

Flexible Work Arrangements Operational Guide for Managers and Supervisors

The operational guide is a tool to assist supervisors and managers with the implementation of flexible work arrangements in their units.

Position Reviews

Management must first determine based upon the nature of an employees' work if the employee's position is suited for a flexible work arrangement.

Consider the following questions when determining if a position is suited for flexible work arrangements:

1. What are the operational needs of the university and the work unit related to this position?
2. Does the position require a high level of in-person contact or physical presence to perform the job effectively?
3. Does the position function as part of a team that requires consistent working hours for all team members?
4. Does the position require significant in-person communication with anyone?
5. Does the position require high on-site visibility to perform the job effectively?
6. Are there time, location or protocol restrictions on how the position's work must be performed?
7. Does the schedule result in continued or increased worker productivity for the employee, the manager and/or the work unit?
8. What is the position's degree of autonomy and independence?
9. Can any required work-related data or files be accessed in a secure and confidential manner from a remote work location?

If a manager/supervisor determines that an employee can perform a portion or all required work using a flexible schedule or from an alternative work location, the manager/supervisor can determine what types of flexible work arrangements are appropriate for the position and the incumbent.

Establish Core Work Hours for the Department/Unit

Core work hours are the primary operating hours for the unit. In order to ensure effective operations and service delivery, each college, division, and administrative unit must establish core work hours:

- The regular work hours for the university are 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday, however, some divisions or departments may have expanded core hours established based on their essential work activities (e.g., the NC Veterinary Hospital, which has

evening and night shifts).

- Units that have instituted core hours that exceed 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday may have alternating shift schedules that provide greater flexibility around their extended core hours.

Flexible work arrangements enable managers/supervisors to shift employee work hours as long as their department or unit still meets operational needs. For example, a department with core hours of 8 a.m.–5 p.m. may allow some employees to work from 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. while other employees work from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. In this example, operations are covered during the core hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Identify Flexible Work Options

Multiple flexible work arrangements may be possible given the needs of a department or unit, including adjusted work hours, compressed work schedules and/or alternate work locations. Not all flexible work arrangements will be appropriate for all eligible positions.

Consider these questions when identifying flexible schedule options for positions determined to be suitable for flexible work:

1. What are the present and future operational and staffing needs of the work unit?
2. What is the employee's level of performance and experience on the job?
3. What are the work/life needs of the employee? And for what period of time?
4. Will this flexible work arrangement create employee relations issues, such as perceived favoritism?
5. Are requests for flexible schedules being handled in a manner that is fair, equitable and consistent with business necessity?
6. Does management have sufficient budget to provide necessary office supplies and equipment for alternate work locations?
7. Does management have the ability to effectively monitor an employee's work that occurs outside the supervisor's regular schedule or from an alternate work location?
8. If applicable, can the supervisor continue to assure compliance with federal wage-hour regulations regarding work that occurs outside the supervisor's regular schedule and away from the campus work location?
9. If a proposed telework location is outside of North Carolina, has the department received approval from UHR for an exception for remote work out of state. Has the department considered the additional HR employment law implications for that state, payroll and tax-related costs and setup time required to employ the individual?
10. Will the employee be able to conduct business meetings with university or other personnel via phone, teleconference and/or videoconference?
11. Will the employee have access to all necessary work-related data or files at the teleworking site, and can the security and confidentiality of this information be assured as required by university policy and best practices?

12. Does the proposed change in the employee’s schedule create an increased workload on other employees in the unit?
13. Does the employee have any active disciplinary actions or current challenges meeting performance expectations?
14. What is the proposed duration of the arrangement?

Flexible Work Hours

Flexible work hours are hours that can extend outside of a department or unit’s core work hours. Schedule adjustments should take into account operational needs during core hours, the overlap of an employee’s work hours with the core work hours and related operational logistics. UHR recommends that flexible work hours fall within two hours of a department’s core work hours based upon the factors above.

Flexible Work Schedules/Compressed Work Week Schedules

Flexible work schedules or compressed workweek schedules enable eligible employees to consolidate their work hours into fewer than five workdays per week. A position’s exemption status under the wage and hours laws of the Fair Labor Standards Act is a key consideration in compressed workweek scheduling.

FLSA-Exempt Employees Considerations

- FLSA-exempt employees can work 40 hours per week over four days but schedules that make the employees’ workdays exceed 10 hours per day should be avoided when possible. FLSA-exempt positions allow for two types of compressed work schedules:
 - Four 10s: As explained above, this schedule is when an employee works four 10-hour days in one week.
 - The 9/4 split: This schedule is when an employee works nine hours per day for four days and four hours one day of the week.
- FLSA-exempt employees can work 80 hours over two weeks, but no workday should exceed 10 hours per day. Here are two scheduled to consider:
 - The 9-8-1: An employee works nine hours per day for eight days over two weeks and eight hours for one day during that period. The employee gets one day off during the period.
 - The 9/80: An employee works 80 hours over nine workdays in a two-week period and gets one day off every other week.

Hours/Day					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4-10s Schedule					
Week 1	off	10	10	10	10
9/4 Split					
Week1	9	9	9	9	4
9-8-1 Schedule					
Week 1	9	9	9	9	9
Week 2	8	9	9	9	off
9/80 Schedule					
Week 1	10	10	10	8	8
Week 2	10	10	10	4	off

Sample Compressed Schedules

- FLSA-exempt employees working compressed weeks (36 hours in one week and 44 hours in the next) should have language included in their flexible work agreement that states leave is not necessary to be used in the shorter week to get the hours to 40.
- Manager discretion should be based on business/operational needs. Try to limit stress or placing additional workload on other employees but do accommodate employee needs in a progressive manner. For example, if an employee needs to transport their kids to and from swim team practice, allow that employee to work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on-site and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. remotely. Hybrid remote and flexible schedules can be combined if approved by the manager.

FLSA Non-Exempt Positions Considerations

Regular schedules for employees subject to the FLSA must not exceed 40 hours per workweek. FLSA nonexempt employees can work a four-day ten hours a day schedule or FLSA nonexempt employees can work four 10-hour days or nine hours per day for four days and four hours for one day

- Four 10s: 10 hours per day for four days within one week; or,
- The 9/4 split: 9 hours per day for 4 days, and 4 hours per day for 1 day within one week.

All schedules must be approved by the supervisor. Supervisors can change or discontinue a modified schedule due to a change in public health conditions or the needs of their college, division or administrative unit. When possible, supervisors should give at least a 30-day notice to an employee before altering or revoking the employee's flexible work arrangement.

Part-Time Hours, FTE Reductions and Job Sharing

- A part-time employee may request to change the number of hours worked per week to meet personal obligations. Supervisors must approve of such schedule changes and ensure the employee can still meet the unit's business and operational needs. Permanent part-time hours changes are not recommended for short-term needs.
- A full-time employee may request to work part-time. If the request is approved, the employee's unit will have to reduce the full-time equivalency of the position. Supervisors can approve such requests, and they must ensure that the employee continues to meet the business needs of the unit.

Note: Please be aware any change that results in an employee working reduced hours per week can change the employee's benefits and retirement earnings and eligibility statuses. Supervisors should review any permanent reductions to an employee's to under 40 per week with your HR representative or a UHR benefits consultant.

- Job sharing is when two employees perform the work of one full-time position. Each employee works reduced hours occupying the same position to meet the position's full-time equivalency. For example, two employees may work in the same position for 20 hours per week, each rotating their work schedules if reporting on-site. They can work simultaneously if one or both of them is performing the work remotely. The planned schedule for the position should not routinely exceed 40 hours per week.

Note: Please be aware that compensatory time is earned based on when an employee works above their own FTE and is not based on the combined hours worked. The intent of a flexible work schedule is not to generate a schedule that enables overtime or compensatory time earnings.

- In limited approved situations, employees whose work schedule allows for the sharing of space may be assigned shared space or hoteling space based upon management's assessment of the necessary on-site workspace.

Alternate Work Locations (Remote Work or Telework)

- Employees may be allowed or required to work at an alternate worksite, such as their home or another work location, as approved by their supervisor.
- Supervisors can approve alternate work locations, however, the feasibility of these locations must be monitored regularly and may be changed. All off-site work locations must comply with the requirements established by Security & Compliance in the Office of Information Technology and with Environmental Health and Safety workplace safety standards. Please review the [OIT remote work resources and guidelines](#) for instruction on keeping university data secure and accessing technology for remote work. EHS provides resources related to [Ergonomics & Safety When Working Remotely](#).
- Employees working remotely must have the appropriate resources (e.g., access to university systems and/or software) needed to complete their work assignments. Computer access must be university-owned when necessary for complying with data security controls outlined in the [end point protection standard](#). The access of university systems for work purposes must follow OIT protocol using VPN and/or trusted networks.
- Employees will not be reimbursed for personal expenses to maintain work activities provided under a flexible work arrangement.
- Any out-of-state work location must be temporary (not to exceed six months) and must comply with the out-of-state work agreement provisions.

Student Workers

Supervisors of graduate student teaching assistants or research assistants are not required to utilize this request process. Other student workers employed as graduate services assistants or temporary employees will follow the request processes established in their employing college or division for student employees.

Manager/Supervisor Responsibilities

Managers/supervisors should:

- Assess the suitability of implementing flexible work arrangements in their units based on operational needs.
- Conduct flexible work arrangement position assessments and review employee flexible work arrangement requests in a fair and unbiased manner.
- Implement consistent mandatory schedule expectations and regular communication check-ins. For example, the expectations of your unit might be:
 - Telephone coverage must be in place five days a week, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - All staff must attend staff meetings (via telephonic conferencing or in person) and/or be available for regular check-ins at a mutually convenient time.

- All staff members are required to ensure that their contact information in MyPack Portal is up-to-date, and they must be reachable by phone, email, video conferencing or other electronic resources during regular business hours.
- All staff members are expected to be available as if they were physically on-site and accessible using a variety of modes of communication (e.g., forwarded phone, email, voicemail) with comparable response times from the alternate work location.
- Establish core work hours. Communicate the hours in a workday when all staff members are expected to be available to meet essential business needs. Meetings are typically scheduled during this time.
- Establish bandwidth work hours: Define the earliest and latest time periods during a day that employees should be working remotely to meet operational needs. Additionally, define the number of allowable telework days. For employees who are subject to the wage and hour provisions of the FLSA, it is important that work start and stop times are specifically defined so overtime is not incurred unless approved.
- Establish core obligations and business requirements. Set expectations for communication, work, equipment, systems security and safety requirements.
- Conduct an assessment of positions to determine eligibility for the various work options available.
- Set expectations for the delivery of work performed remotely, and ask employees to provide updates or share documents so you can monitor their progress on completing tasks.
- Supervisors should give employees no less than a 30-day notice of a change or end to their approved flexible work arrangement unless there is an immediate business need or public health emergency.
- Review flexible work arrangements incrementally (e.g., one to three-month pilot intervals) but no less than annually for participating employees. The annual performance management cycle is a good time to assess the arrangement in direct correlation with an employee's overall performance.

Note: Managers should consult Employee Relations in UHR prior to revoking an employee's flexible work arrangement. Management has the discretion to implement a temporary alteration of a flexible work arrangement due to critical operational needs (i.e., staffing shortage) on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions to the minimum notice period may be made, in consultation with Employee Relations for reasons such as employee misconduct, safety issues, an immediate change in the business and/or operational needs of the unit or department, and/or significant or sustained performance deficiencies, which may require a shorter notice period.

Supervisors and managers have an opportunity to creatively utilize a fuller spectrum of scheduling options for their units to enhance productivity, coverage and flexibility. Be cautious of biases based on more traditional views of work hours related to one's work ethic. The workplace is experiencing significant change and employees' motivations and reward preferences may have shifted. Employees with children may need greater flexibility with ongoing pandemic modifications being made across various school systems. Employees with household members who are at greater risk of illness or need care may also prefer scheduling flexibility. Slight modifications in employees schedules or the ability to work remotely may enable a strong, productive member of the NC State community to stay rather than seek more flexibility with other employers. Likewise, it is important to assign new

opportunities to qualified employees with flexible work arrangements as equitably as those with traditional schedules.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees participating in any portion of the flexible work arrangements program are subject to the same employment terms and conditions of their position. Employees are responsible for:

- Adhering to the time and attendance criteria in place for their approved work option.
- Satisfactory performance and completion of their work assignments.
- Regular communication with their supervisor as defined in their work arrangement.
- Employees with a flexible work arrangement must be able to balance their duties with other external obligations and must perform their duties free of external interruptions to the greatest extent possible.
- Understanding that flexible working arrangements are not substitutes for child or elder care. Employees working remotely must be able to provide dedicated working hours remotely.
- Complying with all university policies, regulations and procedures to include continual compliance with known university work rules, data security and safety procedures on-site and when at alternative work locations.
- Identifying a dedicated workspace that meets the data security and workplace safety requirements.
- Giving their supervisor no less than 10 working days notice of a request to change or end their approved flexible work arrangement. Emergencies may be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- Understanding that failure to meet the expectations outlined may result in loss of ability to continue with their flexible work arrangement.
- Maintaining and protecting any university-owned equipment that they are using in an alternate work arrangement.
- Any expenses arising out of an approved alternate work location, unless directed by the university.

Equipment and Materials

NC State may provide an employee using an alternate work location with necessary office supplies and equipment, if the individual unit deems appropriate and necessary to perform the essential functions of the job. An inventory of all university-owned equipment used by an employee at their alternate work location must be maintained. All university-owned resources provided to the employee must be used primarily for university business and in accordance with applicable NC State policies, regulations and rules, including but not limited to all requirements around data security and IT regulations. The employee will take reasonable steps to protect all university-owned equipment from theft, damage, or misuse.

Common examples of university provided equipment:

- LAPTOP
- MONITOR (1 OR 2)
- MOUSE
- KEYBOARD
- DOCKING STATION
- PRINTER

- SCANNER/FAX
- CAMERA (PORTABLE)
- HEADPHONES/MICROPHONE
- CABLES

Note: Special requests for ergonomic supplies may be provided if previously approved for ADA-related accommodation, or at management's discretion.

Accounting for Absences, Leave, and Pay

Employees working in alternate locations are subject to the same time and leave policies as on-site employees. Please visit the [WolfTime FAQs](#) for information on timekeeping options and instructions.

Monday through Friday is the traditional workweek, however, flexible scheduling may extend to a Saturday or Sunday, when it meets the operational needs of the unit.

Holidays. The time administration system counts the number of hours worked in the week of a holiday without any consideration of individual schedule. If the holiday falls on July 5th and an employee's schedule does not include Monday, the employee will still earn the gap leave time because their actual hours worked is above the hours needed in the week of the holiday.

Shift-premium pay may need to be considered if schedules vary across work weeks for FLSA non-exempt employees. Schedules that would result in overtime pay for FLSA non-exempt employees should not be allowed under this arrangement. Schedules that create shift premium pay should be avoided to the greatest extent possible based on business needs.

Employees working compressed schedules need to account for weeks when leave is taken differently. If the employee works a schedule that is more than 8 hours a day, the employee will need to adjust the Scheduled Daily Hrs field on their leave request to reflect the correct schedule. Employees who enter time daily should not work schedules that will exceed 40 hours in one work week.

Employees who are FLSA-Exempt and do not record daily time entries should use the following formula to enter their leave:

- 40 minus the number of total hours worked for the week equals the number of hours to enter for leave.

Additional information about [work hours and timekeeping](#) are available on the UHR website.

Posting Vacant Positions

Hiring managers are encouraged to advertise on their postings any positions that are eligible for flexible work arrangements. This is a valuable recruiting tool and opportunity to attract top talent.

Requirements and Preferences

* **Work Schedule**

This field is required.

The information in the box above will show in the posting.

Use the “Work Schedule” field in PeopleAdmin shown above to list the unit’s core business hours, and add one of the statements below:

“This position may be eligible for flexible work arrangements.”

“This position may be eligible for hybrid remote work.”

If a position is only eligible for a defined arrangement, you can specifically list that there.

Flexible Schedules and ADA or Religious Accommodations

If an employee requests an accommodation due to medical or religious reasons, that employee should be directed to the [Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity](#).