



**SEIZING THE VIRTUAL OPPORTUNITY:
redefining global mobility from Assignment Specialists
to International Distribution Workforce Experts**



Where to start?



1. Define your companies' priorities i.e. cost saving, compliance, employee experience, flexibility



2. Review the current and projected virtual assignment employee population



3. Design one policy framework and with core and variable benefits that meets the majority of current and anticipated use cases



4. Review with team members and test against existing and upcoming cases. Test the framework to make sure it is flexible enough!



5. Automate process to make it as easy as possible for the business to use and understand



6. Data is key – put tracking and feedback opportunities in place and report regularly on how the policy is performing for the business and individuals



7. Communicate, communicate, communicate – include examples and illustrations. The business and the employees need to understand the company and personal financial risks clearly



Possible virtual assignment policy and considerations regarding the scope and details that should be defined as part of the policy:

- **Employee work location and employment status:** Where the assignment is virtual and the ability to complete the assignment is not tied to a specific office or country location, the policy must clearly define any parameters. This is likely to relate to the payroll location of the employee and an agreement to not work in a third location unless prior approval is sought
- **Home Set-up Allowance:** Where the role will be completed from a home office, an allowance may be made available to ensure the employee has the necessary equipment and internet connectivity. The employee should guarantee that any proposed workspace is suitable from both a privacy and confidentiality perspective as well as having available space. Where a home office is not available, acceptable alternative workplace parameters should be defined e.g. café, library with non-secured Wi-Fi. Provision for a company visit to the workplace with an agreed period of notice to confirm the suitability of the workspace may be included to allay any occupational health concerns.
- **Immigration:** To support the employee on the anticipated regular business trips to the host location, immigration advice and support will be provided to ensure that the correct visas and applications are made where applicable
- **Tax Assistance:** To educate the employee on their compliance responsibilities and any possible tax implications of using their home or alternative location for work purposes and individual liabilities associated. Support in filing of tax returns in relevant jurisdictions may be required
- **Cultural Training:** Where there may be cultural differences between the assignee and their team, virtual cultural training support could be provided



- **Language Training:** Although not required from a work perspective, from a cultural and team building perspective some limited language training may help integration and also support the ease of business trips
- **Pre-Assignment Trip and Regular Business Trips:** Including an initial and then subsequent regular business trips into the assignment policy and confirm the scope of support provided will help to manage the employee expectations and experience. Highlight any accommodation that will be provided and also document that the purchase of housing in the host location is not supported
- **Pre-Assignment Orientation:** Support for a virtual assignment should mirror that of a physical assignment to reflect the formality of the arrangement. It should be clear to the employee the fixed term nature of the assignment and any specific responsibilities and host country practices that need to be observed
- **Working Hours:** Where the assignment is in a similar time zone then it may be possible to shift working hours to that of the host location with minimal impact on the employees' health and wellbeing. Where there is a significant difference then consideration of the impact of shifted working should be considered and provisions included
- **Holidays:** A decision on whether to follow the home or host location for standard holidays should be considered and documented as part of the policy. A decision to follow the host location could help with team dynamics but have an impact on the employee where the family would not be following a similar schedule
- **Tax, Social Security and Immigration:** Where costs of the assignment are borne by the host company/location, any business travel may have both tax and immigration implications. Advice should be sought pertinent to the locations involved and applications made as appropriate
- **Other elements that you may choose to define in the policy could include:** Incentive Compensation, Continuity of Service, Salary Review Health Care/Medical Benefits, Retirement/Pension Plan, Payback agreement, Termination, End of assignment provisions

If you would like to consult with one of CapRelo's client services experts to define and build out your virtual assignment policy, [contact us at info@caprelo.com](mailto:info@caprelo.com)

