

### Why Offer a Flexible Work Schedule?

Many studies have shown that job flexibility is a critical component of maintaining job satisfaction and quality of life. With the changing demographics of our workforce, economic challenges, rising fuel prices, childcare expenses, and transportation challenges for employees, flexible work schedules may be an option that can meet the needs of both the department and the employee. Departments must continue to offer full services during the core business hours of the university (8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday), in allowing for flexible work schedules when it is determined to be in the best interests of the employee and the University.

### Definition of a Flexible Work Schedule

There are two major types of work schedule flexibility - flexible work *hours* and flexible work *schedules*.

*Flexible work hours are temporary changes* in an employee's regular work schedule in order to adjust for a planned or unplanned, short-notice, or sporadic event. The flexibility helps the employee to avoid working more than 37.5 hours in a work week or to avoid having to take paid or unpaid time off for an absence. Human Resources does not need to be informed of such temporary or unexpected arrangements, any flexible work hour adjustment is at the discretion of management in each department. An example of flexible work hours might include the following:

- An employee (with management's approval) worked an additional two hours on Monday in order to complete a report due by Tuesday. The manager then adjusted the employee's schedule later in the week to allow the employee to leave work two hours early on Thursday so that the employee did not work more than 37.5 hours in the work week.

*Flexible work schedules are adjustments to the employee's regular work schedule* on a recurring or occasional basis to respond to work/life needs of an employee. Such a schedule must continue to support the operational needs of the University and allow for appropriate oversight of the employee's work. Flexible work schedule adjustments may be revised or revoked by management at any time. A flexible work schedule must be in writing, submitted to management, approved, and filed with Human Resources.

### Guidelines for Proposing a Flexible Work Schedule

- Full-time staff who are not in a supervisory role may submit a Flexible Work Schedule proposal after they have been continuously employed for 6 months. Faculty or part-time employees are not eligible for the Flexible Work Schedule benefit.
- Departments must continue to offer full services during the core business hours of the university (8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday). If the functions/services offered by a department fall outside of the traditional work day, those needs must also continue to be met.
- Working on Saturday or Sunday in order to shorten the normal Monday through Friday work week will not be approved. If the demands of a position require occasional/temporary weekend work hours, those would fall under the classification of flexible work hours, not a flexible work schedule.
- A daily lunch break of at least 30 minutes must be a part of any Flexible Work schedule. Lunches cannot be eliminated.
- The work/customer service demands of a department or the nature of an employee's primary job responsibilities may make a Flexible Work Schedule impossible.
- You cannot flex more than one day each week, meaning you cannot work more than 9.5 hours in a day in order to have two days off weekly.
- All full-time staff employees must continue to work 37.5 hours each week.

- Flexible Work schedules can be proposed for a period of time (ex: summer) or they can be proposed as ongoing with no end date.
- An employee might propose to change the number of hours to be worked per day to permit fewer work days per week or an early arrival or release. For example:
  - A staff member who is regularly scheduled to work 37.5 hours per week may propose to spread an additional 7.5 hours over four days and take the fifth day off.
  - A staff member might work an additional hour on four days and then leave at 11:30 AM on the fifth day.

### Factors Considered by Supervisors or HR When Approving a Flexible Work Schedule Proposal

Flexible work schedules are not appropriate for all positions. Approval of a proposal is at the sole discretion of the supervisor. The unit Director and Human Resources will be consulted if necessary. In reviewing proposals for flexible work schedules, the needs of the University and the department must always take first priority. A review of the following considerations will assist management in making the appropriate decision regarding a proposal for a flexible work schedule:

- What are the operational and scheduling needs of the department? If I cannot approve this Flexible Work Schedule now because of the scheduling needs of the department, is there another season in which I could?
- What are the customer needs of the department?
- What are the work/life needs of the employee?
- Are there restrictions on when an employee's work must be performed? Do the primary functions of the employee's job require them to be present daily (ex: safety, housekeeping, or front-line customer service personnel)?
- Does the employee have difficulty in completing their work under their present work schedule?
- Does the employee function as part of a team that would require a matching schedule of all team members or significant face-to-face communication? Will reduced face-to-face time cause a loss of work-unit cohesion?
- Is the work unit able to provide coverage for functions handled by the employee in his/her absence without undue burden on other employees in the unit?
- Are requests for flexible schedules being handled equitably?
- Can management continue to monitor effectively employee work that occurs outside the supervisor's regular schedule?
- Does the schedule result in continued or increased worker productivity for the employee, the manager, and/or the work unit?
- Will conflicting requests by multiple employees result in coverage issues for the department?

### Process For An Employee to Propose a Flexible Work Schedule

Employees must complete and submit the Flexible Work Schedule Proposal form to their supervisor. It will be reviewed by the supervisor and their Director and Human Resources if needed--and then approved or denied.

### Process to Review and Terminate a Flexible Work Schedule

It is recommended that any approved flexible work schedule begin as a "pilot program" to be re-assessed after 4-6 weeks to see if the department's and employee's needs are being met through the adjustment in work schedule. After review, additional adjustments to the schedule may be needed, or the flexible schedule may be terminated. Possible reasons for a supervisor to modify or discontinue a flexible work schedule include, but are not limited to:

- Business needs or coverage needs change;
- Valid negative customer feedback occurs;
- Performance or attendance deteriorates;

- Departmental staff shortages occur;
- Becomes too disruptive to work unit;
- Employee is dissatisfied or his/her needs have changed;
- Equity concerns make such schedules prohibitive.

All efforts should be made between the supervisor and employee to reach an equitable resolution, however the final decision is at management's discretion. If a Flexible Work Schedule is being rescinded by a supervisor, they must provide a two-week notice to the employee. Human Resources can provide assistance to management and employees in evaluating the effectiveness of flexible work schedules. The Flexible Work Schedule Benefit is at the sole discretion of management and Human Resources. The University reserves the right to rescind the Flexible Work Week benefit with a two-week notice.