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SUTHERLAND

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# Home working - for the long haul

Need to adapt to new ways of working long term

- > Update contracts and policies to reflect the fact that homeworking is here to stay.
- > Subsidy towards the cost of working from home?
- > Diversity and inclusion – some groups have been more impacted by COVID than others. Firms need to tackle inequalities and build on inclusivity.
- > Grievances and whistleblowing – employees feel able to raise issues?
- > Think, plan, experiment, adapt – firms will be experimental in their efforts to manage the new working environment

# Taking a step back

Reigniting the home working model - Health, Safety and Wellbeing Risks

Health and Safety Executive guidance:-

- Lone working without supervision
- Working with display screen equipment (DSE)
- Keeping in touch to recognise signs of stress and mental health problems
- Review mechanism



# Return to Office initiatives

## A waiting game

- *“Work from home over the winter”*
- Secure-covid guidelines – stricter rules (28 September)
- Return to office protocol
- Risk assessment
- NHS Track and Trace policy
- Engagement



# Sick pay rules

**Are employees who voluntarily self-isolate as a result of Test and Trace entitled to be paid during this period?**

In such cases, the [NHS Test and Trace service in the workplace guidance](#) advises employers:

*"If a worker cannot work from home, you:*

- must ensure they receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) provided they meet the eligibility criteria*
- may consider giving them the option to use their paid leave days if they prefer*
- Employees in self-isolation are entitled to SSP for every day they are in isolation, as long as they meet the eligibility conditions".*

Risk employees will actually be able to claim full pay

# Misconduct and disciplinary issues in the Covid era

Companies and regulators fear more conduct breaches

Greater scope for misconduct – psychological/financial stress leading to misconduct. “Out of sight, out of mind” and “psychological distancing” leading to lower feeling of personal accountability.

- Inappropriate Whatsapp/IM messaging - discloseable
- Breaches of confidentiality – papers not kept secure
- Employees photographing confidential information
- Not complying with pandemic rules – is this a disciplinary issue and / or a regulatory issue? SRA or FCA report?

# Back to the agenda

## Business as usual

- IR35 – preparation now
- Brexit planning
- Diversity and inclusion



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