

	Town of Chapel Hill, NC PP 8-6 Flexible Work Arrangements Policy	Policy Number: Issue Date: September 1, 2018 Effective: January 1, 2019	I. POLICY II. PURPOSE III. IMPLEMENTATION IV. FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS V. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS VI. DEFINITIONS VII. RESPONSIBILITIES VIII. APPENDICES IX. FAQ X. SCOPE XI. RELATED INFORMATION XII. POLICY HISTORY	Approved By:  Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager
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Flexible Work Arrangements Policy

I. POLICY

The Town of Chapel Hill is committed to helping employees face the demands of work, family, and life-related issues by offering a number of possible flexible work arrangements. The Town supports Town departments in exploring flexible work arrangements, where possible, with their employees.

II. PURPOSE

Although we hold different roles in the organization, we all work toward the common goal of serving the Town and the Town's residents and customers. Having Equitable workplace flexibility supports Teamwork and Professionalism. An Equitable approach to flexible work arrangements:

1. Improves employee morale, retention, and loyalty.
2. Improves the Town's recruiting efforts.
3. Increases options for service delivery.



Equity: Although we may hold different roles in the organization, we all work toward the common goal of serving the Town and the Town's residents and customers. Therefore, we seek and support policies and actions that are administered consistently and fairly to everyone regardless of rank, tenure or personal background.



Professionalism: We are committed to the excellence and accountability of our own performance as well as the performance of the organization. We carry out our jobs efficiently and effectively, are open to feedback about our performance and show a willingness to learn.



Teamwork: We participate in a cooperative work environment in order to support each other in our service to the community. We encourage an environment that fosters innovation and creativity.

	Town of Chapel Hill, NC PP 8-6 Flexible Work Arrangements Implementation	Policy Number: Issue Date: September 1, 2018 Effective: January 1, 2019	I. POLICY II. PURPOSE III. IMPLEMENTATION IV. FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS V. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS VI. DEFINITIONS VII. RESPONSIBILITIES VIII. APPENDICES IX. FAQ X. SCOPE XI. RELATED INFORMATION XII. POLICY HISTORY	Approved By:  Cliff Turner , Director Human Resource Development

III. Implementation

Implementation information is provided by the Director of Human Resource Development as a companion to the Flexible Work Arrangements Policy, PP 8-6, issued by the Chapel Hill Town Manager. This information may be periodically updated.

A. WHAT IS A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT?

A **flexible work arrangement** is a schedule or work location change to meet a departmental, employee and/or team interest.

Some examples of flexible work arrangements are

1. **Remote Work:** in which an employee works at a location other than their office.
Example: Working from home or a public location.
2. **Compressed Schedule:** a schedule in which an employee works their base hours in fewer days than their position traditionally works.
Example: A 40 hour per week employee whose position normally works 8 hours per day, 5 days per week might compress their work schedule into:
 - Four 9 hour days and one 4 hour day
 - Four 10 hour days
3. **Alternative Schedule:** a schedule in which an employee starts and ends their workdays at non-traditional times for their position, but traditionally work their scheduled workdays.
Example: An employee normally working 8am -5pm five days weekly might change their schedule into a 7 am to 4 pm or a 10 am to 7 pm workday.



Approved by Cliff Turner, Director
Human Resource Development

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B. FORMAL AND INFORMAL FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Employees may have a formal or informal flexible work arrangement, or both.

Formal flexible work arrangements are typically long term and ongoing. These arrangements typically represent a structural change to operations. Therefore, employees and supervisors should document a formal flexible work arrangement with a written agreement that clarifies the understanding between the parties. See the [attached resources](#) for guidance on creating a written agreement.

Example: Working a compressed schedule with Mondays off every week.

Informal flexible work arrangements are occasional, infrequent, or short term. Supervisors and employees can work out these types of arrangements without a written agreement.

Examples:

- Working from home during adverse weather events
- Emergency situations
- Last minute child care issues
- Providing flexibility for caretaker needs or for an employee's own health needs
- Helping with a department's short term business needs

C. GETTING STARTED

Any employee can request a flexible work arrangement by asking a supervisor. Departments will have their own internal processes to review requests.

The following resources are available to help the employee and supervisor determine whether a flexible work arrangement is suitable:

1. [Flexible Work Arrangement Planning Guidance](#)—helps a supervisor evaluate whether a position is suitable for a flexible work arrangement
2. [Flexible Work Schedule Written Agreement](#)—can be used as a template to spell out expectations of all parties
3. [Flexible Work Arrangement Supervisor's Checklist](#)—a quick reference list of things to remember when implementing a flexible work arrangement

After review, the department may determine that the request cannot be granted. The department's decision is not grounds for a grievance.

IV. FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS See [Appendices](#)

V. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Human Resource Development 919-968-2700 or HR@townofchapelhill.org
 Business Management 919-968-2712 or finance@townofchapelhill.org

VI. DEFINITIONS

- A. Alternative Schedule: a flexible work arrangement in which an employee might start and end their regularly scheduled workdays at non-traditional times.
- B. Compressed Work Schedule: a flexible work arrangement in which an employee works their base hours in fewer days than normal for their position.
- C. Flexible Work Arrangement: a schedule or work location change to meet a departmental, employee and/or team interest.
- D. Formal Flexible Work Arrangement: is typically long term and ongoing. These arrangement typically represents a structural change to operations. Therefore, employees and supervisors should document a formal flexible work arrangement with a written agreement that clarifies the understanding between the parties.
- E. Informal Flexible Work Arrangement: Generally, a flexible work arrangement that is occasional, infrequent, or short-term, used to meet a specific interest of the department and/or the employee.
- F. Remote Work: in which an employee works at a location other than their office.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Employees are expected to:

- a) Work collaboratively with their supervisor when requesting a flexible work arrangement
- b) Understand that some positions do not lend themselves to flexible work arrangements
- c) Follow the guidelines of a flexible work arrangement
- d) Understand that a flexible work arrangement might be modified or canceled if necessary
- e) Report their time accurately

All Supervisors/Managers are expected to:

- a) Fairly evaluate requests for flexible work arrangements
- b) Communicate promptly with employees about the status of their flexible work arrangement request



- c) Follow their department's processes
- d) Request assistance from HRD if they need help

All Department Heads are expected to:

- a) Support an open dialogue about flexible work arrangements
- b) Develop and communicate departmental processes to receive and evaluate requests for flexible work arrangements

All Human Resource Development staff members are expected to:

- a) Assist all employees when requested

VIII. APPENDICES

[Flexible Work Arrangement Planning Guidance](#)—helps a supervisor evaluate whether a position is suitable for a flexible work arrangement

[Flexible Work Schedule Written Agreement](#)—can be used as a template to spell out expectations of all parties

[Flexible Work Arrangement Supervisor's Checklist](#)—a quick reference list of things to remember when implementing a flexible work arrangement

IX. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS to be developed

X. SCOPE This policy applies to all Town employees based on the requirements of their position.

XI. RELATED INFORMATION

This policy relates to and is impacted by other Town policies, including but not limited to:

- PP 3-1 Overtime Policy
- PP 2-3 Holiday Pay Policy
- PP 2-9 Annual Leave Policy

All Human Resource Development policies can be found on the [Town's Website](#)

This policy replaces and supersedes any previous Town policies, departmental policies, handbooks, or unwritten policies or practices covering the same subject. Departmental policies in compliance with this policy are referenced in Section XI **Related Information**. In the event of any disparity between this policy and the Town's Code of Ordinances and/or applicable local, state, or federal laws, the Town's Ordinance and/or applicable laws shall prevail.



FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PLANNING GUIDANCE

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Introduction

This document was created to help departments evaluate and implement flexible work arrangements when possible. Offering flexible work arrangements has been associated with improved employee morale, increased productivity, competitive recruitment, and decreased absenteeism.

The Town’s Work-Life Balance Design Team, comprised of employees from multiple departments, surveyed employees, spoke with Senior Leadership Team members, and conducted extensive research for over a year to develop the Flexible Work Arrangements Policy and the supporting materials included as appendices to the policy. The result is based on a shared interest throughout the organization to offer more flexible work arrangements, where possible.

Guiding Questions for Considering a Formal Flexible Work Arrangement

These questions are intended to guide you in thinking through advantages and disadvantages of a formal flexible work arrangement. There may be other factors unique to an employee's request not covered below that should be considered. For guidance on considering an informal flexible work arrangement, [click here](#).

Gathering Basic Information

When an employee requests a flexible work arrangement, you can use these questions to understand the employee's basic interests and begin considering options.

1. What type of flexible work arrangement is the employee(s) requesting (remote work, alternative schedule, compressed schedule, other)?
2. How would this flexible work arrangement change the employee's current schedule?
3. What is the employee's interest in a flexible work arrangement? Does a formal flexible work arrangement meet their interest or would informal, occasional flexibility or another solution better meet their interests?
4. What period of time does the flexible work arrangement request cover?
5. Is the employee's position exempt or non-exempt? The issue of overtime arises in certain flexible work arrangements involving non-exempt employees. Thus, in order to avoid overtime spending, non-exempt employees are more limited in the types of arrangements for which they may be eligible. HRD is available to discuss any challenges such employees may face. In any event, supervisors are encouraged to consider what other flexible work arrangements may be made, without running afoul of the overtime provisions. For more information, please [follow this link](#).

Assessing Business Need

Now that you've understood the employee's basic request and interest, take the time to consider the following questions about how their request might affect business operations or service delivery.

1. Are there aspects of the employee's job that make it necessary to be physically present at their regular work site? What are they and when do they occur?



2. Are there core hours/days that employees must be present regardless of their flexible work arrangement? (Consider things like regularly scheduled meetings, peak service demand times of day, weeks, months, seasons, etc.)
3. How might external and internal customers be affected? Are services enhanced or maintained at current levels? Would service levels decrease?
4. Are there any benefits to operations or customer service that this flexible work arrangement would support?
5. Will any partners or stakeholders be affected significantly and should they be consulted?
6. If the request would negatively impact operations, are there other ways to help the employee have a flexible work arrangement that would meet their interests?
7. What kind of situations would require an employee to abandon their flexible work arrangement temporarily? (Consider emergencies/ inclement weather, certain seasonal work or deadlines, etc.)

Assessing Working Relationship Needs

1. How will this flexible work arrangement affect supervision of this employee? What do the employee and supervisor need to do to maintain a strong working relationship?
2. Will this flexible work arrangement affect others in the supervisory chain for the department?
3. Does this employee supervise anyone, and if so, how will the supervisory relationship be affected by the flexible work arrangement?
4. Does the employees' team need to be considered as part of this conversation? Should we consider a flexible work arrangement for the whole team or multiple team members simultaneously?

Managing Risk and Safety

1. How does the flexible work arrangement affect the safety and security of the employee, staff and/or others, as well as Town facilities and property? If there are concerns are there reasonable ways to address them?



2. Does the employee have the necessary equipment and connectivity available for the flexible work arrangement? If the employee will be working in a Town facility, is it heated and cooled properly? Is the building safe and secure? Can the employee access the building? Is the parking lot well lit?

Implementation

Now that you and your employee have agreed that a flexible work arrangement is the right fit, the following steps are intended to help you get started and put important information and decisions in writing.

Developing a Written Agreement

- Consider if there are benefits for a test period to try the flexible work arrangement or if the employee is required to stick with their arrangement for a determined period of time.
- Put the basic agreement in writing. [The attached template](#) is available for your use, or you can create a format that works for your operation. Consider the following:
 - What are the details and logistics of the arrangement? (For example, M-Th 7am-6 pm with an hour lunch.)
 - How will productivity be measured?
 - What are the expectations for daily employee-supervisory communications?
 - How will the employee plan ahead for and catch up when they are away during the traditional work schedule?
 - How will the employee keep up to date on communications?
 - What situations (core hours, seasonal work, emergencies, etc.) will require an employee to abandon their flexible work arrangement temporarily?
 - When and how will you evaluate the flexible work arrangement?
- If you would like review or assistance with developing the written agreement, contact your HRD partner.
- Once you have completed the flexible work agreement, please provide copies to HRD Partner and Payroll in BMD.
- Be clear with the employee in writing about the duration of the flexible work arrangement. Remind the employee that the flexible work arrangement is subject to evaluation and change at the department's discretion, while also considering the employee's needs. Set expectations with the employee regarding how and when they may request changes to the flexible work arrangement in the future.



- Communicate the change in the employee’s schedule to the team, customers, and partners.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Flexible Work Arrangement

How will you know if the flexible work arrangement is working well? It’s important to create a plan and set expectations with your employee to evaluate the flexible work arrangement. Consider asking the following questions when reviewing the flexible work arrangement:

1. What unanticipated advantages have arisen from this flexible work arrangement?
2. Have unexpected challenges arisen as a result of this flexible work arrangement?
3. Should the flexible work arrangement continue as is?
4. When will we check in on the flexible work arrangement again?

Considering an Informal Flexible Work Arrangement

Informal arrangements can be very helpful in accommodating short term, infrequent, or non-recurring requests. For example, an employee who is sick with a minor illness may want to work from home to avoid infecting others and to be able to rest between work periods. Employees may want to modify their work hours or work location during inclement weather.

These types of work arrangements—short term, infrequent, occasional—don’t necessarily need to be formalized in writing or go through a more lengthy approval/vetting process. However, it is a good practice to briefly summarize in writing your understanding of the arrangement—such as how long it will last, what work will be accomplished, and how the person will be accessible to the manager and their colleagues. An email is a simple way to capture this understanding.

Example:

Hi <name>

Sorry to hear you are sick. Yes you can work from home today—you said you would probably put in about 4-5 hours, right? We agreed that you will work on <XYZ> and be available at <#phone>. Let’s plan to talk at <time>. I will call you. You can reach me at <#phone> if you need anything before we talk. Email me your work by <time>.

Sincerely,
<name>



Flexible Work Arrangements for Non-Exempt Employees

Employees that are considered “non-exempt” according to the Fair Standards Labor Act (FLSA) must be paid at time and a half for all the hours over 40 that they work in the Town’s designated 7 day workweek. **

Although many types of flexible work arrangements are available to non-exempt employees, some arrangements would require the Town to pay overtime. It will be important to manage the hours of non-exempt employees to assure that the overtime pay requirements aren’t triggered.

Town employees are paid bi-weekly, so it can be easy to get confused about the overtime pay requirement. Hourly employees cannot balance their hours out over the two week pay cycle; they must balance their hours out over the Town’s designated 7-day work period.

***Public safety employees have different hours and pay cycles before overtime pay requirements are triggered. Please ask Human Resource Development or Business Management for more information.*

Here is an example of a possible flexible work arrangement that would trigger the overtime pay requirement for most non-exempt employees. In this example, the employee is also forced to use leave.

EXAMPLE

Raja, a non-exempt employee in the Engineering Division of Public Works, wants a flexible work arrangement that will allow him to have every other Friday off. His department is agreeable. He proposes the following:

- Week #1 - works 5- 9 hour days = 45 hours
- Week #2- works 3-9 hour days and 1-8 hour day and has Friday off = 35 hours

Although this equals 80 hours over a biweekly pay period, the employee must be paid for 5 hours of overtime on week #1. The employee will be short 5 hours of base time in week #2 and would have to use leave to make up the difference.

The result is an increased payroll cost to the department in week 1 and a requirement for the employee to use leave time to make up hours in week 2.

However, there is a way to accommodate this request without triggering an overtime pay requirement.

- Week #1- works 5- 8 hour days = 40 hours
- Week #2- works 4-10 hour days with Friday off = 40 hours

If you have any questions about how a flexible work arrangement for a non-exempt employee might affect your payroll, feel free to contact HRD or BMD for assistance.

CTJ

Department Head Signature

Date



Flexible Work Arrangements Supervisor Checklist

- | | Do you have the request from the employee in writing? *(Email is fine)*
- | | Have you gathered basic information *(Flexible Work Arrangements Planning Guidance)*?
- | | Have you assessed business need *(Flexible Work Arrangements Planning Guidance)*?
- | | Have you assessed working relationship needs *(Flexible Work Arrangements Planning Guidance)*?
- | | Have you considered any impact to risk/safety *(Flexible Work Arrangements Planning Guidance)*?
- | | Have you met with employee to discuss details and logistics of agreement?
- | | Have you approved or denied the request, and communicated that decision to employee?

Checklist for Supervisors – After Approval

- | | Have you developed a written agreement covering details, logistics and evaluation plan?
- | | Have you communicated about the agreement with Supervisor, Department Head and/or HRD/BMD partner?
- | | Have you communicated the arrangement to team/customers/partners?
- | | Have you set a time to sit down and review how the arrangement is working out?

*Approved by Cliff Turner, Director
Human Resource Development*

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