



Subject: Flex Work Arrangement Policy

Office Responsible for Annual Review of this Policy: Human Resources

Related University Policies: N/A

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## I. SCOPE

This policy applies to full-time staff.

## II. POLICY STATEMENT

The university recognizes the growing demands on staff while at work and the increasing challenge of finding new and better ways of serving students, other customers and meeting the university goals. American University supports flex work arrangements to foster a highly desirable and productive work environment that is responsive to these demands and challenge. The University expects that flexible work arrangements will increase retention and recruitment of highly qualified staff, maintain staff productivity, and promote employee engagement.

While not all positions will be amenable to flex work arrangements, consideration of flexible work schedules will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis taking into account the departmental needs and the employee's ability to maintain a high level of service. The University expects that implementation of flexible work arrangements will enhance the quantity, quality, and productivity of the employee's level of service. A flex arrangement must be authorized in advance by an authorized official.

## III. DEFINITIONS

Flex arrangement, flexible work arrangement, or flexible arrangement – work hours, work week that vary from the standard schedule of the department in which the staff member works. Flex arrangements include flex time, compressed work week, and reduced work schedules.

Flex time – agreed-upon starting and departure times that differ from the standard schedule for the department. The schedules may be fixed for a period or can vary from day to day.

Compressed work week – regularly scheduled hours worked are fixed over fewer than five days a week.

Reduced work schedule – either a reduction in regularly scheduled hours worked each week (i.e. 28 hours), or a partial year appointment (i.e. 9, 10, or 11 months) to permit a block of time off during a non-peak season for the department. The employee maintains full-time status and leave accruals are earned on a pro-rated basis.

Core office hours – a block of hours within the work day or work week, determined by the department based on their unit’s business needs, during which all employees are expected to be at work and available for meetings and other departmental activities.

Authorized official – Cabinet members are responsible for approving flex work arrangements for their direct reports, Deans of academic units for staff in their schools/colleges. Direct reports to the cabinet are responsible for approving flex work arrangements for any staff member in their units. Please contact human resources to determine the authorized official in the affected department.

#### IV. POLICY

##### *General Information and Guidelines for All Flex Work Arrangements*

Flex work arrangements are discretionary based upon the operational needs of the department and must have the prior approval of the authorized official. Either the employee or supervisor may initiate discussion of flexible work arrangements. General factors to be considered when evaluating feasibility of flex arrangements include:

- employee is maintaining satisfactory performance and attendance
- employee’s ability to work independently, including desire to be successful in a flex schedule
- employee’s communication skills
- nature of the work to be performed
- impact on the department’s operations and other employees

If a flex arrangement is desirable, the employee and supervisor will jointly submit a written proposal to the authorized official which should include the following elements:

- the specific details of the flex arrangement
- duration of a trial period to determine effectiveness of arrangement
- frequency of review (at least annually) of flex arrangement

The Flexible Work Arrangement Request Form should be used. The written proposal is reviewed by the staff member's direct supervisor and submitted to the authorized official for consideration.

Flex arrangements may be modified or terminated as needed to ensure that the arrangement does not negatively impact the employee's or the unit's work quantity, quality, or productivity.

All flex arrangements must conform to the overtime, record keeping, meal break and other provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and other relevant laws. Lunches and/or scheduled rest period are not eliminated when staff works a flex arrangement. An employee may not use the university grievance procedure to grieve a decision on a request for a flex arrangement unless the employee believes the decision violates the university's nondiscrimination policies.

#### *Guidelines for Flextime and Compressed Work Week*

In addition to the factors listed in the general guidelines above, for compressed workweek schedules, supervisors should consult with human resources for changes in recording time on timesheets and impact on leave.

#### *Guidelines for Reduced Work Schedule*

The primary factors that should be considered when reviewing a request for a reduced work schedule are the work load of the department and the impact an employee's reduced work schedule will have on other employees and customers. Reduced work schedules generally take one of two forms – either the employee reduces their regular work schedule to 80 % of their normal work schedule throughout the year or the employee moves to a partial year appointment and works 9, 10, or 11 months per year. In the second scenario, the time off is usually during the summer months.

## V. RESPONSIBILITIES

Several groups are responsible for ensuring the use of the flex schedule policy. Those responsible and their duties are defined in this section.

Staff members are responsible for requesting and participating in flexible work arrangement according to the procedures outlined in this document.

- Supervisors, deans, directors and department heads are responsible for recognizing the need for and thinking creatively about flexible arrangements,


- Authorized officials are responsible for determining when flexible work arrangements are appropriate and consulting with supervisors and staff members who request flexible work arrangements. They are responsible for approving, monitoring and discontinuing flex arrangements as outlined in this document
- The office of human resources is responsible for consulting with individuals and management requesting information about flexible work arrangements.
- The executive director of human resources is responsible for the design and implementation of the flex arrangement policy in accordance with the general management philosophy of the university. The executive director is responsible for developing and delivering strategies aimed at continually communicating, educating, gathering feedback and refining the policy as necessary to meet the needs of the university. The executive director is responsible for reviewing the program to ensure fair and consistent application in accordance with the university EEO policies.

**VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPROVAL**

This Policy is effective September 10, 2009.

This Policy replaces all prior versions.

This policy needs to be signed by the appropriate officer (listed below) before it is considered approved.

Vice President:   
Date approved: 