Flexible Work Arrangements
Innovating Opportunities for Success

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Welcome!

As a premier, public research university and employer of choice, the University of Arizona relies on attracting, developing and engaging excellent employees. As a leader in innovation, the University can support these efforts by offering creative and flexible job design and a work environment that enables employees to achieve optimal job performance and work/life integration.

Through the use of the information in this guide, I hope you will find resources to help you consider implementing flexible work arrangement options that meet the departmental, employee and managerial needs of our campus.

Feel free to call upon the staff of Human Resources for consultation on proposing or making decisions about the implementation of any of the flexible work arrangements found in this guide.

I hope you will soon be sharing a success story with us!

Best regards,

Allison M. Vaillancourt, Ph.D., SPHR
Vice President, Business Affairs & Human Resources
What is a flexible work arrangement?

Flexible work arrangements are documented agreements between employees and managers in which employees alter aspects—such as location or hours—related to performing their jobs. These arrangements may be long- or short-term. The specific arrangements discussed in this guide include:

- Compressed Work Week
- Flexible Work Schedule
- Academic-Year Position
- Informal (Daily) Flexibility
- Job Sharing
- Part-Time Work
- Telework (formerly known as Telecommuting)
- Temporary Alternative Duty Assignment

Used effectively, flexible work arrangements serve as strategic, organizational tools that address the needs of the University and its employees, promoting individual and workgroup productivity and the recruitment and retention of excellent people.
In addition to reading this guide, employees may refer to Employee and Career Advising for advice on the application of University policies and career resources and to UA Life & Work Connections for assistance with Childcare and Family Resources, Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources, Work/Life Integration, or Employee Assistance Services. For additional support for managers concerning various flexible work arrangement options and their implementation, contact Human Resources Consulting.

**What is Workplace Flexibility?**

While workplace flexibility can mean different things to different people, in this guide we will use this focused definition:

*A flexible workplace fosters the use of flexible work arrangements as strategic tools to meet the needs of both the University and its employees. Workplace flexibility is an important part of a supportive University culture.*

**Benefits of Flexible Work Arrangements**

Flexible work arrangements can help to improve employee performance by providing better work/life integration. For example, an employee may want a flexible work arrangement due to multiple responsibilities away from work. Conflict that occurs between work and life can cause stress, reduced productivity, and undesired and expensive turnover. As such, it is in the University’s best interest to consider flexible work arrangements whenever possible for recruiting and retaining valued colleagues.
Why is workplace flexibility helpful to the University of Arizona and its employees?

Workplace flexibility can support the University’s goals and efforts in many ways, from boosting employee retention and morale, to cutting costs, to being environmentally responsible. These efforts can also support employees in finding better work/life integration and increasing productivity and job satisfaction. Flexible work arrangements help the University and its employees to:

- Promote work/life equilibrium
- Increase individual, work unit, and departmental effectiveness
- Engage and keep highly qualified employees
- Foster a positive work attitude
- Improve employee attendance
- Promote “green” initiatives
- Promote cross-training within departments and units
- Increase global competitiveness
- Encourage effective use of limited workspace

Types of Flexible Work Arrangement Models

Each flexible work arrangement described in this guide can be viewed as a single, independent option or can be combined with other arrangements to support your workplace and the effective resolution of work/life issues. All flexible work arrangements require prior approval from the employee’s manager and it is important to document arrangements to reduce potential misunderstandings.

Managers and employees will need to determine how each selected arrangement may affect compensation, benefits, vacation, sick time and leave. For management consultation, contact Human Resources Consulting. Employees may contact Employee and Career Advising.

- **Compressed Work Week**: A schedule that allows a standard full-time work week to occur within a condensed period of time. Example: a 4/10 schedule is composed of four 10-hour days per week, with one day off, to equal 40 hours in one week; some variations may occur due to established University holidays.
• **Flexible Work Schedule**: A broad term for various work arrangements that mutually support workplace productivity and greater individual control over one's time. Examples include varied beginning and ending work times for select days of the week or applying extended work hours as a part of a weekly schedule.

• **Academic-Year Position**: A position that is scheduled to work an academic-year nine (9) month, rather than a fiscal-year twelve (12) month, schedule

• **Informal (Daily) Flexibility**: A strategy that allows managers and employees to create work coverage solutions in foreseen or unforeseen individual circumstances such as a medical appointment, jury duty, or an emergency at home.

• **Job Sharing**: A full-time position shared between two employees with work hours and job assignments equitably or inequitably distributed.

• **Part-Time Work**: An arrangement with reduced hours and tasks, usually with pro-rated salary and benefits. Part-time work supports the retention of talented employees who want to work fewer hours, such as those planning for their imminent retirement, enrolled in classes, or with dependent (child and elder) care needs.
  - Under certain circumstances, a University employee may elect to return to work part-time following retirement.
  - Employees who reduce their hours, through part-time work or job sharing arrangements, to less than 20 hours per week (<.50 FTE) will no longer be eligible for full University benefits.
• **Telework (formerly known as Telecommuting):** A work arrangement that allows an employee to work from home or at another designated site for all or some portion of the individual's scheduled work hours. This arrangement can be used full- or part-time, or on an as-needed basis.
  
  o The manager and employee should determine whether the employee will provide equipment needed for teleworking or whether University equipment and technology will be used at the remote location.

• **Temporary Alternative Duty Assignment:** Under University policies for [Appointed Personnel](#) and [Classified Staff, University policy](#), an eligible employee may request a period of up to 16 weeks during which the employee may receive a temporary assignment of alternative duties that will make it possible for the employee to remain actively employed at the University while affected by any of the following circumstances:
  
  • The birth of the employee's child and to care for this newborn child,
  
  • A child's placement with the employee for adoption or foster care, or
  
  • The need to provide temporary care to the employee's spouse/domestic partner, child or parent who has a serious health condition.

• **Transitional Arrangement:** A work schedule of reduced hours for a limited period of time, changing gradually, either phasing in or phasing out of work. A transitional arrangement may help an employee who is returning to a full work schedule following a short-term disability, a workplace injury, or family leave. It offers a way to return an employee to the workplace instead of remaining on extended leave.
  
  o Eligible retiring employees may take advantage of the [Phased Retirement Program](#), which is a flexible work arrangement that allows for a gradual reduction in the number of hours worked over a period of one to three years.
Proposal Guidelines

An employee requests a flexible work arrangement by submitting a written proposal to one's manager. A list of components to consider and include in the proposal follow.

The following types of proposals require specific forms and guidelines:

- Telework
- Phased retirement
- Proposals based on medical need

Flexible work arrangements must be approved by the manager before an employee can begin working under the new arrangement. The manager is responsible for understanding and following the necessary proposal components and guidelines; the optimal conditions for flexible work arrangements; the legal and safety considerations; and other University policies and procedures. It is helpful for the manager and the employee to discuss the specific issues and considerations of the proposal and for the manager to provide the employee with written approval or denial of the request. If an employee requests a flexible work arrangement or other adjustment or assistance due to a disability, medical condition or health need, please see “When Requests are Based on Employee Medical Needs” on page 11 of this guide.

Compressed Week, Flexible Schedule, and Part-time Work

Proposals to alter an employee’s work schedule should include the following components:

- The proposed schedule in specific terms.
- How the work will be allocated.
- Necessary changes to current office or departmental procedures.
- Additional equipment needed.
- A plan for evaluating the arrangement.
- Paid and/or unpaid time off requested.
Job Sharing
Job sharing proposals have many of the same components as compressed work week, flexible schedule, and part-time proposals. Special attention to such considerations as how the work will be allocated, how the work space will be used, and whether both employees are required to attend staff meetings are important.

Telework Proposals
Because of the unique nature of telework, specific guidelines and forms are devoted to this topic:

- Telework Application
- Telework Request Worksheet
- Telework Agreement
- Telework Resources Checklist
- Telework Office Checklist
- Telework Effectiveness Assessment

If a proposal for telework includes work that will be performed outside the State of Arizona or in another country, managers should contact Human Resources Consulting to consult on applicable out-of-state or out-of-country considerations as early in the discussion as possible and prior to finalizing an agreement. Employees may contact Employee and Career Advising.
Phased Retirement Program
Employees in the Optional Retirement Program may take advantage of the Phased Retirement Program. An eligible employee's participation is voluntary and subject to approval by the applicable dean/vice president and by the Provost.

When Requests are Based on Employee Medical Needs
If an employee requests a flexible work arrangement or other adjustment or assistance due to a disability, medical condition or health need, both the employee and manager can explore this request, but should not discuss the details of the disability, medical condition or health need, or request medical documentation. (Note: Family and Medical Leave certification is allowable for applicable leave requests.) If it is the manager's practice to approve this type of request for any number of reasons (e.g., long commute, caregiving responsibilities), the manager may approve a similar request from an employee with a disability, medical condition or health need. Before such a request is denied, however, it is requested that the employee and/or manager please consult with the University's Disability Resource Center (DRC) about whether the employee may be eligible for the University's process for requesting reasonable disability accommodations, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The DRC may recommend that the manager refer the employee to the DRC to discuss possible accommodations. In addition, the manager may contact Human Resources Consulting and the employee may contact Employee and Career Advising to discuss application of University policies, or Employee Assistance Services in UA Life & Work Connections regarding change and resiliency.
Optimal Conditions for Flexible Work Arrangements

The successful design, implementation and maintenance of flexible work arrangements are based upon several conditions:

- The presence of a collegial culture within work groups and a department that encourages shared engagement and productive interactions;

- A workplace arrangement or initiative that meets the academic, business and service requirements of the University while supporting the individual, life-cycle needs of the employee;

- The availability of resources related to employee, operational, technological and ergonomic issues;

- The development of a written action plan, documenting responsibilities, expectations, communications and accountabilities agreed upon by the employee and the manager;

- The establishment of a trial period to review and assess the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements to determine long-term implementation considerations; and

- On-going communication and assessment regarding the effectiveness of the flexible work arrangements.

Beyond these general conditions, optimal conditions for flexible work arrangements require attention to the specific attributes of the job; the employee’s competencies; the performance objectives of the position; and how colleagues, managers and support staff will be affected by the arrangement.
These considerations are outlined here:

**JOB ATTRIBUTES**
Certain jobs lend themselves more readily to flexible work arrangements than others. For some jobs, the location of work is critical, such as at a front counter, inside a laboratory, in a classroom, or on the campus grounds. The time of day the work is performed is critical to the department’s success, such as during a scheduled work shift, at an event, when others are working, during class, or according to research requirements. In addition, technology offers more adaptability or flexibility to some occupations than to others.

**EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES**
Employee attributes necessary for a successful flexible work arrangement include:

- Satisfactory performance
- Effective communication
- Self-discipline
- Good decision-making skills
- Independent problem-solving abilities
- Ability to take initiative
- Effective priority management abilities
- Ability to establish and maintain productive working relationships with colleagues and other groups
- Ability to use technology and resources effectively
- Professionalism
- Flexibility and adaptability

This is not an exhaustive list of necessary characteristics.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**
Clear performance objectives are vital to the success of a flexible work arrangement: employees have to know what they are expected to accomplish; managers have to know what it will look like when the objectives are met. Good performance objectives denote specific and measurable behaviors and deliverables, along with a timeframe for accomplishing them.
It is important that the objectives, standards and frequency of updates be negotiated and set, before the employee starts performing the work. The more the employee is involved in setting and updating performance-related standards, and agrees they are clear and reasonable, the greater the chances for successful performance. Further information on setting effective objectives and standards can be found at the Performance Management website.

INVolVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS
Flexible work arrangements also have implications for stakeholders beyond the employee and the manager, such as peers, subordinate employees, and senior managers. Each will have questions about the arrangement. Questions that may come up are:

- How will the change impact others in the office?
- Will this require changes to regularly scheduled meetings?
- How and when will the employee be available for contact?
- Will there be opportunities for input on the arrangement by others?
- Will the work distribution change?
- Being prepared to address these questions will help optimize conditions for flexible work arrangements.
Common Challenges of Flexible Work Arrangements

The following chart outlines common challenges of various types of flexible work arrangements and offers solutions to these challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Flexible Work Arrangement</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compressed Work Week</td>
<td>• Overtime obligations for non-exempt employees that exceed 40 hours worked in work week&lt;br&gt;• Availability of employee</td>
<td>• Review FLSA and Overtime policies for <a href="#">Appointed Personnel</a> and <a href="#">Classified Staff</a>, as applicable&lt;br&gt;• Focus on results&lt;br&gt;• Make jobs measurable&lt;br&gt;• Establish communication mechanisms&lt;br&gt;• Ensure adequate coverage to meet business needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Work Schedule</td>
<td>• Working outside of business hours&lt;br&gt;• Availability of employee&lt;br&gt;• Ability to supervise employee&lt;br&gt;• Applying University policies and guidelines (e.g., holiday, leave and vacation time)</td>
<td>• Focus on results&lt;br&gt;• Make jobs measurable&lt;br&gt;• Establish communication mechanisms&lt;br&gt;• Ensure adequate business needs and coverage are met&lt;br&gt;• Review <a href="#">University policies</a> for <a href="#">Appointed Personnel</a> or <a href="#">Classified Staff</a>, as applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic-Year Position</td>
<td>• Summer work break occurs during a peak business cycle</td>
<td>• Ensure adequate business needs and coverage are met</td>
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<td>Informal Daily Flexibility</td>
<td>• Selecting degree of informality&lt;br&gt;• Balancing attendance requirements with frequency of employee requests</td>
<td>• Establish procedures for requesting flexible work arrangements, such as requirements for advance notice, who to notify, length, attendance, and schedule&lt;br&gt;• Consider business needs of unit before approving requests&lt;br&gt;• Apply appropriate accrued leave time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Sharing</td>
<td>Part-Time</td>
<td>Telework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hand-off of work between two employees</td>
<td>Distribution of work when a full-time employee requests a part-time arrangement</td>
<td>Communication, performance and related factors may develop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of both employees for staff meeting attendance</td>
<td>May result in a different level of in-person connections at work</td>
<td>Challenges regarding ownership for necessities for the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring two employees eligible for full benefits to fill one position affects the department's budget</td>
<td>Applying University policies and guidelines, such as holiday, vacation and sick time</td>
<td>Employees multi-tasking personal business during work-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create schedules, systems and communications for overlap and sharing</td>
<td>Assess if work can be streamlined</td>
<td>Safety factors for a remote work environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees may need to alter or alternate schedules to meet business needs</td>
<td>Identify work tasks that are no longer relevant, or can be delegated to others</td>
<td>May result in a different level of in-person connections at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine budget implications for hiring two employees instead of one</td>
<td>Find meaningful ways to include the part-time employee in communications and unit events</td>
<td>Out-of-state or out-of-country telework may have implications of financial or legal liability and more research is required before agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review University policies for Appointed Personnel or Classified Staff, as applicable</td>
<td>Use Telework forms to communicate and customize working requirements</td>
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<td>Managers should consult with Human Resources Consulting especially before agreeing to out-of-state or out-of-country arrangements</td>
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<td>Managers should consult with Risk Management Services about safety, loss prevention, worker’s compensation and other insurance coverage, and regulatory compliance</td>
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<td>Establish procedures regarding equipment, Internet access, phone line and related matters</td>
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<td>Set clear expectations regarding work, personal and dependent care responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Consult with Childcare and Family Resources, Elder Care and Life Cycle</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Temporary Alternative Duty Assignment | Resources, and Work/Life Integration to discuss work and life options  
• Find meaningful ways to include the remote employee in communications and unit events  
• Invite the remote employee to workplace meetings and events as required  
| Temporary Alternative Duty Assignment | Resources, and Work/Life Integration to discuss work and life options  
• Develop an alternative duty assignment that is feasible and meets work demands  
• Coverage of duties that will temporarily not be assigned to the employee  
• Review the applicable policy for Appointed Personnel or Classified Staff  
• Discuss priorities and identify those that have the most importance  
• Set clear expectations regarding work, personal and dependent care responsibilities  
• Consult with Childcare and Family Resources, Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources, and Work/Life Integration to discuss work and life options  
| Transitional Work | Review the University's Phased Retirement Program, a flexible work arrangement that allows eligible retiring employees to gradually reduce the number of hours worked over a period of up to three years  
• Consult with Human Resources Consulting and the University's Disability Resource Center if the request is due to an employee's disability or medical condition  
• Consult with Childcare and Family Resources, Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources, and Work/Life Integration to discuss work and life options  
| Transitional Work | Develop a feasible binding agreement for unit and employee for retirement  
• Develop an effective arrangement to have an employee return to work gradually from a leave  

Managers can also consult with Human Resources Consulting to discuss any challenges and possible solutions as well as the application of various University policies. Employees may contact Employee and Career Advising for such advising.
Legal and Safety Considerations

Before agreeing upon a flexible work arrangement, employees and managers should consider applicable laws and the non-discriminatory application of the decision. While the following is not an exhaustive list, here are some highlights to keep in mind:

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
The University’s policies on the Fair Labor Standards Act and Overtime for Appointed Personnel and Classified Staff, require that a non-exempt employee be paid overtime if the employee works more than 40 hours in a week. The University’s workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Monday and ends on 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. Therefore, it is important to know if the employee is non-exempt and, if so, to structure a flexible work arrangement to ensure the employee’s hours do not exceed 40 hours per week if the department wants to avoid overtime.

Since there is no limitation on the hours worked by an exempt employee, and no overtime pay is required by law, flexible work arrangements are not based on the hours worked for exempt employees.

Some additional considerations for specific types of flexible work arrangements and FLSA are:

- Compressed work weeks are, for example, 4/10 schedules during which an employee works 10 hours on four business days a week. Although hours per day are increased, a non-exempt employee's hours in a work week do not exceed 40 in order to avoid overtime.
- Telework and Travel - Generally, time spent commuting to and from work is not work time as noted in the Telework Agreement: “The University of Arizona will not pay or reimburse you for time spent in travel between your University of Arizona work site and your telework site or any purchase, service charge or cost related to telework that is not specified in the telework agreement.”

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Employees on flexible work arrangements may also be eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave in certain circumstances. Some unique questions and considerations for flexible work arrangements include but are not limited to:
1. Are employees on flexible work arrangements eligible to request FMLA leave?
   Employees on flexible work arrangements follow the same eligibility rules as other employees. Absence will coincide with whatever the normal work schedule is.

2. Are part-time employees on a flexible work arrangement eligible for FMLA leave?
   One of the eligibility requirements for FMLA leave is to have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 month period immediately preceding the start of the leave. A part-time employee on a flexible work arrangement may or may not be eligible for FMLA leave based on this requirement.

3. How is a work week in a flexible work arrangement defined? It's important to understand how the work week under the flexible work arrangement agreement is defined and if the employee will take FMLA leave on a continuous, reduced work schedule leave or intermittent leave basis. An employee that is eligible for FMLA leave may take up to 12 work weeks of FMLA leave (basic leave entitlement) or 26 work weeks of FMLA leave (military family leave entitlement) based on the normal work week of the flexible work arrangement.

   If an employee requests a flexible work arrangement or other adjustment or assistance due to a disability, medical condition or health need, please see “When Requests are Based on Employee Medical Needs” on page 11 of this guide.

Out of State/Out of Country Considerations

Other state laws may apply, and may have implications of financial responsibility or legal liability for the department on behalf of the University of Arizona. Before agreeing to an out-of-state or out-of-country telework arrangement, the manager should contact Human Resources Consulting and the employee may contact Employee and Career Advising to consult on such considerations.
Other University Policies and Procedures

Our employment policies are also legal agreements with employees. Employees and managers will need to ensure all University policies are followed. Key policies in the context of flexible work arrangements are:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** “…As a matter of law and as a matter of University policy, selection for opportunities for hire, promotion, transfer, or training, as well as decisions regarding demotion, termination, layoff, or other terms and conditions of employment shall occur without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national original, or other prohibited basis...” This applies to employees on a flexible work arrangement as well. Managers and employees may contact the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) with any questions or concerns.

2. **Vacation Policy.** An employee on a flexible work arrangement will be eligible to earn and use vacation hours following the same guidelines as other [Appointed Personnel](#) and [Classified Staff](#) employees, as applicable. If the flexible work arrangement includes a change in the full-time equivalency (FTE) of the employee’s position, it will cause vacation time accrual to be pro-rated to the actual hours paid to the employee in a pay period or, if below .50 FTE, it may mean the loss of vacation benefits altogether.

3. **Sick Time Policy.** An employee on a flexible work arrangement will be eligible for sick time following the same guidelines as other [Appointed Personnel](#) and [Classified Staff](#) employees, as applicable. As stated in the policy, sick time is a privilege, not a right. If a flexible work arrangement includes a change in the full-time equivalency (FTE) of the employee’s position, it will cause sick time accrual to be prorated to the actual hours paid to the employee in a pay period or, if below .50 FTE, it may mean the loss of sick time benefits altogether.

4. **Unpaid Time.** An employee on a flexible work arrangement may request an excused unpaid absence for a period of 28 calendar days or less. Vacation and sick leave time will accrue on only the hours paid to the employee in a pay period. If benefits deductions cannot be fully taken from an employee's paycheck, they will be deducted from the next paycheck. *Note: Absences longer than 28 calendar unpaid days are subject to Leave of Absence policies for [Appointed Personnel](#) and [Classified Staff](#).* Contact the [Division of Human Resources](#) for more information.
5. **Holiday Policy.** The University of Arizona observes 10 annual holidays and the *specific dates* are published on the Human Resources website. When considering the work schedule of an employee on a flexible work arrangement, if an employee’s regular day off falls on a holiday, the employee shall be granted an alternate day off with pay. The alternate date needs to be discussed with and approved by the manager in advance.

6. **Use of University Equipment and Technology.** Consult with your department or college information technology professionals regarding access to and security of department information stored on individual computers and networks. Some policies relating to this topic include *information security policies*, *Use of University Property*, *Approved Use of University Computing and Communication Equipment*, and *Acceptable Use of Computers and Networks at The University of Arizona*. Should any questions arise, the manager may contact *Human Resources Consulting* and the employee may contact *Employee and Career Advising*.

7. **Intellectual Property.** Familiarize yourself with University policies related to *intellectual property* in order to avoid any disputes within this context, including the policy on *Misuse of University Property*. If appropriate, clarify the definitions of “University Assets” and “intellectual property” when discussing the details of the flexible work arrangement. Employee tasks, responsibilities and communication processes may need to be adjusted accordingly.

8. **Risk Management and Safety Considerations.** Flexible work arrangements may involve alternative work locations, with unique conditions that should be considered as they relate to safety and health, loss prevention, and regulatory compliance. Some common topics that should be evaluated in advance include:

   - Is the work activity compatible with the alternative work location? Consider the hazards and risks that may be associated with the work activity. For computer-based activity, is the workstation located in a safe and ergonomically appropriate location? Are equipment AND data properly secured against damage, theft or unauthorized access when not in use? Does the work involve hazardous materials, specimens, collections, or other materials that require special handling, environmental conditions, storage, or security? Will there be children or other visitors present in the work area, and does any aspect of the work represent a hazard to them?

   - If an on-the-job injury occurs, employees must know how and where to obtain medical assistance and the procedure for notifying the manager. Worker’s compensation insurance is
applicable to job-related injuries that occur in alternative work locations. Additional information is available from the Risk Management Services web site.

- If the work activity involves contact with clients, study subjects, students, or others who are not University employees, consult with Risk Management Services to evaluate injury potential and the liability issues that might arise, as well as insurance considerations for the premises owner.

- University property that is taken to a private residence for work to be done at home requires prior approval by the employee’s department head. An employee’s personal homeowner’s or renter’s insurance policy will be asked to cover any loss or damage to University property before University insurance becomes applicable to the loss.

9. **Worker’s Compensation Considerations – Post-Injury Flexible Work Arrangements.** Many employees who experience on-the-job injuries can be released by their treating physician to return to work with modified or restricted duties. The employee’s home department and manager must be involved in defining temporary job duties that allow the returning employee to be productive while complying with any restrictions from the physician. As applicable, there are numerous advantages to getting injured workers back in the workplace sooner rather than later. Some of these include:

- Injured employees who return to work, even with modified duties, heal faster and are able to return to full functional status sooner than employees who remain at home during their recovery period.

- Getting an injured employee back into the workplace sends a message that his or her presence is valued, and that he or she can provide valuable productivity while recovering from the injury.

- Employees who are returned to work in a modified duty status return to normal University payroll, which reduces the cost of worker’s compensation claims. This savings, over time, helps to control the cost of worker’s compensation insurance in the University’s ERE rate.

- There is considerable evidence that the longer injured employees stay at home, the less likely they are to return to a fully functional work capacity. This outcome results in claims for permanent disability, which then may require the University to go through steps of recruitment, hiring, and training to fill the vacancy.

If an employee requests a flexible work arrangement or other adjustment or assistance due to a disability, medical condition or health need, please see “When Requests are Based on Employee Medical Needs” on page 11 of this guide.
The manager and the employee should jointly review work restrictions as stated by the physician, as well as proposed modified duties, to ensure success and maximize the benefit of the flexible work arrangement.

It is important for the manager and the employee to note that a post-injury flexible work arrangement is a temporary arrangement, intended to help the employee heal faster, and that upon approval from the physician, the employee will be expected to return to his or her normal duties.
University Resources

Resources at the University of Arizona include:

Human Resources

- **Human Resources Consulting** – Provides management and supervisory consultation and coaching services on issues such as: policy interpretation and use to achieve organizational goals; workplace culture, communication, and development of best practices in organizational management; and performance management and conflict management strategies.
- **Employee Career and Advising** - Provides advice and guidance to employees regarding application of University policies and career development and planning strategies.
- **HR@UAHS** – Provides on-site human resources services to managers and employees at the University of Arizona Health Sciences.

UA Life & Work Connections

- **Childcare and Family Resources** - Provides childcare consultations (including lactation, changing tables, infant/toddler, preschool, school-age and seasonal care resources), financial assistance for qualifying childcare, and a University-subsidized sick child and emergency/back-up care program.
- **Employee Assistance Services** – Provides free, voluntary and confidential employee assistance services to help employees eligible for full benefits who are encountering personal problems or the problems of a family member. Managers may also contact Employee Assistance Services to discuss individual, workgroup, and organizational issues related to dealing with troubled employees and addressing departmental change and stress.
- **Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources** - Provides elder care consultations, caregiving resources, and national family caregiving referrals.
- **Work/Life Integration** - Provides consultations on flexible work options referencing the University’s Flexible Work Arrangements Guide, related workplace and workforce issues, and strategies for coordinating work/life matters.

Risk Management Services - Provides workplace resources and consultation on health and safety, ergonomics, worker's compensation insurance and other related issues.

Disability Resources Center - Provides services, resources and programs to facilitate equal work opportunities for disabled employees of the University in accordance with the ADA. The manager and employee should contact the Disability Resource Center to discuss and, if applicable, initiate the process for reviewing a request for an accommodation or adjustment due to an employee's disability or medical condition.
Related Resources

External resources include (in alphabetical order):

- [United States General Services Administration (GSA) Telework](#) – Describes this Administration’s initiatives and resources.
- [State of New Mexico Human Services Department – Personnel Policies Work Schedule](#) – Describes the State of New Mexico telework model and resources.
- [Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)](#) – The Society for Human Resources Management is the world’s largest professional association devoted to human resource management.
- [State of Arizona Office of Travel Reduction Program – Telework Program](#) – Describes the telework program for State employees (non-university) in Maricopa County.
- [State of California Department of Human Resources Telework](#) – Describes this Department’s telework policy and resources.
- [State of California Department of General Services Statewide Telework](#) – Describes this Department’s “…statutory authority to coordinate and facilitate the inter-agency exchange of telework information…,” and more.
- [State of Colorado Division of Human Resources](#) – Describes this Division’s work-life program and related resources.
- [United States of Personnel Management – Telework.gov](#) – Describes this Office’s telework resources for employees and managers.
- [WorldatWork](#) - A nonprofit human resources association for professionals and organizations focused on compensation, benefits, work-life effectiveness and total rewards.
FAQs

What types of flexible work arrangements are available?

- **Compressed Work Week:** A schedule that allows a standard full-time work week to occur within a condensed period of time.

- **Flexible Work Schedule:** A broad term for various work arrangements that mutually support workplace productivity and greater individual control over one's time. Examples include varied beginning and ending work times for select days of the week or applying extended work hours as a part of a weekly schedule.

- **Academic-Year Position:** A position that is scheduled to work an academic-year nine (9) month, rather than a fiscal-year twelve (12) month, schedule.

- **Informal (Daily) Flexibility:** A strategy that allows managers and employees to create work coverage solutions in foreseen or unforeseen individual circumstances such as a medical appointment, jury duty, or an emergency at home.

- **Job Sharing:** A full-time position shared between two employees with work hours and job assignments equitably or inequitably distributed.

- **Part-Time Work:** An arrangement with reduced hours and tasks, usually with pro-rated salary and benefits. Part-time work supports the retention of talented employees who want to work fewer hours, such as those planning for their imminent retirement, enrolled in classes, or with dependent (child and elder) care needs. Under certain circumstances, a University employee may elect to return to work part-time following retirement.

- **Telework (formerly known as Telecommuting):** A work arrangement that allows an employee to work from home or at another designated site for all or some portion of his or her scheduled work hours. This arrangement can be used full- or part-time, or on an as-needed basis.

- **Temporary Alternative Duty Assignment:** Under University policies for Appointed Personnel and Classified Staff, an eligible employee may request a period of up to 16 weeks during which the employee may receive a temporary assignment of alternative duties that will make it possible for
the employee to remain actively employed at the University while affected by any of the following circumstances:

- The birth of the employee's child and to care for this newborn child,
- A child's placement with the employee for adoption or foster care, or
- The need to provide temporary care to the employee's spouse/domestic partner, child or parent who has a serious health condition.

- **Transitional Arrangement:** A work schedule of reduced hours for a limited period of time, changing gradually, either phasing in or phasing out of work. A transitional arrangement may help an employee who is returning to a full work schedule following a short-term disability, a workplace injury or family leave. It offers a way to return an employee to the workplace instead of remaining on extended leave. Eligible retiring employees may take advantage of the Phased Retirement Program, which is a flexible work arrangement that allows for a gradual reduction in the number of hours worked over a period of one to three years.

**How does an employee request a flexible work arrangement?**
An employee requests a flexible work arrangement by submitting a written proposal to his or her manager. For a list of components to consider and include in the proposal, see Proposal Guidelines.

**The following types of proposals require specific forms and guidelines:**
- Telework
- Phased retirement
- Proposals based on medical need

**Who must approve a flexible work arrangement?**
Flexible work arrangements must be approved by the manager before an employee can begin working under the new arrangement. The manager is responsible for understanding and following the necessary proposal components and guidelines; the optimal conditions for flexible work arrangements; the legal and safety considerations; and other University policies and procedures. It is helpful for the manager and the employee to discuss the specific issues and considerations of the proposal and for the manager to provide the employee with written approval or denial of the request. If an employee requests a flexible work arrangement or other adjustment or assistance due to a disability, medical condition or health need, please see “When Requests are Based on Employee Medical Needs” on page 11 of this guide.
What are the optimal conditions for a flexible work arrangement?
The successful design, implementation and maintenance of flexible work arrangements are based upon several conditions:

- The presence of a collegial culture within work groups and a department that encourages shared engagement and productive interactions;
- A workplace arrangement or initiative that meets the academic, business and service requirements of the University while supporting the individual, life-cycle needs of the employee;
- The availability of resources related to employee, operational, technological and ergonomic issues;
- The development of a written action plan, documenting responsibilities, expectations, communications and accountabilities agreed upon by the employee and the manager;
- The establishment of a trial period to review and assess the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements to determine long-term implementation considerations; and
- On-going communication and assessment regarding the effectiveness of the flexible work arrangements.
- Beyond these general conditions, optimal conditions for flexible work arrangements require attention to the specific attributes of the job; the employee’s competencies; the performance objectives of the position; and how colleagues, managers and support staff will be affected by the arrangement.

For a flexible work arrangement to succeed, the following job- and employee-specific considerations are also crucial:

- [Job attributes](#)
- [Employee competencies](#)
- [Performance objectives](#)
- [Involvement of stakeholders](#)

Will a flexible work arrangement affect an employee’s benefits?
Employees who reduce their hours, through part-time work or job sharing arrangements, to less than 20 hours per week (≤ .5 FTE) will no longer be eligible for full university benefits.
Will a flexible work arrangement affect an employee's vacation, sick time, or holiday pay?

**Vacation Policy.** An employee on a flexible work arrangement will be eligible to earn and use vacation hours following the same guidelines as other Appointed Personnel and Classified Staff employees, as applicable. If the flexible work arrangement includes a change in the full-time equivalency (FTE) of the employee's position, it will cause vacation time accrual to be pro-rated to the actual hours paid to the employee in a pay period or, if below .50 FTE, it may mean the loss of vacation benefits altogether.

**Sick Time Policy.** An employee on a flexible work arrangement will be eligible for sick time following the same guidelines as other Appointed Personnel and Classified Staff employees, as applicable. As stated in the policy, sick time is a privilege, not a right. If a flexible work arrangement includes a change in the full-time equivalency (FTE) of the employee's position, it will cause sick time accrual to be prorated to the actual hours paid to the employee in a pay period or, if below .50 FTE, it may mean the loss of sick time benefits altogether.

**Holiday Policy.** The University of Arizona observes 10 annual holidays and the specific dates are published on the Human Resources website. When considering the work schedule of an employee on a flexible work arrangement, if an employee's regular day off falls on a holiday, the employee shall be granted an alternate day off with pay. The alternate date needs to be discussed with and approved by the manager in advance.

Can an employee arrange to work more than 40 hours some weeks and fewer than 40 hours other weeks, if the total number of hours worked per year stay the same?

The University's policies on the Fair Labor Standards Act and Overtime for Appointed Personnel and Classified Staff, require that a non-exempt employee be paid overtime if the employee works more than 40 hours in a week. The University's workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Monday and ends on 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. Therefore, it is important to know if the employee is non-exempt and, if so, to structure a flexible work arrangement to ensure the employee's hours do not exceed 40 hours per week if the department wants to avoid overtime.

Since there is no limitation on the hours worked by an exempt employee, and no overtime pay is required by law, flexible work arrangements are not based on the hours worked for exempt employees.
Does the University of Arizona provide equipment for an employee to telework?
The manager and employee should determine whether the employee will provide equipment needed for teleworking or whether University equipment and technology will be used at the remote location.

Are employees on a flexible work arrangement eligible for Family and Medical Leave?
Employees on flexible work arrangements follow the same eligibility rules as other employees. Absence will coincide with whatever the normal work schedule is.

Are part-time employees on a flexible work arrangement eligible for Family and Medical Leave?
One of the eligibility requirements for FMLA leave is to have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period immediately preceding the start of the leave. A part-time employee on a flexible work arrangement may or may not be eligible for FMLA leave based on this requirement.

How is a work week in a flexible work arrangement defined?
It’s important to understand how the work week under the flexible work arrangement agreement is defined and if the employee will take FMLA on a continuous, reduced work schedule leave or intermittent leave basis. An employee that is eligible for FMLA may take up to 12 work weeks of leave based on the normal work week of the flexible work arrangement.

What if an employee requests a flexible work arrangement because of a disability or medical condition?
Both the employee and manager can explore this request, but should not discuss the details of the employee’s disability, medical condition or health need or request medical documentation (Note: Family and Medical Leave certification is allowable for applicable leave requests). If it is the manager's practice to approve this type of request for any number of reasons (e.g., long commute, caregiving responsibilities), the manager may approve a similar request from an employee with a disability or medical condition/heath need. Before such a request is denied, however, it is requested that the employee and/or manager please consult with the University’s Disability Resource Center (DRC) about whether the employee may be eligible for the University's process for requesting reasonable disability accommodations, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The DRC may recommend that the manager refer the employee to the DRC to discuss possible accommodations. In addition, the manager may contact Human Resources Consulting and the employee may contact Employee and Career
Advising to discuss application of University policies, or Employee Assistance Services in UA Life & Work Connections regarding change and resiliency.

What are my options if my manager denies my flexible work arrangement request?
First of all, don't take the decision personally. Decisions about Flexible Work Arrangements are considered against work needs rather than based on an individual's personal circumstances. The most important factors are usually business needs, the available resources, and the individual's job performance. By evaluating these factors the process is more equitable and non-discriminatory.

Conduct an honest and direct conversation with your manager to try to better understand the business factors driving the decision not to support the request. You may offer to brainstorm alternatives to the request to see if an acceptable option is available. If the timing is not good for a request to be approved, ask your manager when this request might be revisited.

If a flexible work arrangement is due to an individual's medical need, consult with Employee and Career Advising and the University's Disability Resource Center to determine options.

Whom should I contact if I still have questions?
Managers should contact Human Resources Consulting
Employees should contact Employee and Career Advising