



MEMORANDUM

TO: HR Administrators of All Department, Institutions, Boards and Commissions

FROM: Hugh Quill, Director *HQ*

DATE: November 18, 2008

SUBJECT: Alternative Work Schedules: Flextime and Compressed Workweeks

On February 5, 2008, the Department of Administrative Services distributed a memo outlining new state time and attendance policies. Since that time, we have been asked for additional guidance regarding the portions of the memo dealing with flextime and compressed workweeks. As always, nothing in this memo is in any way intended to contradict or alter any relevant provision of an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

1. Serving Agency Customers

The earlier memo made clear that during the core business hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, the first obligation of managers, with regard to scheduling the work hours of employees, is to "... ensure that [agencies] are adequately staffed to perform all of their business administrative functions for both internal and external customers" The memo also noted that "[o]nce an agency has ensured that it is adequately staffed from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, it may offer employees an alternative work schedule that offers flexibility in the scheduling of work hours." Alternative work schedules, when properly managed, can simultaneously benefit the agency and increase employee job satisfaction. Alternative work schedules can be accomplished through the authorized use of flextime, an authorized compressed workweek, or both.

2. Flextime (Manager Discretion)

As has always been the case, flextime is a tool for those employees typically assigned to work five eight-hour days each week. An employee may obtain authorization to "flex" his or her work schedule by obtaining authorization to do any of the following:

- a) Obtain permission to work, on any given day, his or her typical number of hours at times which differ from the employee's normal work hours. For example, an employee who normally works from 8 am to 5 pm might be authorized, on a certain day, to work from 7 am to 4pm, instead.
- b) Obtain permission to work, on a regular basis, his or her typical number of hours each day at times which differ from the core hours of the agency. For example, an employee at an agency with core hours from 8 am to 5pm might obtain permission to have a permanent work schedule from 7 am to 4 pm, instead.
- c) Obtain permission to work, during any given week, fewer (or no) hours on one day that week, with the missed hours made up on one or more other days that week. For example, an employee might be authorized, for that week, to work ten hours on each of four days or might be authorized to work 9 hours on four days and four hours on one other day that week.

Accordingly, employees who routinely work five days each week may request modifications of the hours they work on each of those days. The employee's manager may approve, consistent with meeting agency customer needs, alternative forty-hour schedules at variance from the agency's core hours. Managers may, at their discretion, authorize periodic adjustments to an employee's daily arrival and/or departure time, different start or departure times on different days, or different numbers of hours on different days. Managers authorizing a permanent modification to a five day per week employee's start and/or departure time should provide a record of that authorization to the agency HR director. Managers approving flextime schedules must be certain that supervisory personnel have established means of assuring employee productivity during non-core hours.

3. **Compressed Workweek (HR Director Approval Required)**

An employee authorized to regularly work less than five eight-hour days each week has been granted permission to work a "compressed workweek." While agencies should not generally grant compressed work week schedules for a large number of staff, it may make sense to allow some employees to work fewer than five 8-hour days each week. An employee who routinely works a schedule of four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day or four 10-hour days is said to have a compressed workweek schedule. This sort of compressed workweek schedule must be approved by the agency HR director and may be approved only when core hours will be adequately covered and agency customer needs can still be adequately met after implementation of the proposed compressed workweek schedule.

To obtain approval, managers must demonstrate that there is a specific, business process or purpose advanced by the proposed compressed workweek schedule. Legitimate business purposes would include schedules which limit overtime use or which advance the agency's employee recruitment or retention objectives or to increase productivity. Proposals should also explain how supervisory personnel will assure employee productivity during non-core hours.

Requests for the approval of a compressed workweek should generally be for an individual employee or a small group of similarly-situated employees. HR directors will not approve compressed workweek requests that do not demonstrate how a specific, identified business process or purpose is advanced with respect to each of the employees for whom a compressed workweek schedule is proposed. Requests which involve the elimination of Monday or Friday from the workweek will be carefully scrutinized to avoid undermining agency customer service objectives by having too many employees out on those days.

4. **Alternative Work Schedule Authorization and Annual Review**

At the time a flextime or compressed workweek schedule is implemented, the affected employee should be reminded that alternative work schedules are a benefit, not a right, and may be cancelled or modified at the agency's discretion to meet agency needs. When the agency is particularly busy or a number of employees are absent because of vacations or holidays, alternative work schedules may need to be suspended, modified, or cancelled.

In order to ensure that agency core hours are being adequately covered and customer needs are being adequately met, each agency HR director shall, on annual basis, review their approved compressed workweek schedules and confirm that an agency business process or purpose is being advanced by its continuation.

The proper use of alternative work schedules can boost employee morale while still assuring that agencies are meeting customer needs and performing agency functions. If you have questions about this memo, please contact the Office of Policy Development at 614.752.5393.