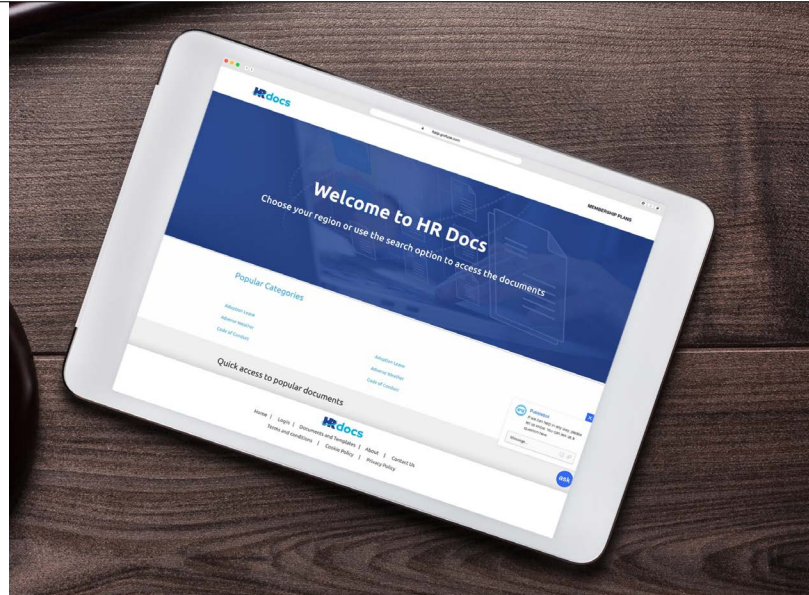


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# EMPLOYERS CONSIDER REDUCING PAY FOR REMOTE WORKERS

**A survey carried out by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has revealed that 10% of companies plan on reducing pay or benefits for home workers.**

**T**he survey found that 4% of businesses have already reduced pay or benefits for people who continue to work from home, and a further 13% are on the verge of doing so.

This follows recent reports that a London-based law firm employees have been given the option to work from home full-time in return for a 20% reduction in pay.

The firm that recruited lawyers who lived outside of London as additional resources during the pandemic stated: "The packages we offered were different from what we offer our people in London. They're fully remote and are not expected to regularly attend the office. If they are needed in the office, we cover their travel and accommodation expenses."

The justification for offering home

**"It could also make it harder to recruit or retain staff if people working remotely are valued and rewarded less than those who have to attend their organisation's workplace."**

workers reduced pay appears to be that these workers benefit from living in less expensive parts of the UK. The policy also provides for existing staff who accept the offer in line with its new remote workers.

Ben Willmott, head of public policy for the CIPD, said employers that are planning to reduce pay or benefits should "recognise there are potential ethical and legal risks in this approach. "It could also make it harder to recruit or retain staff if people working remotely

are valued and rewarded less than those who have to attend their organisation's workplace."

HR Team co-director, Martina McAuley, said: "Some employers are choosing to take a tougher approach to entice people back to the office after other initiatives have been unsuccessful.

"However, employers who want to offer reduced pay or benefits to their employees in return for permanent home working or hybrid working will need to consider the business reasons for this and how such a scheme would be implemented, to reduce the risk of claims for unfair dismissal or discrimination." She added that offering remote workers reduced pay or benefits is likely to harm morale, job satisfaction and the organisation's reputation as a good employer, particularly given the desire for home working.



# HYBRID WORKING CONTINUES TO INCREASE IN POPULARITY

A recent survey by Acas highlights that hybrid working continues to be popular amongst employees, showing that 60% of employers have seen an increase in hybrid working for staff compared to before the Covid-19 pandemic.

The conciliation and arbitration body commissioned YouGov to ask British

businesses about changes to working practices that they have seen compared to before the pandemic. Not only did this highlight the rise in hybrid working, but the poll also found that more than half of employers (52%) have seen an increase in staff working from home full-time.

HR Team co-director, Breda Cullen, said: "Many businesses adapted to new ways of working during the pandemic, and it's not surprising that most employers have seen an increase in home and hybrid working among their staff." "There are clear benefits to these types of flexible working arrangements, such as helping businesses attract and retain staff.

"However, employers will need to recognise that there will be staff that are eager to get back to how they were working before Covid-19 and that hybrid or home working may not be practical for everyone. Employers should ensure that staff who work remotely have access to the same opportunities as those who are physically in a workplace."

## GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS ON HYBRID WORKING

Employers can approach hybrid working to maximise the benefits for their organisation and employees. Below are some key steps to take:

- > Consider a trial period to see if it works and if any further adjustments to arrangements are needed.
- > A company hybrid working policy should be in place to explain how someone can request it, how job roles will be assessed and how decisions will be made. It can also include principles such as allowing remote working for a maximum number of days per week.
- > Have clear communication channels in place, so managers can engage with their remote workforce as easily as people in the office and vice versa



Many employers are keen to embrace remote or hybrid working to afford their staff a better work-life balance whilst saving on costly office space expenses.

Employees are also reducing their outgoings on commuting, and appreciating employers supporting their lifestyles and personal circumstances. With more employees working from home than ever before, it's crucial employers take steps to ensure their remote workplaces are safe and comfortable.



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### About the facilitator

Angela Prior is an experienced business development manager with a successful career spanning 20 years, including twelve years in this specific arena.

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