instructions.
- protect themselves and others from harm during the course of their work, e.g., take care of any equipment provided and report any defects immediately to the employer.
- report any injury arising from work activity to their employer immediately.
- follow procedures that have been put in place by their employer.

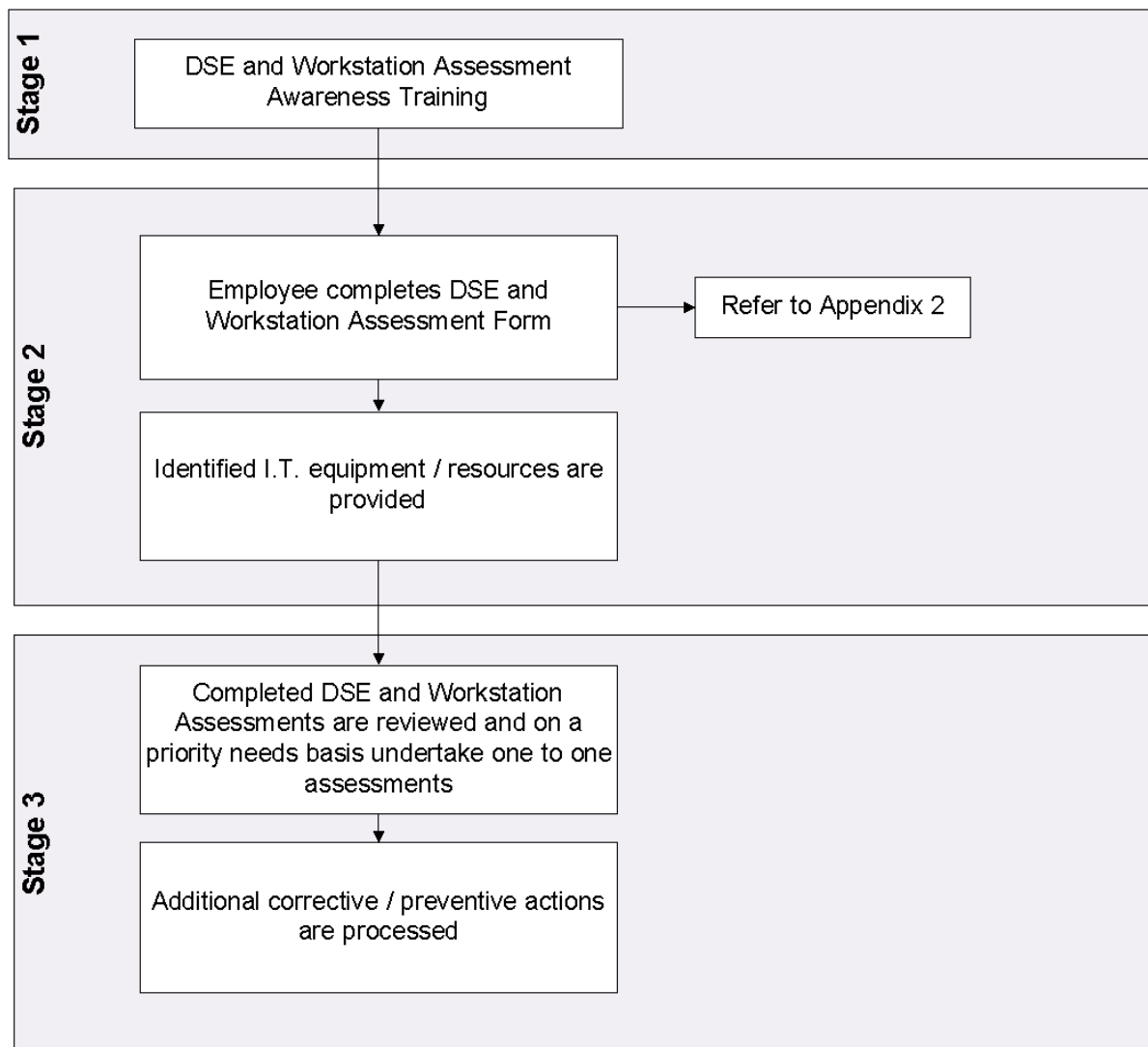
Provision of Equipment

Employers must engage with employees regarding the provision of equipment and resources in so far as is reasonably practicable. The equipment/resources employees need to work remotely can be identified and recorded as part of the risk assessment process.

Such equipment may include:

- work desk and adjustable chair.
- IT equipment, for example monitor, keyboard, mouse.
- a headset if dealing with frequent phone calls'
- work phone, and
- adequate stationery.

Health & Safety Procedure for Working Remotely



Each employee's homeworking environment will be different whether it is the individual, the type of work to be carried out, workstation location or equipment required.

Employers are required, to ensure a risk assessment of an employee's workstation, is carried out.

Stage 1: Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and Workstation Assessment Awareness Training

Online DSE and Workstation Assessment Awareness Training and guidance, on how to set up workstation to be issued to employees, to ensure employee is made aware of the risks associated with working remotely and to ensure employee is provided with instruction, on setting up the workspace, and using the equipment correctly.

Stage 2: Employee completes DSE and Workstation Assessment Form

Tusla HWEAP DSE Assessment Referral Process: <https://www.tusla.ie/health-wellbeing-and-eap/occupational-health-service/statutory-health-surveillance-assessments/>

Stage 3: Completed DSE and Workstation Assessments are reviewed and, on a priority, needs basis, a 1:1 assessment is carried out by competent ergonomic assessor.

The assessment can be done online, for example, through the use of video calls ideally with a smartphone so that the employee, can move freely around the specific work location, so as to help the assessor identify and direct the employee, to areas that need to be addressed.

Additional corrective / preventative actions are processed.

The assessor must record any specific issues identified at an employee's workspace and agree on corrective actions with the employee. Once, any corrective actions have been actioned then the homeworking assessment / checklist can be signed off by the assessor and the employee.

Guidance on Workstation Set up; follow links below

<https://tusla.sharepoint.com/sites/InternalCommunications/Documents/Health%20and%20Safety/Guidance/HSA%20Guidance%20for%20Employers%20and%20Employees%20Working%20from%20Home.pdf?cid=405c0537-ec17-418e-959a-3fdb8fe4f9ec>

Guidance on Remote Working; follow links below

HSA- Guidance on Working From Home for Employers and Employees:
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

RA35 Remote Working Risk Assessment Form; follow links below

Health & Safety Hub page:
<https://tusla.sharepoint.com/sites/home/SitePages/Health-and-Safety.aspx>