

Frequently Asked Questions - Flexible Work Arrangements

This FAQ is intended to provide concise guidance for employees and supervisors. Flexible work arrangements are discretionary, must support University operations, and must be documented in Workday and administered consistently.

What is a flexible work arrangement?

A flexible work arrangement is an approved adjustment to an employee's regular work schedule, work location, or both. Flexible work arrangements must support the operational needs of the University, allow for appropriate coverage and supervision, and comply with applicable timekeeping, leave, overtime, and attendance requirements.

Flexible work arrangements are discretionary and do not create an entitlement to a particular schedule or work location. An approved arrangement may be modified or discontinued when operational needs require.

What types of flexible work arrangements may be considered?

Depending on the position and the needs of the employing unit, flexible work arrangements may include:

- Adjusted start and end times
- Compressed work schedules, such as four ten-hour days or four nine-hour days and one four-hour day
- Recurring hybrid or remote work arrangements, when approved under applicable University policy and process
- Other recurring schedule patterns that maintain required work hours, service coverage, supervision, and compliance obligations

What are appropriate reasons to consider a flexible work arrangement?

A flexible work arrangement may be considered when it supports the employing unit's business needs and allows the employee to meet all work expectations. Appropriate reasons may include:

- Maintaining or expanding service coverage
- Aligning staffing with student, customer, or University service needs
- Improving continuity of operations through planned coverage or cross-training
- Supporting recruitment and retention when arrangements can be administered consistently and equitably
- Addressing limited employee scheduling needs when the arrangement also supports business operations

What factors should supervisors consider before approving a request?

Supervisors should consider whether the proposed arrangement is workable for the position, the employee, and the unit. Relevant factors include:

- Operational needs, service expectations, and coverage requirements
- Position duties and any restrictions on when or where work must be performed
- Team coordination, meetings, training, and required in-person work
- The employee's ability to meet performance, productivity, communication, and attendance expectations
- The supervisor's ability to monitor work, timekeeping, overtime, and wage-and-hour compliance
- Equitable administration of similar requests within the work unit
- Impact on other employees, including workload distribution and coverage responsibilities

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Who decides whether a flexible work arrangement is approved?

The supervisor determines whether a flexible work arrangement may be approved, modified, or discontinued based on the operational needs and resources of the employing unit. Supervisors should seek to review requests in a fair and consistent manner. To be approved, requests must align with applicable University policies, timekeeping requirements, and business needs. Approval for remote work does not constitute approval to conduct work outside the State of Arkansas unless specifically included and authorized by all levels necessary in an FWA.

How does an employee request a flexible work arrangement?

An employee or supervisor may initiate a request in Workday. The request should include enough information for the supervisor to evaluate whether the arrangement will meet business needs. The request should identify:

- The proposed schedule, work location, or other arrangement
- The business reason for the arrangement
- How coverage, communication, and service needs will be maintained
- How time will be recorded and leave will be reported
- Any proposed review period, performance expectations, and conditions for modification or discontinuation

Approved recurring flexible work arrangements must be documented in Workday and renewed annually.

What if an approved arrangement does not work as expected?

A flexible work arrangement may be modified or discontinued at any time based on operational needs, coverage concerns, performance or attendance issues, timekeeping or overtime concerns, customer service needs, or other business reasons. The supervisor should document the decision and communicate expectations to the employee.

When appropriate, the supervisor and employee should discuss concerns and possible adjustments; however, the final decision rests with the supervisor. Human Resources can assist with evaluating and documenting flexible work arrangements.

Can a flexible work arrangement be used instead of leave or dependent care?

No. A flexible work arrangement is not a substitute for leave or dependent care. Employees must be able to perform assigned duties during scheduled work hours. When an employee needs time away from work to care for a child or family member, the employee should use the appropriate leave in accordance with applicable policy.

How does a flexible work arrangement affect sick leave, annual leave, and holidays?

Employees must report leave based on the number of hours they were scheduled to work on the day leave is taken. Official University holidays are generally credited according to applicable University policy and payroll guidance. Employees and supervisors should consult Human Resources or Payroll for questions about leave reporting or holiday treatment under an approved flexible arrangement.

Where can employees and supervisors get help?

The unit Human Resources Partner can assist supervisors and employees in reviewing requests, evaluating operational considerations, and documenting flexible work arrangements consistent with departmental needs and applicable University requirements.