



Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. Who is responsible for establishing flexible work schedules?

Answer: Employees and supervisors can propose implementing flexible scheduling. However, supervisors have the final say when implementing FWAs on either a case-by-case basis, or as a program within their department.

Q2. Is it necessary to have a signed agreement to be on a flexible work schedule?

Answer: No, not unless the supervisor requests it. Some flexible work arrangements are more complex than others and may have more details to be agreed upon. There is a [sample agreement](#) on the Wellness website for your use.

Q3. Everyone may be coming and going at different times. How will a supervisor be able to ensure the work gets done?

Answer: The business needs of the department remain the primary issue and it is a supervisor's responsibility to schedule employees to ensure that the work is completed. The supervisor's role is to clearly assign and define duties and set performance expectations to meet workload demands. The supervisor will monitor work product, deadlines, workload activity, and other metrics to ensure work is accomplished.

Q4. Will a supervisor have to work longer hours in order to supervise employees working on a flexible work schedule?

Answer: No, not unless the supervisor feels that they must be on site during the entire schedule. A benefit of a FWA is that staff can be encouraged to self-monitor and supervisors can be a resource for staff rather than overseers.

Q5. What does a supervisor do if staff members come in late or leave early without making up time?

Answer: A FWA is a privilege, not a right. If employees abuse the program they can be required to return to a standard schedule. They can also be disciplined for their behavior, based on existing policy. At all times employees should keep their supervisors apprised of any deviations from the FWA.

Q6. How will this affect benefits and compensation?

Answer: Staff members on a FWA earn the same rate of pay and are eligible for the same benefit programs as those working on a traditional schedule. Overtime eligibility is on the same basis as for traditionally scheduled workers. If the employee remains at 100% fte, he/she will be expected to work at least 40 hours per week.

Q7. How does a flexible work schedule affect use of sick and vacation time?

Answer: If an employee is out sick or on vacation he/she will use vacation and sick leave accruals to equal the work schedule for the day(s) off.

Q8. How is pay calculated when on a flexible work schedule when an official holiday occurs?

Answer: Holiday is paid at 8 hours for 100% fte employees. If your work schedule is 10 hours per day, you will receive 8 hours of paid holiday and may use vacation or personal time to make up the other hours to equal your work schedule.

Q9. How will an employee know what goals he/she must meet if moving to a more flexible schedule?

Answer: Generally the work does not change but the location where an employee works might change and the number of hours worked per day may change. In order to effectively manage for results, criteria for success should be established at the beginning of the FWA, as well as prioritization of which tasks are most critical and which can be deferred. By setting goals, milestones, and timelines, productivity can be measured.

Q10. How does a supervisor balance the needs of all employees who wish to work a flexible work schedule?

Answer: Decisions for approving FWA requests should be based on organizational need. However, if similar proposals are presented, objective criteria, such as seniority, special skills, or specific office needs may serve to resolve these conflicts. Often, a group discussion and team approach helps to resolve any of these issues.

Q11. What if it appears to be appropriate to approve one person's request for flexibility and, based on other factors, deny the request of another. How should a supervisor handle this situation? Can a supervisor's denial to grant the proposal be grieved?

Answer: All decisions should be focused on the organizational needs and objective criteria related to work performance and job demands. A consistent approach to analyzing the situation should be applied. It is important to communicate to each

employee the decision and its rationale. Documenting the basis for these decisions is important in case questions arise later. Human Resource Services can help supervisors develop objective criteria to use and a strategy for communicating your decision. Circumstances may exist where the work is not suitable for FWAs. In addition, circumstances may change in a department causing a FWA to change or be discontinued.

Q12. Some support staff are key to the work done by the rest of the employees in the office and when they are not there to take care of everyone's immediate needs, the flow in the office is affected. How can a supervisor approve everyone else to use flextime except these employees?

Answer: Often practices already exist for managing workflow when support staff is not available (e.g., on sick leave or vacation, or on special training or task assignments). Using these practices on a regular, recurring basis rather than on occasion for the above-listed situations can allow support staff to enjoy some flexibility in their work too. Strategic planning of workflow can also reduce the amount of urgent and immediate needs and improve productivity. If none of these changes are feasible, provide an objective explanation to employees.

Q13. One department has employees working flexible schedules and another department in the same division does not allow it. Is this fair?

Answer: Flexible work schedules are not an across-the-board benefit or right for employees. Management knows the operations of their unit(s) and they have the authority to say "yes" or "no" to a FWA. Since every job, worker, and situation is different, it cannot be assumed that the same decision is appropriate for two similar positions or departments.

Q14. Can flexible work schedules be used for a limited time to meet fluctuating work demands, such as the need for expanded hours coverage at the beginning of the semester or at the end of the fiscal year, or to allow more flexibility when work demand is less, such as during the summer?

Answer: Yes. For example, if it would be useful for an office to have extended hours during the beginning of a semester to accommodate special demands, flextime could be implemented. Some staff could have the opportunity to work an early schedule while others would work a late schedule. At the end of the specified time frame, traditional hours may be resumed. Note: remember overtime pay is required for non-exempt staff working in excess of normal work hours up to forty hours. Above forty hours a week, time and a half pay or compensatory time off is required.

Q15. How will I know everyone's schedule if all employees do not work the same hours?

Answer: Co-workers need to be kept informed of their colleagues' typical schedules. A weekly work schedule should be made available on a bulletin board, on the intranet, and/or the employee's office outlook calendar. If some arrangements for working off-site change on a regular basis, communication about the changes needs to be constant and consistent.

Q16. Whom should an employee or supervisor contact if they have more questions about FWAs?

Answer: You may contact your department/division human resources/fiscal office, or Campus Human Resources.