

Home Office FAQs

The company agreement on working from home sustainably regulates the possibility of working from home. The data protection and security notices and a checklist for working from home supplement the regulations of this company agreement. They must be signed and submitted by all employees who wish to work from home.

How do I proceed if I want to work from home? Working from home is informally agreed upon in writing – for example, by email – between the employee and the immediate supervisor, and its specific implementation is discussed. This can also happen at short notice. If the supervisor does not agree with working from home (e.g., for operational reasons), they must justify their decision. The approval can also be revoked later. The works council is appropriately involved.

Am I insured against accidents when working from home? The protection provided by statutory accident insurance when working from home is the same as when working at the company premises. At the COMPANY, you are not only insured in the office but also, for example, if you have an accident on the way to the printer or the canteen. Examples:

- You fall on the way from the home office to the kitchen or toilet: As in the COMPANY's premises, this path is covered by statutory accident insurance.
- You slip in the bathroom and fall: Activities in the bathroom and shower are purely private, and accidents that occur there are not covered by statutory accident insurance.
- In summer, you work with your laptop on the terrace and fall on the way into the house to get a drink: This path is covered by statutory accident insurance. The location of the workplace does not matter.
- You go to the basement to get a drink and fall on the basement stairs: This path is also covered by statutory accident insurance, as in the COMPANY's premises.
- You spill hot coffee on your hand in the home office and suffer moderate burns: Eating and drinking are not insured activities as they belong to the private sphere.
- You injure yourself with a bread knife in the kitchen: This activity is purely private and, therefore, not covered by statutory accident insurance.
- The parcel delivery person rings the doorbell, and you fall down the stairs on the way to the door: This accident is not a work accident because the way to the door was solely for private interests (receiving the parcel).
- You regularly walk your dog and fall on the sidewalk in front of your house when returning from a walk with your dog: This accident is not a work accident because walking the dog is a purely private activity.

Am I insured when I take my child to school? What happens if I go shopping on the way? When working from home, if you take or pick up your child from school, you are also covered by statutory accident insurance on the direct way to and from the school. This applies to all external childcare arrangements, such as kindergarten and daycare. Insurance coverage only applies to direct routes, not during shopping.

Are agreements on fixed home office days possible? An agreement between employees and supervisors is provided for in section 3.3 of the company agreement on working from home.

What should I do if I want to agree on fixed home office days with my supervisor?

If working from home on fixed days is necessary and the conditions of section 3.3 of the company agreement are met, an agreement with the supervisor can be made. The electronic form "Agreement on fixed home office days" available on the COMPANY's intranet (Form Center) must be used. This document must be completed electronically by the applicant and sent to the team leader or the next higher manager. If the conditions for approving the requested fixed home office days are met, the manager will also sign electronically. With this electronic signature, the document is automatically forwarded to the HR Services & Payments team for filing in the personnel file.

What can I do if my supervisor rejects an agreement on fixed home office days?

If employees and supervisors cannot agree on the setting of attendance days, a clarification discussion takes place, involving the department head or division manager and the works council. If no agreement is reached in this clarification discussion, the decision lies with the managing director.

Do I need to sign a new agreement on fixed home office days if my supervisor changes?

A change of supervisor does not affect an existing agreement on fixed home office days.

Do I need to sign a new agreement on fixed home office days if I change departments within the COMPANY?

In the event of a personal job change within the COMPANY, a new agreement on fixed home office days must be made with the new supervisor, provided that working from home is necessary and operationally feasible.

How many workplaces do I have when working from home?

The primary workplace is at the COMPANY's premises, as stated in the employment contracts. This does not change even when working from home.

What should I do if my phone or internet connection does not work at home?

Employees must resolve technical issues related to their phone or internet connection at home themselves or have them resolved by their telecommunications provider. If this is not possible at short notice, the next steps must be coordinated with the supervisor. If necessary, work must be continued at the COMPANY's premises.

Does this also apply in cases where I have an agreement on fixed home office days? Yes, the same applies.

Do I receive technical support from the COMPANY while working from home?

Employees are responsible for the functionality of their private phone or internet connection when working from home. If the private phone or internet connection works properly, but there are disruptions in the COMPANY's IT infrastructure, the Service Desk will assist as usual: Tickets can be created via the <LINK> myServicePortal, and technical support is available through the IT hotline at 2525.

Can I work from a friend's or relative's home while working from home? If all the points under section 2.1 of the company agreement and the data protection declaration are met, working from another location within Germany is also possible. This should always be coordinated with the supervisor.

Can I work from abroad while working from home? Working from home abroad is not allowed due to numerous legal restrictions.

How am I equipped for working from home? The COMPANY provides employees with all necessary work and communication tools (computer, headset, software, office supplies) for official use, as well as an ergonomic chair for the home office upon request, free of charge. Monitors, keyboards, and mice are only provided if necessary and within operational possibilities.

I am currently working in telework. What happens to the furniture and technical equipment provided by the COMPANY if I switch to working from home? If work continues from home after telework ends, employees can continue to use the office furniture provided by the COMPANY. If usage is no longer desired, for example, after permanently ending working from home or acquiring new private furniture, the General Services team, Ms. Claudia Schmitz-Billig (2436), should be contacted. After telework ends, the Fritzbox, including the power supply, must be returned to the COMPANY. The return is to the IT team's user service in room I / 074-079. No prior appointment is required.

What happens if the required work tools are not available or cannot be provided by the COMPANY? In this case, working from home is not possible.

Do I have to take care of requesting technical equipment myself or does it go through the supervisor? The request for technical equipment is handled through the supervisor or via an IT request, while office supplies are requested through the secretariats.

Can I use my own technical devices in the home office? The use of a private keyboard, mouse, or monitor is allowed. However, private storage media such as USB sticks or memory cards are not permitted.

Can I use my wireless mouse and/or keyboard in the home office? Since confidential data is entered with these devices, they must generally be connected with a cable. Exceptions to this rule can be clarified with IT operations, for example, by creating a self-service ticket in the <LINK> myServicePortal (request facility service). See the "User Responsibility for Information Security Policy" section 3.3.

How can I request an ergonomic office chair for the home office? The COMPANY provides an office chair for use in the home office upon request. Interested employees must create a ticket through the <LINK> myServicePortal (request facility service). The General Services team will then contact the applicants to arrange a pick-up appointment. The existing office chair at the COMPANY's workplace must remain there.

What about using my private email address in the home office? Automatic forwarding of emails to private email addresses is not allowed. Similarly, sending emails with official content to private email addresses is not allowed (see also section 3, point 8 of the service directive on the use of internet and email and the FAQ on the permission to use private devices for video and audio conferences).

Can I take everything I need for the home office from my office at the COMPANY? Technical devices for the home office are issued exclusively by the IT department, and an office chair can only be provided by the General Services team. Devices or furniture must not be taken independently from the COMPANY.

What should I do if my laptop breaks or is stolen? In the event of damage or loss of official work tools, the supervisor must be informed immediately. The supervisor must ensure that data protection measures are taken, that an insurance claim can be filed, and that a replacement device can be provided. At the same time, the supervisor must ensure that the employee can resume work.

Will the costs for a phone or internet connection be reimbursed? No.

Is travel time from the home office to the COMPANY considered working time? No. Travel time is not considered working time – even if a meeting is scheduled at the COMPANY or if the private phone or internet connection does not work and the COMPANY's workplace must be visited unplanned.

Can I travel to an external meeting from the home office? Travel to an external business meeting can start from the home office. Travel time is considered working time if it is shorter than the travel time from the COMPANY. If it is longer, the time required for travel between the COMPANY and the external meeting is considered working time.

By when must the supplementary documents be signed and submitted? The two attachments, "Supplementary Data Protection Notices and Security Rules for Working from Home" and "Checklist for Working from Home," must be signed by all employees who wish to work from home. This can also be done electronically. The signed documents must be sent to the direct supervisor.

What happens if I do not sign them? In this case, working from home is not possible.

Do I have to fill out and sign the checklist for working from home, or is a signature sufficient? The checklist for working from home must be filled out. It gives an overview of the essential aspects of occupational safety that you need to be aware of. Occupational safety and health protection are also the responsibility of each employee. If some boxes are not checked because the corresponding statements do not apply, the supervisor will discuss this with you. The checklist serves as a support for the conversation with the supervisor. Working from home is also possible if some boxes are not checked.

Do I have to fill out, sign, and submit a new checklist if my private room situation changes? If the private room situation changes, and the requirements for data protection and information security can no longer be met, this must be reported to the supervisor.

