

**Flextime Work Arrangement Frequently Asked Questions**

*This FAQ resource is for employees in non-represented (academic or non-academic) classifications and managers who are responsible for supervising such employees. Collective Bargaining Unit employees (i.e., represented) must comply with rules outlined in their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements (Refer to [APPM 3.0.6](#)).*

**A. Flexible Work Arrangement and Flextime Things to Know**

**1. What are the differences between a flexible work arrangement and flextime?**

- a) *Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are pre-approved agreements between a supervisor and employee that allow the employee to complete his/her employment duties while working non-traditional schedules.*
- b) *Flextime is a system by which employees are provided some degree of freedom to choose their working hours, subject to operational needs and management approval. Flextime allows an employee to flex his/her start or end time, with prior approval from the supervisor.*

**2. What are the advantages and challenges of flextime flexible work arrangement?**

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Challenges</u>
Allows changes in schedule without any reduction in hours and, thus, income. As a result, they are among the easiest flexible work arrangements to manage.	Loosely structured flextime arrangements may present several challenges, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequate department coverage and customer service and ability to monitor overtime for non-exempt staff</li> </ul>
Improves comfort and efficiency on the job.	In areas where several staff members work flextime schedules, it may be a challenge to coordinate staff members' schedules for adequate department coverage and customer service.
Can tailor workday to family commitments and schedules (such as taking children to and from care givers or being home when children return from school).	Staff may be more difficult to supervise.
May accommodate non-routine commitments such as family illness, health care appointments, or special events.	It may be a challenge to sustain morale among staff members who do not have the opportunity to work a flextime schedule but see others who work a flextime schedule.
Potential for more convenient commute.	If a flextime schedule is agreed to, typically a staff member will be able to return to their original work arrangement, if arrangement is still available. However, this should be discussed during the approval process.

**B. Initiating a New or Continuing an Existing Arrangement****General****1. How do I initiate a flextime schedule arrangement?**

*An employee requesting a flextime schedule must complete the Flexible Work Arrangement Pilot Proposal, prior to beginning a pilot and the Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement, after the successful completion of the pilot period and gain written approval in advance of beginning a flextime schedule.*

**2. How far in advance should an employee formally request flextime, prior to the anticipated need?**

*Employees who would like to request a flextime schedule should notify their supervisor a minimum of two weeks in advance of their need and complete a Flexible Work Arrangement Pilot Proposal form.*

**3. Are the flextime arrangement procedures different for exempt and non-exempt employees?**

*No, arrangement procedures do not differ. Unit supervisors/managers must submit their flexible work arrangements for exempt and non-exempt (hourly) employees to their HR Client Services Human Resources Consultant prior to approval of a flextime schedule arrangement.*

*All flexible work arrangement forms (for both non-exempt and exempt employees) must be forwarded to HR for indexing into the employee's personnel file, once signature approvals are granted.*

**4. How long can a flextime schedule arrangement remain in place?**

*Flextime schedule arrangements must be piloted for three months, prior to final approval. Once approved, flextime schedule arrangements must be reviewed annually, at the beginning of each calendar year, by the supervisor to determine if the arrangement is still a viable option for the department.*

**5. What steps should an employee take to discontinue/terminate an approved flexible schedule arrangement? What work schedule will I revert back to?**

- a) *Employees can request to terminate an approved flexible schedule arrangement by providing the request in writing to his/her supervisor.*
- b) *If an employee's flextime schedule is terminated by the employee or supervisor, he/she may return to the pre-flextime work schedule, if that schedule is still available.*
- c) *If the pre-flextime schedule is not available, the supervisor will determine the appropriate work schedule, based on the needs of the business.*

## Flextime Work Arrangement Frequently Asked Questions

**C. Core Hours and Work Schedule**

- 1. What are core hours? What are the university's core hours and do I have to work during the core hours every day?**

*The university defines core hours as a subset of hours when all employees are expected to be at the office. All employees are expected to be at work during core hours. Core hours for are established by the vice president of the respective business unit.*

- 2. If I work more hours than my original schedule (working more than 37.5 hours a week), am I eligible for over time?**

*"Employees holding non-exempt (hourly) positions as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, with the exception of Technicians and Instructional Assistants, are entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time off for all authorized time worked in excess of seven and one-half hours in any one day, and 37.5 hours in any one work week..." (refer to [NRM 3.12](#)).*

*Exempt (salaried) employees are not entitled to overtime pay.*

- 3. Do I need to establish a new schedule that has a consistent start and end time, or can my start and end times vary throughout the week?**

*Yes, the schedule can vary if approved by the supervisor and department head, provided the flexible work schedule is consistent with the university's core hours. Flextime schedules however; must be consistent from week-to-week.*

**D. Employees****General**

- 1. I currently flex my schedule, which was previously agreed upon by my supervisor, prior to the rollout of the Flextime Policy.**

- a) Do I still need to formally request a flextime schedule arrangement and complete a Flexible Work Arrangement form?**

*Yes, employees who have been granted a flextime schedule prior to the roll-out of the Flextime Policy, must also complete A Flexible Work Arrangement form.*

- b) Am I still required to complete the 3-month pilot period?**

*It is up to the supervisor to determine whether an employee will need to complete the 3-month pilot period, in instances when an agreement is being continued from a previous arrangement with the current supervisor.*

- 2. Now that we have a flextime policy, does this mean that I can work from home?**

*No, this does not mean you can work from home. The only flexible work arrangement Approved for use at WSU is flextime. The university **does not** have a policy governing the use of other FWAs such as compressed work week or telecommuting.*

## Flextime Work Arrangement Frequently Asked Questions

**3. If I am promoted (or transferred) into a different non-represented position in another department, while working under an approved flexible work arrangement:****a) Does the arrangement follow me to my new department?**

*No, the flextime schedule arrangement **does not** follow you when moving to a new department.*

*An employee will have to complete a new Flexible Work Arrangement Pilot Proposal form; complete the 3-month pilot period, fill-out the Flexible Arrangement Form (after successful completion of the pilot period) and gain approval from his/her supervisor.*

**4. I am an exempt employee who may need to come in early or stay late based upon the work and deadlines:****a) Do I need to complete the Flexible Work Arrangement form, if I am requesting to work an adjusted (i.e. flextime) schedule for other reasons, since I am not paid overtime?**

Yes, exempt employees are required to follow the provisions outlined in the flextime policy, if they are requesting a flextime schedule arrangement.

**b) If the answer is “Yes”, will I need to complete a new form as the work priorities change, perhaps even daily?**

Yes, exempt employees requesting to work a flextime schedule, will need to complete a FWA form and receive approval from their supervisor and department head, prior to beginning a flextime schedule.

**5. If I am on an approved flextime schedule arrangement, can I work through my lunch hour and leave?**

*No, you cannot. Flextime allows an employee to flex his/her start or end time, with prior approval from the supervisor. The policy states that, an employee who is approved for flextime **cannot** utilize his/her paid lunch hour and/or paid breaks to meet 37.5 or 40 hour work week requirement.*

*Working during lunch is not a satisfactory arrangement for making up lost time, resulting from a flextime schedule.*

**6. Can I be turned down if I request a flextime schedule arrangement option?**

*Yes, you can. Flextime schedules must be approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor/manager and their department head. Flexible schedule arrangements are not mandatory, universal, nor an entitlement. The intention of flexible work arrangements is to accommodate special needs of employees, while maintaining operational effectiveness.*

## Flextime Work Arrangement Frequently Asked Questions

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### 7. Can my supervisor change my flextime schedule arrangement or can I?

*Yes, flexible work arrangements can be terminated at any time, although every effort should be made to provide reasonable notice to the employee. Reasonable notice may vary depending upon the department and the circumstances.*

*What is most critical is that departments and offices have appropriate staffing; however, unforeseen occurrences may cause a supervisor to alter a flextime schedule arrangement on short notice.*

*Employees who are requesting a change to their flextime schedule arrangement must do so in writing, with approval granted by the supervisor and department head.*

### 8. Is it necessary to review my proposed flextime schedule request with my peers?

*All requests for a flextime schedule arrangement are ultimately reviewed and determined by the supervisor and department head. However, as a part of the review process, the supervisor will consider all factors that may impact the team's ability to perform the department's daily objectives. Once a flextime schedule arrangement has been approved, the supervisor will communicate work schedule information with the team, as appropriate.*

### 9. What should I do if I feel I have been unfairly denied my request for a flexible work arrangement?

*Employees should first speak with their supervisor to resolve the issue. If the discussion with the supervisor does not yield a resolution, the employee should speak with his/her department head. Ultimately, management has the right to not approve a flextime schedule request.*

## E. Supervisors

### General

#### 1. How will I interact with an employee who is on a flextime schedule arrangement?

*Interaction with an employee who you may not always see can be accomplished successfully through e-mail, telephone and other agreed upon communication methods. For employment duties to be completed as expected, open and regular communication is very important as are clearly laid out work assignments and due dates.*

#### 2. As a supervisor, I am uncomfortable with the thought that I may be pressured by my staff to utilize a flexible work arrangement. What is the best way for me to manage this?

*Supervisors are the ultimate arbiter of whether a flextime work arrangement is appropriate for their staff. Each employee's case must be considered fairly and consistently, but supervisors are not obligated to approve an employee's request for flextime scheduling.*

#### 3. How should multiple requests in a single unit be handled? Who will be given priority?

*Management should do its best to ensure appropriate staffing exists at all times. Supervisors must ultimately evaluate whether a flextime option is appropriate for their department and staff members. Each employee's case must be considered fairly and consistently; however, supervisors are not obligated to allow the use of or approve flextime.*

**Flextime Work Arrangement Frequently Asked Questions**

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**4. As a supervisor, how do I make the case for allowing an employee to utilize a flexible work arrangement?**

*Answering the following questions when assessing whether the positions in your area are conducive to flexible work arrangement will help you make well-informed decisions:*

- a. Will the department/office workflow be either neutrally or positively impacted by a flexible work arrangement?*
- b. How will my team communicate during this time period to manage and fulfill the work duties of the employee requesting a flexible work arrangement?*
- c. Has the employee satisfied his/her probationary, provisional or qualifying periods, prior to approval of the flexible work arrangement?*
- d. Has the employee received a performance rating of “Effective” or above on their prior year’s annual performance evaluation?*
- e. Can flexible work arrangements contribute to the overall effectiveness of the department and/or its workflow (e.g., could flextime arrangements extend your office’s availability to customers)?*

**5. If flexible schedule arrangements are available to all staff members, how will supervisors handle all of the requests and ensure adequate coverage?**

*Traditional schedules meet the needs of the majority of staff members. Staff members who do request flexible schedule arrangements most often ask for slight changes in their daily arrival and departure times, changes that pose the least challenge for a staff member's supervisor and co-workers. A supervisor/manager must still assess the needs of the business prior to approving a flexible schedule request.*