



# Flexible Work Arrangements

Supervisor's Guide to Compressed,  
Flextime, Hybrid, Flexplace and  
Remote Work

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## Introduction

Flexible (flex) work arrangements are privileges, not rights. The arrangement must be in the best interests of the University and periodic review of arrangements must be conducted by the supervisor/manager to ensure that it remains to the benefit of the unit and University.

## Deciding Which Jobs Can Accommodate Which Flexibility Options

All jobs are not amenable to all types of flexibility, and this can be a part of your dialogue with your staff as you explore flexibility for your team. Become familiar with the necessary skills, responsibilities, and processes will help you implement a successful flexible work environment for your team.

All supervisors and managers must familiarize themselves with the University Policy 7.7, which includes the Flexible Work Agreement. This will allow you to have an informed and constructive discussion concerning hybrid, flexplace or remote work arrangements.

If the employee is selected for a change of position or promotion to another role, the flexible work arrangement must be reviewed and shall not be considered as an automatic option for the changed position/role.

## Communicating What Is Possible In a Unit

Many supervisors and managers may be uncomfortable broaching the topic of flex work arrangements as they may encourage high expectations that employees will not be able to meet, that they will create conflict between employees, or that their team's ability to reach goals will be compromised.

Talk to your team early about your unit's goals how you will best serve our students, staff, faculty and community. There should be a shared understanding of who needs to be in place to reach the department's goals. This can help to head off unrealistic expectations. It allows the whole group to weigh the pros and cons of given options, and to problem solve together how they might work as a team to create a flexible work environment for all.

## Arrangement Options and Eligibility

### Options

<b>Compressed Work</b>	A schedule with a reduction in the number of workdays in a work week and changes to an employee's starting and departure times that are outside of a unit's usual or standard shift. The total number of hours worked in a workweek are not altered.
<b>Flextime</b>	A schedule with variations in which an employee's starting and departure times that fall outside of a unit's standard shift. The total number of hours worked in a workweek are not altered.
<b>Flexplace (Temporary Alternate Workplace)</b>	An on-campus work location other than the employee's primary or standard workplace, such as an alternate office, building, or campus.
<b>Hybrid Schedule</b>	A schedule that permits eligible employees to perform work in a combination of University Workplace and Flexplace. On-campus presence is at a minimum of 3 days onsite for any given work week.
<b>Remote Work Schedule</b>	A work arrangement that occurs 100% from an off-campus workplace. (Granted under limited circumstances.)

**SCHEDULES WITH AN ALTERNATE LOCATION COMPONENT ARE FLEXPLACE, HYBRID AND REMOTE WORK. THEY INCLUDE EITHER AN ON-CAMPUS OR OFF-CAMPUS LOCATION THAT IS NOT THE STAFF'S PRIMARY OR STANDARD LOCATION(S) PER THEIR ROLE.**

## Eligibility and Suitability

### Suitability

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*Not all positions are compatible with flex work arrangements.*

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Positions that require primarily in-person interactions on campus during core business hours to be most effective may not be suited for flex work. Other considerations may not support the implementation of flexible work arrangements, such as, but not limited to, overarching unit needs or mission essential functions.

Employees must be able to perform the same duties, assignments and other work obligations, including contact or collaboration that is necessary between coworkers and customers, as they would if working their standard schedule in their standard location.

### Eligibility Criteria

#### *General*

For employees to be considered eligible, they must:

Have received a 3-  
Good or higher on  
last evaluation

Not have received a  
notice of discipline  
in the preceding  
two (2) years

Not be on current  
Performance  
Improvement Plan

Not be on  
probationary  
period

#### *Staff Holding Non-Immigrant Work Visas*

*The Center for Global Engagement determines the feasibility of the flexible work arrangement for non-immigrant work visa holders. These employees may not be eligible for reasons such as, but not limited to,*

- *labor conditions*
- *prevailing wages*
- *physical/onsite presence requirements*

#### *Other Requirements – Non-Exempt Employees*

- ✓ *Employees are required to obtain their supervisor's pre-approval prior to working overtime.*
- ✓ *Hours cannot be extended beyond an employees' schedule that could potentially result in a shift differential.*

## Considerations For Establishing Flex Work Arrangements

**An employee is allowed only one flexible work agreement in force.** If an arrangement includes additional schedule considerations, choose the arrangement type that has the most impact or implications to the unit and most stipulations to meeting the expectations of your job. Oftentimes, but not always, these would be schedules with an alternate workplace component – flexplace, hybrid and remote work. Requests may include additional schedule considerations that need to be addressed as part of the supervisor’s review.

### Employee Fit

#### Accountability, Self-Direction & Job Knowledge

How much onsite supervision, oversight, or direction is needed by this employee?

Is the employee comfortable with physical isolation from other employees, and can they work independently, be self-directed and follow through in accomplishing their tasks?

Does this employee have the necessary job knowledge or do they need to demonstrate competency in a critical area before such an arrangement can be approved?

#### Engagement & Development

Can the employee miss some meetings and engagement activities? If not, how can these duties be scheduled in?

How can I help this employee succeed and remain motivated if this schedule is approved?

Will the arrangement affect existing career development plans or opportunities for this employee?

#### Employees with Supervisory Duties

Can they still effectively manage their team under the proposed work arrangement? Consider aspects such as, how would:

- Their employees have access and timely communication with them
- They monitor and measure team performance
- They maintain equity and balance with those they supervise

### Work Being Done And Environment

#### Productivity, Work Quality and Time Management

How will the employee receive the work that needs to be accomplished?

Can the employee complete the same amount of work while on a flex work arrangement (not including a reduced appointment)? Consider weekly, monthly, and annual work projects that need to be accounted for.

Does the workload need to be restructured or equipment or devices needed for the flex work arrangement? And can the employee create an off-campus work space that is safe (for them and for university equipment and information) and is free from distractions?

Does the employee have the technical, technological, and other operational systems and services needed to perform the work readily accessible or in place?

How will the flex work arrangement affect the workload of other employees?

How will I judge evaluate the impacts to productivity, work quality and time management?

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## Communication and Travel

How will workplace communication be affected by the flex work arrangement? Consider communication between the staff member and internal/external customers, co-workers, supervisors, others?

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How and how often will I check in with the employee to see how things are going?

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How much travel is required to do the job? Are the travel demands of the job aligned with the flex work arrangement?

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## Unit Logistics

Consider the impact to the unit's ability to provide services to the University community based on the particularities of flexible work arrangements requests submitted by any other employees in the unit.

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Which duties and responsibilities must be performed onsite and how often?

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Will the employee respond to the needs of you, the team or the work environment (such as be available to come in on short notice; suspend working from the alternate site during busiest times of the year, etcetera)?

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Will the employee respond to emergencies or other unexpected events within the unit?

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Supervisors and managers must assess what the advantages and disadvantages would be if the flexible schedule were implemented.

### Adjustment Period

If approval is given, consider establishing a pilot period to allow for adjustments necessary for success. Establish a check in process during the pilot period to evaluate how the new schedule is working for both the employee and the department. If the flexible schedule is not working, make fine tuned adjustments or return to a more standard work schedule.

## Maximizing Your Effectiveness As a Supervisor/Manager

### Be specific about expectations

Communicate with your employees and let them know what is expected of them in terms of work procedures. As with any work arrangement, ensure there is a clear, mutual understanding of and agreement on work assignments, expected outcomes, and anticipated timeframes. One big difference between flexplace/hybrid/remote work and office-based work is that flexplace/hybrid/remote work minimizes many of the opportunities for casual encounters where work goals and progress can be discussed "on the fly." Those casual meetings are replaced by more deliberate discussions planned in advance.

## Maintain equitable expectations and performance standards

Although flexible work arrangement schedules may often allow staff to get work done with fewer distractions, this does not mean that you should assign them more work or change expectations of their performance standards. Arrangements with an alternate workplace component only changes the place where work is being done. Avoid assigning staff more or less work than you normally would if they were in the office. However, if you do notice that a employee, on such an arrangement, has been able to produce more or better work (as is often the case), be sure to compliment them so that they know the extra effort is not taken for granted.

## Establish communication techniques for staying in touch and keeping employees engaged and motivated

Establish effective communication techniques for maintaining contact with any employee on a flexible work arrangement, in particular, flexplace/hybrid/remote employees and for enabling/encouraging them to stay in touch with customers, colleagues, faculty and staff.

As with most work situations, effective communication is an asset. As the supervisor, you may need to change your typical worksite style depending on the employee's schedule. Encourage and facilitate ongoing communications between these employees and their in-office peers (if applicable). Colleagues should not encounter that it is harder to access or get a response from an employee on a flexible work arrangement than when they are working their standard schedule.

Keep in mind, however, that no manager has 100% access to his or her staff all the time even when everyone is working in the office and their standard schedule.

## Clarify procedures for discussing concerns and performance issues

Should an employee begin to show performance deficiencies, it is not necessarily due to the work itself. When your employee(s) are ready to begin a work arrangement, make it clear from the onset that you will be focusing on their work results. If those results begin to slip, you will address them as you would if they were on campus - by addressing and analyzing the problem to determine its causes.

If they do not perform satisfactorily, you will work with them to uncover causes and to implement a solution (perhaps with some coaching, training, additional feedback, wellness support services, etc.). This is the time to be creative with your staff in addressing the cause of the unsatisfactory performance.

If the work arrangement appears to be a factor in the performance issues, discuss your concerns with the employee. Consider a temporary adjustment to the employee's work schedule and/or work location.

Continue providing feedback and sharing performance observations with the employee. If performance improves, consider if the employee may return to their prior work arrangement or if it may be advisable to remain on the adjusted schedule. If performance is not improving, advise the employee that a performance improvement plan may be required, or the flex work arrangement may be discontinued.

You can also contact HR – Employee Relations for assistance.

## Managing by Results/Outcomes

Effective performance management techniques create a results-oriented environment that enables supervisors to make a smooth and easy transition to managing employees with flexible work agreements. The key is to focus on the final product, not the processes used to develop it. This requires joint understanding and discussion between the manager and employee. It also requires that the manager have a strong understanding of how long tasks take to complete, and what complexities employees must deal with to achieve the outcome desired.

Performance standards for employees do not change whether they are on-site or remote. Performance management involves two distinct operations specifying:

- ✓ Attainable work objectives and standards.
- ✓ Reviewing performance and giving feedback.

### Attainable work objectives and standards

A clear discussion of objectives and standards must take place up front between you and your team member(s).

- ✓ Review current job tasks and responsibilities.
- ✓ Establish measurable outcomes and deliverables.
- ✓ Establish communication and participation expectations.
- ✓ Specify who receives or monitors the outcomes and deliverables, as well as when interim checkpoints and due dates will occur.
- ✓ Use language that avoids subjectivity, vagueness and interpretation.
- ✓ Be clear and specific to avoid misunderstandings about what is needed.
- ✓ Link outcomes and deliverables to the University's organizational goals. It is important that all employees understand the importance of work functions in relationship to the strategic plan, goals, mission, and services.

### Reviewing performance and giving feedback

Employees should not have to guess your expectations.

- ✓ Be clear and provide feedback often.
- ✓ Schedule routine evaluations of the work model and revise as necessary. This applies to both ongoing, formal evaluation of job performance and just-in-time, result-oriented feedback.

## Executing an Agreement

A flexible work **arrangement** is the request by the employee that routes to all applicable levels of hierarchical review for approval. Supervisors must execute the **agreement** as a final step by ensuring that the start date is accurate, and selecting the end date so that the agreed upon duration is met. Once the agreement is executed, the employee can shift to the new schedule and/or location.

## Agreement Modifications

Modifications to an executed agreement are limited in scope as they can only address revisions to established parameters or conditions, such as work hours or workdays. Modifications must be requested in writing by the employee and approved by the supervisor, with additional hierarchical review, as deemed appropriate, prior to approval. The approved modification requires both the employee and supervisor's signature and date of execution, and must be added to the employee's Flexible Work Agreement file.

## When/If a Flexible Workplace Arrangement Ends

Any Flexible Work Agreement may be discontinued at the discretion of the University at any time or, if in place for a defined period of time, expire accordingly.

Discontinuation of an agreement in non-emergency circumstances, requires the supervisor/manager to give advance written notice of at least 15 calendar days. Supervisors and managers must ensure that:

- All University property is returned in good condition.

In the event of a campus emergency or other matter that requires an employee to report to their assigned campus/location, notice of less than 15 days is permitted.

The employee may request to discontinue the agreement.

## Resources

Flexible Work Arrangements Webpage: [https://www.fau.edu/hr/employee\\_relations/flexwork.php](https://www.fau.edu/hr/employee_relations/flexwork.php)