

Office Working Protocols

Our guide to a better workplace environment

These protocols are designed to provide a practical, common sense approach to a better workplace environment, and aim to protect and enhance our workplace.

This is a guide for staff based in offices.

The purpose of the protocols is to:

- promote good practice and
- define a sensible way of working in close proximity to others

Easy steps for a better workplace

- It's good practice to log into your phone when you arrive at your desk
- Workspace Manager is an easy to use system for booking a meeting room or Worksmart desk. If you no longer need the meeting room, remember to cancel it on the system so others can use the room
- Security is extremely important. When at work, always wear your ID badge and council lanyard. The Civic Centre Admin team can provide council lanyards
- A clean office is a healthy, safe, professional and pleasant environment. One key area is the kitchen so please always clear up after yourself and ensure you clear out your items on a monthly basis.

- Turning our mobile phones onto silent whilst at work helps to reduce unnecessary noise
- Our safety is important so don't leave anything lying on the floor for people to trip over.



The council operates a clear desk policy.

What do we mean by a clear desk?

Everyone's desk should be kept tidy at all times. The amount of paper and other items on desks should be kept to a minimum.

Staff may keep small personal item/s on their desk but all staff are asked to ensure that their desks are tidy, clean and free of clutter, especially when they are not at work or are away from their desk for a long period of time during the working day.

Everyone is expected to observe this guidance.



Phones

- Don't forget to log on to your phone when you arrive at work (IPT users)
- Be aware of how a loud telephone call might be disturbing others nearby
- Turn down ring tones, particularly on mobile phones, or better still put them on silent
- Log off or divert your calls to voicemail if you have it or another person when you leave your desk

De-clutter

- Try to regularly de-clutter your work area
- Notices and posters must only be displayed on designated notice boards and will otherwise be removed by caretakers

Meetings

- If available in your office, use 'Workspace Manager' room booking system when booking meeting rooms, shared desks or Worksmart. If your meeting is cancelled for any reason, then please ensure you cancel the room booking on Workspace Manager
- Please make an effort not to start or continue discussions outside meeting rooms
- Informal meeting areas are not soundproofed – so try to keep noise to a minimum
- Please leave all meeting areas tidy once you have finished
- You should inform your reception in a timely manner of any visitors you are expecting, and provide them with your contact telephone number

Save energy

- Make sure you switch off your computer and monitor when you leave work
- Remember to close meeting room doors to ensure the lights go off when rooms are unused



Interruptions

- Think before you approach someone to avoid breaking into their train of thought.
- Avoid holding noisy discussions around desks, especially on non-work related subjects
- Please don't conduct loud conversations across the heads of others
- Any music or other recorded sound that could disturb your colleagues is not allowed within our workplace.

Health and Safety

- You have a legal responsibility for your own health and safety, and those of others around you so please familiarise yourself with your organisation's health and safety policies and service guidelines www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/2200/Policies-Procedures-and-Guidance
- Do not leave files, documents or other items on the floor, particularly where they may create a trip hazard
- You should ensure if you spill any liquids that you have these cleaned up
- You should not carry out heavy manual handling tasks unless you have completed the appropriate training
- You should familiarise yourself with all fire escape and evacuation arrangements in respect of your building and comply with these at all times
- Personal evacuation plans should be completed for all staff with mobility issues – if in doubt ask your fire marshal
- In the event that you incur an accident, or have a near miss, then you should ensure that the appropriate incident form is properly completed

Security

- Always wear your ID badge and the official council lanyard so that it is clearly visible - if you see someone not wearing ID, bring it to their attention or report it to security/caretakers if you are suspicious. The Admin team can provide lanyards - please email CivicCentreAdminTeam@westlothian.gov.uk
- Always enter or leave your building by a designated entrance or exit
- Always go to meet your visitors from reception and escort them back after your meeting
- Visitors should not be left unattended at any time
- Be aware of possible tailgating by non-staff members when entering or leaving your building through swipe activated doors
- Remember that in many cases, information which you are dealing with will be of a confidential nature – take care to comply with the relevant Data Security Policies at all times intranet.westlothian.gov.uk/article/7170/Council-IT-Policies



Food, Drink and Fridges

- Please monitor your own supplies stored in the fridge and do not allow milk or food products to overstay their welcome
- Fridges should be cleared out and cleaned on a monthly basis. To facilitate this you should remove any items belonging to you which are not clearly identified and/or are out of date. If this is not done, then these will be disposed of
- If you use the kitchen facilities make sure that you clear up when you are finished
- Try to avoid eating at your desk - if your office has break out areas and/or an area for staff to heat and eat their own food, then use these facilities whenever possible to minimise the need to consume food at your desk
- Please dispose of your waste appropriately, recycling as much as possible <http://intranet.westlothian.gov.uk/article/9118/Recycling-at-Work-and-Building-Cleaning-information>

