Request:	Answer:
The number of employees in your organisation and, of these, the number able to perform their work remotely (i.e., not those who are front-line workers) and the number who have started returning to in person work.:	As per published headcount figures (the latest period is to the end of September 2021, published in December 2021): Social Security Scotland - workforce information: September 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Number of employees:	Of which are able to work from home:	Of which have returned to the office on a regular basis:
1,478	1,478*	41**

To note: We have interpreted 'regular' as the average number of people who have been in an office on a recurring basis in the last 6 months.

* All colleagues are able to work from home as per Scottish Government flexible working guidance.

** All colleagues working from an office have volunteered and in line with Scottish Government COVID guidelines.

Request:	Answer:
Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, what has your organisational policy to employees working from home vs coming into work in person?	In line with Scottish Government guidance all employees were initially advised to work from home and we have monitored and complied with Scottish Government home working guidance throughout. When Scottish Government guidance allowed colleagues in non-essential roles to attend offices this has been managed and access provided where there has been a business need and/or wellbeing requirement. Colleagues who have returned have done so on a voluntary basis and building capacity managed and controlled in line with Scottish Government guidance.
Please explain this in terms of change to previous policy and how this has changed over the course of the pandemic. For example: *"Prior to the pandemic, most staff were expected to work in person (except for managers who were able to work from home 2 days a week). When the pandemic started, all staff were sent to work from home, until August when some staff began to return to the office"*.	There has been no change to policy. We have used flexibilities within existing Scottish Government Main HR policies to support our people during this time.
Did your organisation have enough of the basic equipment needed for transitioning to remote working during the pandemic? If not – how long did it take to provide everyone with the basic equipment (laptops) they required and implement remote-working?	Yes, Social Security Scotland had enough basic equipment to transition to home working.
Did you provide further equipment at any point e.g. laptop stands, chairs, desks etc.? If so what did you provide and was this based on a specified value (if so, how much was spent per remote worker)?	Yes, extra equipment was provided as and when employees required this in order to undertake their roles. This was specified via a Homeworking Checklist and/or Display Screen Adjustment e-learning package (includes review of seat posture, workstation arrangement, work routines and physical working environment.) Colleagues were dealt with on a case by case basis and there was no specified value per headcount. This is not an exhaustive list however additional equipment includes: Monitors, chairs, mice, keyboards, desks, wrist and foot rests.
Has your organisation created a policy for reversing the option for working from home and/or creating new hybrid working patterns, or returning fully to 'pre-pandemic' practices?	No policy has been created, existing HR policies have always provided for colleagues to request to work flexibly including to work from home.
If yes, please provide details of your policy including how many days a week you will be aiming to have employees working in person and by what specific date or date range you are aiming to achieve this. **Has this changed or been delayed considering the government briefing on 29th November** regarding the new Omicron Covid variant and updated advice?	N/A
Did you consult your employees about their attitudes to returning to in person work? If so,	Engagement Surveys were undertaken:

Survey:	Response Rate:	Relevant Question & Results:

please provide details of their responses (e.g. did you create a survey; if so, how many people responded and what % were in favour or against returning to the office?)	COVID-19 Colleague Engagement Survey - July 2020	567	If you were given the choice, which of the following statements best reflects how you would like to work in the future? · I would like to split my time evenly between the office and home = 39% · I would like do the majority of my work from home, and a little in the office = 32% · I would like do the majority of my work from the office, and a little at home = 17% · I would like to work from home all of the time = 8% · I would like to work from an office location all of the time = 3%
	Pulse Survey – August 2021	1,122	If you were given the choice, how many days per week, on average, would you work from a Social Security Scotland building in the future? · 1 day or less =49% · 2-3 days = 45% · 4-5 days = 6%
Have you implemented any changes to pay for those working from home and if so, please describe the average change in pay rates and who it applies to. Were these changes implemented immediately or are you, for example, keeping current staff on the same pay but starting new remote employees on a lower rate? On what rationale have you made changes to pay?	No, Social Security Scotland is bound by Scottish Government terms and conditions which have not changed as a result of home working.		