

FLEXIBLE AND COMPRESSED WORK WEEK ARRANGEMENTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a flexible and compressed workweeks arrangement?

A flexible work schedule allows staff to adjust their arrival and departure times during the work week, subject to manager/supervisor approval and the operational/business needs of the department. An example of a flexible work schedule is coming in at 7 am Monday through Friday, taking a 30 minute lunch each day and departing at 3:30 pm.

A compressed workweek allows staff to work longer days for part of the week in exchange of up to a day off each week. Compressed workweeks are most appropriate in situations where staff do not have to keep pace with the incoming work on a daily basis or where there are several staff members that perform the same or similar work. An example of a WT's compressed workweek is a four 10-hour day workweek in which the staff member would be off one (1) workday per week.

Who is eligible to request a flexible or compressed workweek arrangement?

Full time exempt and non-exempt staff (1.0 FTE) who are employed in a job position designated as suitable for flexible/compressed work arrangement.

Considerations for staff requesting flexible or compressed workweek arrangement:

- A flexible or compressed workweek is not appropriate for all positions, in all settings, or for all staff members.
- Staff who have difficulty with punctuality, attendance and/or performance, or who require close supervision, are not good candidates.
- A flexible or compressed workweek should not negatively affect the workload or productivity of coworkers either by shifting burdens or creating delays and additional steps in the workflow.
- A staff member on a flexible or compressed workweek should attempt, if possible, to schedule preventative appointments (doctor, dentist, child's school etc.) on his/her scheduled day off to limit further interruption to the workflow.

How does a staff member request a flexible or compressed workweek arrangement?

The employee submits a written or verbal request to his/her manager/supervisor. The manager/supervisor will discuss the request with the employee and his/her department head. If the employee is approved for the flexible or compressed workweek, a Flexible or Compressed Work Schedule Request is completed and a trial period of three (3) months will be established. The employee's respective Vice President will grant the final approval before the agreement is official. During the trial period both the employee and the manager/supervisor should make note of what works well and what does not with the flexible or compressed work week.

What happens once the trial period has ended?

Within ten (10) days of the end of the trial period, the manager/supervisor should complete a review of the flexible or compressed workweek to determine:

- Did we have coverage available as necessary to meet operational and business needs?
- What has been the positive impact of the flexible or compressed workweek?
- Has there been positive and/or negative impact on co-workers?
- How has the schedule impacted customers/clients or others who work with the department?
- Was Outlook used to identify staff member's schedule and was that effective for setting meetings?

- Were preventative/non-emergent appointments (doctor/dentist/child's school) scheduled on days off to reduce additional time out of the office?
- Were performance expectations met? Were deadlines met, calls returned timely, etc.?
- Was staff member available on days off for emergencies? If yes, and the staff is non-exempt, did the manager/supervisor make sure to account for all time "working" and edit the timecard appropriately?

Following the assessment, the employees original **Flexible or Compressed Work Schedule Request** should be updated to designate whether the flexible or compressed workweek will continue or be terminated. This updated form should be returned to HR.

How does the flexible or compressed workweek affect requests for paid leave (vacation, sick)?

Employees must have an established schedule based on the flexible or compressed workweek and will be expected to take leave based upon the schedule. This means requesting ten (10) hours for a full day absence if they normally work 10 hours on that day.

If a paid holiday falls on a day the staff member is not normally scheduled to work, can one of the other regularly scheduled days be taken off that week?

Exempt and Non-Exempt staff will earn eight (8) hours of holiday time, on the holiday. The staff member will adjust their time during the week to reach their scheduled hours or complete a vacation leave request for the additional time. Example:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Regular Schedule	10	10	10	10	Off
Friday Holiday Option 1	8	8	8	8	8 holiday hours
Friday Holiday Option 2	Use 2 hours leave time or work 2 hours	10	10	10	8 holiday hours

Any change in the employee's regular schedule must be reviewed and approved by their manager / supervisor.

How do you address paid holidays when the holiday falls on the staff member's normal scheduled day?

Exempt and Non-Exempt staff: When the holiday occurs on one of the four ten-hour work days, eight (8) holiday hours are applied to that day. In order to have 40 hours for the week, all staff will need to work additional hours on their scheduled days or use vacation or comp leave for two (2) more hours on the holiday.

Example:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Regular Schedule	10	10	10	10	Off
Monday Holiday Option 1	8 holiday hours – Employee submits 2 hours of leave time	10	10	10	Off
Monday Holiday Option 2	8 holiday hours	10	10	10	Work two hours if no annual leave is available

Any change in the employee's regular schedule must be reviewed and approved by their manager / supervisor.

How does a staff member request a flexible or compressed workweek arrangement?

The staff member should review the flexible or compressed workweek Arrangements procedure, and discuss the option of arrangement with his/her manager/supervisor. The employee and the manager/supervisor should engage in honest discussion about whether the option of telework would be appropriate for the employee, the department and the University. Complete the *Flexible or Compressed Work Schedule Request*.

Can my request for flexible or compressed workweek arrangement telework be denied?

Yes. A flexible or compressed workweek is not universal or an entitlement. Through flexible or compressed workweek, telework WTAMU is striving to balance the needs of the staff and department. A flexible or compressed workweek arrangements work best when there is a positive contribution to the staff member's work/life balance while not negatively impacting productivity and availability. Manager/supervisors need to assess the business need and continuity of operations, customer service and to assure meeting individual and department goals are not negatively impacted.

Who has to approve my request for flexible or compressed workweek arrangement?

Your manager/supervisor and your department head. The employee's respective Vice President will grant the final approval before the agreement is official.

What happens if I transfer to another position and/or department? Does my flexible and compressed workweek arrangements move with me?

No. An employee will need to visit with their new manager/supervisor to see if an arrangement will work in the new position.

Can my manager/supervisor amend/terminate my flexible and compressed workweek arrangement?

Yes. With a ten (10) business day written notice, your manager/supervisor may change or terminate your flexible and compressed workweek arrangements. There may be many reasons to terminate or amend the agreements, including operational changes, staffing changes, leadership changes, performance, etc. If amending the agreement, a new flexible and compressed workweek arrangement agreement must be completed.

If you receive a verbal warning, written warning, performance improvement plan, or suspension for deficiencies in performance, attendance or conduct, your flexible and compressed workweek arrangement agreement will be terminated **immediately**.

May I amend/terminate my own flexible and compressed workweek arrangement agreement?

Yes. You may request to amend or terminate the flexible and compressed workweek arrangement agreement with ten (10) day's written notice. Manager/supervisors may agree to a shorter notice. If amending the agreement, a new flexible and compressed workweek arrangement agreement must be completed.

Manager/supervisor FAQs for flexible and compressed workweek arrangements

What are the benefits of flexible and compressed workweek arrangements?

Benefits of Flexible and compressed workweek arrangements may include: Improved productivity; employee retention and engagement; uninterrupted time for creative, repetitive or highly detailed work; cost savings by reducing staff turnover and training costs; improved recruitment as telework options may attract more and higher quality candidates for positions.

I have employees who want to have flexible and compressed workweek arrangements, but I need them physically in the office during all normal WT business hours. What do I do?

Manager/supervisors are not obligated to approve flexible and compressed workweek arrangements. If there is a business need for employees to physically be in the office, you can choose not to designate job positions as suitable for flexible and compressed workweek arrangement work. If position is suitable for flexible and compressed workweek arrangement, you still may deny an employee's request based on the employee eligibility above.

I'm uncomfortable with the thought that I may be pressured by my staff to use flexible and compressed workweek options. How can I put this in perspective?

As a manager/supervisor, you are the ultimate arbiter to determine if a flexible and compressed workweek arrangement is appropriate for your department and staff. It is important that you fairly and consistently consider each staff member's request, but you are not obligated to approve every proposal.

How do I address the situation where I approve one staff member's flexible and compressed workweek arrangements request but not another?

All decisions should be focused on business needs and objective criteria related to work performance and job demands. Use a consistent approach to analyze the situation. Document the basis for your decisions in case questions should arise later.

Can flexible and compressed workweek arrangements be adjusted for a limited period to meet fluctuating work demands?

Yes. If you have staff working on a special project or a seasonal event (payment dates), manager/supervisors have discretion to allow this. Manager/supervisor's should give adequate notice to the employee of the temporary change in schedule to meet the demand of the office and University.