



# REMOTE WORKING & VISUAL DISPLAY UNIT (VDU) ASSESSMENTS





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**Remote working involves employees being set up with a dedicated workspace in their home. There are benefits for both the employee and employer in facilitating homeworking agreements. This is evident in the publication of the Working From Home Bill 2020.**

Homeworking does require coordination and management to ensure employees are not at risk from long-term health and safety hazards. This is why employers are legally bound to complete risk assessments of employees' work stations, whether office-based or at home.

These assessments are referred to as Visual Display Unit assessments or Display Screen Equipment assessments (DSE). A key challenge of remote working and complying with the regulations is adequate equipment such as computers and furniture.

A "workstation" means an assembly comprising display screen equipment, which may be provided with a keyboard or input device or software, or a combination of the foregoing, determining the operator and machine interface, and includes:

- (a) A work chair and work desk or work surface.
- (b) Any optional accessories and peripherals.
- (c) The immediate work environment of the display screen equipment.

# EMPLOYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing legislation for VDU assessments or DSE assessments stems from The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 5 of Part 2. According to the legislation, the responsibility for health and safety at work rests with the employer whether work is being carried out in the employee's home or in an office environment.

In order to comply with the VDU/DSE equipment regulations, the employer must implement the following:

- Provide information to employees in relation to measures which have been implemented.
- Ensure that the provision of an appropriate eye and eyesight test is made available to every employee.
- Provide training to employees in the use of workstations before commencing work with display screen equipment and whenever the organisation of the workstation is modified.
- Perform a further analysis or risk assessment where an employee transfers to a new workstation or significant new work equipment, change of equipment or new technology is introduced an individual's workstation.

With regards to the changes in the majority of Ireland's workforce now having to work from home or outside of the office, employers must ensure the following:

- The employee is aware of any specific risks.
- Regarding working from home.
- The work activity and workspace are suitable.
- They provide suitable equipment to enable the work to be done.
- There is a pre-arranged means of contact.
- Providing safe equipment including personal.
- Protective equipment, where necessary.
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees.
- Have plans in place for emergencies such as a fire or an accident at work.



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# ORS SERVICES

**A competent person with the necessary skills, training and experience must complete an assessment of individual workstations. It is not sufficient to allow employees to use a software package to assess their workstations.**

**The employer must be actively engaged in conducting a physical risk assessment/analysis of the individual workstation.**

**ORS guides employers by facilitating remote/homeworking agreements in line with the recommendations set out in the Working From Home Bill 2020.**

Our services include:

- (1) Working with companies to develop a homeworking policy.
- (2) Conduct office and homeworking VDU assessments. Assessments consist of:
  - o Conducting a video call based assessment of the employee's workstation.
  - o Providing guidance to the employee for workspace set-up and posture.
  - o Provide the assessment report to employers and employees.
- (3) Assist with ongoing support of employees working from home.

The risk assessments are vital as the number of people working remotely will continue to increase. A workstation assessment means compliance with an employer's legal obligations; it also prevents associated health problems and leads to happier and more productive employees.

## THOUGHTS, ENQUIRIES OR QUESTIONS?

Reach out to us

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