

10 Steps to Create an Effective Work From Home Policy

Human resource (HR) managers deal with various forms of workplace scenarios in their companies' premises. A significant element of their HR role is facilitating the welfare of each team, consisting of employees going about their daily tasks. However, there are instances when employees request to work from home, and cases when work from home is required due to certain circumstances. On such occasions, your company will have a remote team, working outside of the office or actual workplace. Even though they're doing work at home, that doesn't mean company rules and regulations do not bound them. So beforehand, make sure to establish a work from home policy. Here are ten steps that you must follow in doing so.

Decide Who Can Work From Home

Depending on the nature of the circumstance, not all employees are eligible to work at home. Some of the employees' tasks might not be suitable for a work-from-home setting. And, it is also possible that their presence in the company's office or headquarters is needed at all times. That said, you have to decide well which employees should be granted a work-from-home privilege. Afterward, implement specific policies for them to comply with.

Set Expectations and Goals

Work from home agreements must be treated in the same way as your company's usual operations. The employees must still produce as they usually do and abide by the company's standards consistently. For that reason, you must indicate expectations and goals to employees who'll be working at the comforts of their homes. A checklist of expectations and goals will incline and prompt them to practice the same work ethic they display in the workplace.

Set Working Hours

Employees working at home must report to work at specific hours. That keeps everybody on the same page despite being away from the office. For that reason, you have to set working hours into the policy. Employees who won't log in on time will automatically be considered overdue, in which salary deductions will be the sanction. Because they're working from home, they shouldn't have any excuse not to start working on time.

Let Employees Maintain Visibility

Throughout the shift, work-from-home employees must be online at all times. In other words, you have to let them maintain visibility—for quick and easy communication. Whenever there's information that must be attended to immediately, the employees working at home will know of them promptly, without any delays.

Choose a Means of Communication

Of course, work from home agreements will not bode well for the company if there's no means of communication. Communication is a mandatory necessity for work from home arrangements. You need to maintain a direct line of connection with the employees for important announcements and instructions. Due to the prevalence of technology we have today, there are many options for communication. The best would be email, group chat, video chat, video conference, text message, and phone call.

Ensure Data Security

Letting employees work at their homes is quite risky, no doubt about it. When they do their work, they're basically handling company properties outside the working premises. The risk of a data breach could be imminent, and that's not good for your company's welfare. That said, the work from home policy must include that employees must protect whatever company data they'll be handling or relaying. You can layoff employees who'll immensely violate data security protocols. Work from home employees should not disclose any company data to other entities, even if it's direct family members.

Provide IT Support

Employees working from home might encounter technical issues with their work along the way. These issues can hinder their progress and productivity and affect their overall performance. To avoid that, provide them with tools that'll make their work faster and more efficient. Some employees might not even have internet connections at home. You can provide them with the condition that they must reach their required daily productivity rate. All of their tasks must be finished and submitted before or on the deadline.

Monitor Performance

Performance management is a very important practice to apply in work from home agreements. For starters, you won't be able to supervise employees working at home directly. So your only means of determining if they're doing well or not is by monitoring their performance in your HR metrics tracker and HR calculators. Check if they're hitting their targets consistently and issue sanctions to those who aren't. Other than that, employee turnover can occur to layoff and replace continually underperforming employees.

Clarify Which Expenses Are Covered

Whatever resources an employee needs to work from home, most of it must be covered by the company, especially the most important ones like internet bills. However, your company should not shoulder everything. That said, you have to clarify to the employees which expenditures are covered by the company's budget. Beforehand, you need to exercise your HR skills and do a budget analysis for this matter.

Receive Input From Your Employees

In the work from home policy, you have to implement a rule to let employees send their inputs after a shift. Through that approach, you'll have a direct means to monitor their day to day productivity and to ensure that they're performing as they're being paid by the hour. You can let them send their inputs through email. If they fail to do so, you have the authority to issue them a notice to explain (NTE).

According to Fundera.com, 86% of employees suggest that working alone, free from office stress, hectic working environments, and workplace gossip, makes them more productive. With that fact, allowing employees to work in the confines and comforts of their homes might benefit the operations of your company. Just make sure to assess the situation, establish ground rules, and clarify the terms of agreement for the employees. Apply what you've learned in this article and create a work from home policy for the welfare of your employees and your company.