

Last reviewed: March 2022

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## **Purpose**

To ensure that health and safety issues are managed effectively and the risk of health and safety incidents to staff working remotely is minimised. To create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of all staff.

Integrity Action is committed to the protection and promotion of physical health and mental wellbeing of all staff and shall continuously strive to improve the environment and culture of the organisation by identifying, eliminating, or minimising all harmful processes, procedures and behaviours that may cause physical and psychological harm or illness to its staff.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all staff. Integrity Action is responsible for the protection of the occupational health and safety, including mental wellbeing, of staff working remotely. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant.

## **Ownership**

The CEO is responsible for this policy.

As members of Integrity Action's team, we are all expected to:

- cooperate with the SMT and managers on health and safety matters;
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard our health and safety;
- take reasonable care of our own physical health, mental wellbeing, and safety while working remotely; and
- report any physical health, mental wellbeing, and safety concerns to the CEO.

<b>Statement of general policy</b>	<b>Action / Arrangements</b>
To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health, including mental health, and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from work activities	Risk assessment managed and reviewed by the organisation and self-performed by staff annually (see below).  Staff must use work items and equipment correctly as indicated in the DSE guidance.  Staff is entitled to eye tests upon request.
To engage and consult with employees on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on occupational health	Staff informed of policy and encouraged to raise any concerns.  Mental health and wellbeing information and awareness promoted by Integrity Action  Unlimited, 24/7 access to GPs for consultations and medical advice available to staff and their families

Last reviewed: March 2022

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The **accident book** is located on google drive at \_IA Folders\Finance, HR, Insurance\HR\Accident book

**Employers' liability insurance** Details of the policy are located on google drive at \_IA Folders\Finance, HR, Insurance\Office and Public Liability Policy

### **Risk assessment**

Integrity Action is responsible to ensure that staff carry out the following risk assessment yearly. Staff should perform the risk assessment and raise any concerns about potential risk with the CEO.

<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>	<b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?</b>	<b>Action by whom?</b>	<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>Done</b>
Slips and trips	Staff may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	Staff encouraged to carry out general good housekeeping. Work station areas should be well lit. Cables should be covered with a cable cover. Staff keep work areas clear Staff should not pile up rubbish Spillages are cleaned up immediately.				
Electrical and fire risk	Staff could get electrical shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	Staff makes sure that sockets are not overloaded. Cables, plugs and sockets are well maintained. Defective equipment taken out of use safely and promptly replaced. Staff keeps sources of ignition and flammable substances apart.				
Display screen equipment	Staff risk posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries, e.g. to their hands/ arms, from overuse or improper use or from poorly designed workstations or work environments. Headaches or sore eyes can also occur, e.g. if the lighting is poor.	DSE assessment performed yearly by staff (prompted by Integrity Action) Eye test available to staff upon request  Allowance to buy equipment to improve work stations available to staff				

Last reviewed: March 2022

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Mental health deterioration	All staff could be affected by factors such as lack of job control, lack of face to face interaction, isolation, bullying, not knowing their role etc.	<p>-Integrity Action ensures that all staff have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and provides them with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job.</p> <p>-Staff can talk to their manager if they are feeling unwell or not at ease about things at work.</p> <p>-Integrity Action ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism.</p> <p>-Integrity Action establishes good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.</p> <p>-Integrity Action provide information and raise awareness about mental wellbeing and monitor staff wellbeing through annual surveys and ad-hoc check-ins</p> <p>-Integrity Action provides opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing and promote policies and practices that encourage wellbeing (flexible working, taking breaks, use up all annual leave, discouraging working longer hours, anti-bullying and harassment policy)</p> <p>-Integrity Action helps people get back to work after a period of absence due to mental illness through making reasonable adjustments and retaining staff who develop a mental health problem.</p> <p>-Insurance offers unlimited access to GPs for staff and families</p>				
COVID-19 pandemic	All staff could be directly or indirectly affected by the pandemic by becoming ill, suffering long-term effects, experiencing losses, having to take care of next of kins,	<p>-Integrity Action follows all relevant and UK Government regulations/guidelines</p> <p>-Integrity Action carries out a collaborative risk assessment with</p>				

Last reviewed: March 2022

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
	<p>and experiencing deterioration of their mental wellbeing</p>	<p>staff on the possibility of face to face meetings, staff working from public spaces, national and international travel, and other events that may increase the risk of catching COVID-19</p> <p>-Attendance to face to face meetings, national and international travel and other events that may increase the risk of catching COVID-19 is at staff discretion</p> <p>-Integrity Action to offer flexible time to staff so that they can work around their personal circumstances</p> <p>-At staff request, Integrity Action can cover the purchase of tests, face masks and hand sanitisers for international work trips and face-to-face events meetings.</p>				

Last reviewed: March 2022

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## **Mental wellbeing**

Mental wellbeing is relevant to all staff and everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work. Addressing mental wellbeing in the workplace can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems, and support them once they are at work.

Important aspects of mental wellbeing includes providing information and raising awareness, management skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, a supportive work environment, offering assistance, advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem or returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.

Many factors in the workplace influence the mental wellbeing of individual employees. COVID-19 outbreak has meant big life changes for us all, including adjusting to new ways of working. Remote work can be isolating and challenging. Without face-to-face contact, the risk of stress and mental health problems increases, while it is harder for other co-workers to recognise symptoms of stress or mental health problems.

Integrity Action encourage staff to have a good work/life balance. You should take regular breaks from your screen, use up all your annual leave, and should not work longer hours regularly. If you find yourself regularly working longer hours, unable to switch off from work, if you feel pressure to work while ill or you feel obliged to answer emails outside normal working hours, please speak with your manager or the CEO. Stress can build up over time and the causes can be work-related or from other issues. Whatever the cause, it's important that you get help as soon as possible.

Integrity Action's travel insurance offers unlimited, 24/7 access to GPs for consultations and medical advice. This service is available to staff, their partners and children of up to 23 yrs old. You can find more information in the travel insurance policy folder.

Integrity Action will monitor the wellbeing of staff through yearly staff surveys and ad-hoc check-ins, as well as monitoring working hours and patterns, number of staff complaints, staff sickness levels, staff turnover, use of occupational health or counselling services and outcomes of exit interviews.

## **Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments**

The organisation will prompt staff to perform DSE self-assessments yearly. Results of the self-assessments will be discussed, and any ameliorative action agreed with staff, including purchase or replacement of equipment.

Staff are entitled to a one-off allowance to cover reasonable purchases of equipment to ensure that their workspace complies with DSE guidelines (e.g. ergonomic office chair, screen, bigger desk, mouse and keyboard, etc). This allowance has been set to £200 by the SMT, subject to annual review. The purchase of equipment needs to be discussed and approved by your line manager.

Last reviewed: March 2022

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Staff are entitled to periodic eyesight tests upon request, the cost of which will be covered by Integrity Action. If the test shows that you need special glasses prescribed for the distance the screen is viewed at, Integrity Action will pay for those too. However, if the test shows that you need glasses (or other prescriptions) for reasons that are not related to you working with a screen, Integrity Action will not cover these glasses.

### **COVID-19**

Integrity Action is committed to protect staff from the risks of contracting COVID-19 while at work with the following measures, which will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain relevant.

Workplace. Staff may work from any preferred location(s), provided that a risk assessment is carried out by staff on this/these location(s) and that they are deemed to respect the organisation's health and safety guidelines as per this policy and the most recent UK Government guidelines on working safely during COVID-19.

While Integrity Action is responsible for staff's health and safety while at work, staff remain responsible for their own health and safety when travelling from their workplace to another place of work (for example, to reach face-to-face staff meetings).

Face-to-face staff meetings. Integrity Action may agree to face-to-face staff meetings in consultation with staff. Location and timing of these meetings will be discussed with staff and will depend on the progress of the pandemic. Participation in these events is at staff's discretion during the COVID-19 pandemic.

National and international travel. To further minimise risks of contracting COVID-19, Integrity Action will avoid unnecessary travel and take additional measures, over and above the UK Government guidelines, in case of necessary travel. If travel is essential, it is recommended that staff travelling are fully vaccinated. Staff are entitled to refuse travelling on the basis of the fact that this will increase their risk of catching COVID-19.

Based on best available guidance, such as the UK government travel advice and the country of destination's guidelines (for international travel), staff intending to travel need to complete a travel risk assessment that has to be signed off by their line manager and the CEO. Fully refundable tickets need to be purchased so that travel can be cancelled at no extra cost should the situation quickly deteriorate.

Integrity Action offers travel insurance that supports travellers that develop Covid-19 whilst travelling through medical assistance, Covid-19 testing, quarantining in the destination country, and possible casualty evacuation. Integrity Action will cover the cost of face masks, hand sanitisers, and COVID-19 tests.

Last reviewed: March 2022

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Staff cannot travel if they have been recently exposed to Covid-19, are sick, test positive for Covid-19, or are waiting for results of a Covid-19 test. Staff aged 60 and over, and those with serious chronic illnesses or underlying health conditions, are considered high-risk and should therefore try to postpone travel or take special precautions, ensuring a medical face mask is worn continuously throughout the trip. Travellers should self-monitor for any symptoms up to 14 days after arrival. Report any symptoms and your travel history to local health facilities and follow national protocols.

### **Support tools**

More information can be found on the following websites:

- [HSE Guidance on homeworking safety](#)
- [DSE assessment and Eye Test](#)
- [Video on the best posture to adopt when working](#)
- [NHS advice to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing](#)
- [HSE Overview on stress and mental health at work](#)
- [HSE Advice for employees with mental health conditions](#)
- [Acas Framework for positive mental health at work](#)
- [NHS Coronavirus and mental wellbeing](#)
- [Latest UK Government guidance on working safely during COVID-19](#)