

Supplementary guidance for employees and line managers on the 'Agile Working Policy & Procedure', in respect of changes to work base locations.

We have received a number of enquiries regarding the correct interpretation of the Trust's Agile Working policy, and to support colleagues in the application of the policy we are providing some additional guidance and examples below:

The criteria for an employee to change their base locations is primarily intended to support those colleagues whose roles require them to frequently (on average for at least half of the days in their working week with multiple moves throughout a working day/shift) work from multiple different locations within the Leicester, Leicestershire, & Rutland (LLR) geographic area, in order to undertake their normal work activities.

If you are an agile worker and your current base is causing issues with operational efficiency and effectiveness, it may be appropriate to request a change. However, any request to change base must be agreed upon between you and your line manager. Additionally, any designated base must meet the criteria outlined in the policy, such as having access to the Firefly WiFi network and being on your natural commute route. It's important to discuss your reasons for the request with your line manager and work together to find a suitable solution.

Where an employee's role would meet the Policy criteria for an 'agile worker', there may be circumstances where their contractual base location is some distance from their home address, and they will be undertaking business required travel to sites that fall closer to home address than their current contractual base location. This will mean that they cannot currently claim some or all of costs of business required travel to these sites.

The employee may request to their line manager (using the application process contained within the Agile Working Policy & Procedure), that their base location is changed to a 'designated base' within the LLR geographic area (and if more limited, within their role specific designated 'patch'), which is closer to their home address than the location of their current contractual work location. The designated base must be an NHS property with 'Firefly' WiFi connectivity, from which the worker may securely access LPT's online systems required for undertaking their role.

Additional business required travel to locations beyond the designated base, may then be claimed via LPT's normal expenses system, and may allow for improved efficiency in service provision.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is an Agile Worker?

The trust policy identifies agile/blended workers as colleagues who: spend most of their time working away from a fixed Trust base, may travel across trust/non trust sites, if clinical, carry out assessments in patient / service user homes, have a workload that is not location dependent.

After consultation and assessment between the individual and the line manager, where the individual is identified as agile, an agreed way of working should be implemented.

Q: How is a designated base defined?

A: A designated base is defined as a health or care building that has access to the Firefly WiFi network, which an agile worker could realistically touch down at to enter data upon an Electronic

Patient Record system. The base must be located within the Geographic area which the employee's role covers (which may be more limited than the whole of the LLR geographic area).

In the case of an agile worker this location would be the first suitable (under policy criteria) site within the geographic area covered by their role, that is passed on their 'daily commute' travel, required to undertake normal work activities. This location could therefore become a designated base location, assuming it meets the criteria outlined in the policy and has been agreed with your line manager in line with the Agile Working policy/procedure application process.

Q: What does "normal commute" route mean?

A: "Normal commute" route refers to the regular path that an agile worker takes to get to their primary work location. In the case of an agile worker this location could be the first suitable (under policy criteria) site within the geographic area covered by their role, that is passed in travel required to undertake normal work activities.

Q: How should my contractual base be determined if since COVID-19 I work from home for the majority of the time but when I do travel, I go to sites across LLR for meetings, but not one specific site? i.e. I use agile desks / meeting rooms and do not currently have a primary work location or normal commute route.

The majority of our services have a designated team base. During the COVID-19 pandemic some of our sites temporarily closed however the majority of these are now open and operational. A small minority of sites are still closed and in these circumstances leadership teams should be working to identify a new team base to enable and support team cohesion, identity and service provision.

Q: I work in the community services in north Leicestershire. I live in Leicester city. My current base is Coalville HC. I often undertake patient visits on my way into base that I cannot currently claim mileage for. Groby medical centre has Firefly. Can I alter this to be my designated base?

A: Yes, as this would be within the geographic boundaries that your role covers, and part of your normal commute, that you would pass to get to your place of work.

Q: I work in the community services in north Leicestershire. I live in Market Harborough My current base is Coalville HC. St Luke's Hospital has Firefly and is nearer to my home. Could this be considered as an appropriate designated base?

A: No, this would not be considered appropriate as the designated base should be part of the geographical area your role covers, and the first site within that area that you would pass on your normal commute from home to work.

Q: I am based at Loughborough Hospital and undertake my normal work activities from this location. I live in Lutterworth. Can I change my designated base to Fielding Palmer Hospital and then claim business miles to Loughborough Hospital?

A: No, the intention of applying a designated base is to allow staff whose normal work requires regular travel to multiple locations across a defined geographic area, to be based from a location that they could 'touch down' in to complete work, with internet access, and which would be part of the normal commute. Changing the base in this circumstance would result in the staff member claiming business miles for part of their commute which would fall foul of HMRC's rules on business mileage.

Q: I undertake a Community based role, and my normal work activities involve me traveling to undertake client meetings at a number of GP surgeries within East Leicestershire. My current work base is an LPT office in the far East of the County, but there are several GP surgeries that my role covers that are closer to my home than my current base location. Can I request that my designated base' is changed to be the closest of these sites to my home address?

A: Yes, so long as the proposed location meets to criteria for a designated base, and your manager approves the change via use of the Policy's application process, then your designated base may be changed to the closest site within your role's geographic area.

Q: My contractual base is County Hall, and I undertake a support function role which requires occasional travel to other LPT sites to attend meetings. The type of work I undertake could also be undertaken from my home or any other LPT office location with secure WiFi access. There are several LPT sites that are closer to my home address than County Hall. Can I change my designated base to the closest LPT site to my home address?

A: No, as there is no Trust requirement for you to frequently attend work from other locations in order to undertake your role, and as such you would not be considered to be an 'agile worker'. As there is no organisational requirement for the move of your contractual base, your base would remain unchanged. You may through the agreement with your line manager adopt a blended working approach, which may provide you with a greater degree of flexibility by reducing the need to travel to your contractual base for an agreed element of your normal working week.