

## A Guide to Flexible Work Arrangements at UC Davis

University of California Davis believes that Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) have a high potential for enhancing university performance. FWAs have been shown to decrease employee stress and increase employee engagement, morale, loyalty and productivity.

### Eligibility

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UC Davis is a family friendly campus guided by the [Principles of Community](#) which embraces “the richness contributed to our lives by our diversity.” Our employees have diverse needs when it comes to managing the integration of work and life responsibilities. Per [UC policy](#) an employee may request an alternative work schedule in accordance with [local procedure](#).

- **Exempt employees** are eligible based upon their manager/supervisor’s discretion.
- **Non-exempt employees** are eligible based upon their manager/supervisor’s discretion as well as [collective bargaining contracts](#) where applicable.

The primary criterion for a manager/supervisor determining if a FWA is appropriate is if it meets the business needs of the workplace. Eligibility varies for different types of arrangements as some alternatives may not be appropriate for:

- **Particular jobs and office necessities:** The nature of a particular job may not be congruent with a FWA. For example, when an employee is required to be available for customer support at the workplace during business hours.
- **Employees:** Typically, an employee will not be granted flexibility unless their prior performance has demonstrated the skills and qualities necessary to succeed in the proposed FWA. Employees should be on the job at least 6 months before considering a FWA unless negotiated at hiring.

### Flexible Work Arrangement Options

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Many units currently have informal systems in place that support flexibility on an occasional basis. Sometimes, with supervisory approval, employees adjust their hours to tend to a “life” matter. Such informal, temporary flexibility exists where there is respect and trust between a supervisor/manager and employee—trust that the job commitments and responsibilities will be met.

The formal proposal process outlined in this guide is designed for employees and managers/supervisors who want to institute a regular arrangement that consistently differs from their department’s or office’s standard hours or work location. Listed below are the primary types of FWAs available at UC Davis.

#### **Flex Schedule:**

- **Compressed Workweek:** an arrangement which condenses one or more standard workweeks into fewer, longer days.
- **Flextime:** an arrangement that allows an employee to alter the starting and/or end time of her/his workday. Employees still work the same number of scheduled hours as they would under a traditional schedule.

**Flex Location:**

- **Telework:** an arrangement in which an employee regularly performs work at a remote worksite (such as home, library or business center) for a specified portion of the workweek.

Flex Schedule	Examples
<p><b>Compressed Workweek:</b> Options that enable employees to work longer days for part of the week or pay period in exchange for shorter days or a day off during that week or pay period.</p> <p><i>Potential Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Improves productivity if some work can best be accomplished during quieter times of the day.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Provides more days off.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Decreases number of days employees commute.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Allows commute outside of peak hours.</i></li> </ul>	<p>*4-day workweek (also called 4/10): 10 hour days</p> <p>*4.5-day workweek: Four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day per week</p> <p>*9-day biweekly (also called 9/80). Working 80 hours in 9 days (typically 8 days at 9 hours and 1 day at 8 hours) and taking the 10<sup>th</sup> day off (check overtime laws when implementing).</p>
<p><b>Flextime:</b> Workday start and end times differ from the workgroup standard, yet the same number of hours per day is maintained.</p> <p><i>Potential Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Improves efficiency if work schedules match employees' most productive hours.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Gives employees more control over scheduling personal responsibilities on either end of the workday.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Allows commute outside of peak hours.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>May allow organization to expand service hours.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Flex:</b> Regular daily schedule that varies from the standard, such as working from 9:00am to 6:00pm instead of 8:00am to 5:00pm.</p>
	<p><b>Core Hours:</b> Established range of time when everyone in a particular workgroup is at work with flexibility on either end of the workday. For example, core hours are from 9:00am to 2:00pm, but employees may start as early as 7:00am or leave as late as 6:00pm.</p>
	<p><b>Summer Flex:</b> Work hours differ during the summer months. For example, starting work at 7:00am instead of 8:00am.</p>
	<p><b>Day of the Week Flex:</b> Work hours are flexed on a particular day of the week, such as Fridays.</p>
Flex Location	Examples
<p><b>Telework:</b> Working from a remote location one or more days a week.</p> <p><i>Potential Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Reduces office space requirements and associated costs.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Can help accommodate employees with disabilities.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Reduces commute.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Can provide a work environment with fewer distractions.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Facilitates ability to work during "personal best time."</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Home Office:</b> Designated office space at employee's home.</p> <p><b>Hoteling:</b> Designated shared workspaces at an organization that are reserved by employees who work remotely, but occasionally come into the office.</p>

Principles of Flexible Work Arrangements

- Flexible work is a mutually beneficial business strategy.
- Flexible work is a resource to improve productivity and morale.
- The operational/business needs of the university remain the priority. The arrangement must align with the office or department's goals, including productivity, cost effectiveness, and service to internal and external customers.
- Terms and conditions of collective bargaining agreements must be upheld.

- The job tasks must be adaptable to the flexible arrangement.
- The individual's prior performance must support the requirements of the flexible arrangement.
- Performance is evaluated on results, not when or where you work.
- Flexible arrangements must themselves remain flexible.
- Flexible work requests are to be evaluated on a reason-neutral basis.
- Flexible arrangements are to be transparent, equitable, and communicated to all.
- Flexible arrangements are to be documented, regularly evaluated, and are subject to termination (
- Flexibility is a partnership with all parties affected.

## For the Employee:

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### Things to Consider:

- What type of FWA or combination would work best for your **work** situation/style/responsibilities?
- What type of FWA or combination would work best for your **life** situation/style/responsibilities?
- How will a FWA affect your co-workers, manager/supervisor and customers?
- Think through the business case for your request. What are the benefits to your employer?
- Identify concerns your manager/supervisor may have. Ascertain how you might be flexible to cover peak time coverage, meeting times, special events, and communication with co-workers, manager/supervisor and customers.
- Consider building access and safety if requesting alternate hours.
- If requesting a flex location:
  - What duties will be performed at the remote worksite?
  - What duties will be performed at the primary worksite?
  - Will you have access to materials and equipment?
  - What is the availability of technical support?
- [Notice to the unions](#) regarding [alternate work schedules](#) under [collective bargaining agreements](#) may apply.

To request a FWA, employees should submit a written proposal and complete the FWA request form. Schedule an appointment with your manager/supervisor to present these documents and discuss the proposed arrangement.

### Elements of the Written Proposal:

- The exact type and schedule of your proposed FWA.
- The business case for your proposed FWA.
- A description of how, when and where you will accomplish the various components of your job under the new arrangement.
- Identify any potential negative impact on colleagues and clients and propose a specific plan to address these impacts.
- Proposed methods and frequency of communication with co-workers.
- A plan for monitoring effectiveness (deliverables and evaluations).
- A start date, trial period (typically 90 days), and intervals of evaluation (at least annually).
- An acknowledgement that the FWA is subject to termination should operational/business needs change or performance issues arise.

## For the Manager/Supervisor: Guidelines, Proposal Review and Implementation

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Managers have a responsibility to achieve the goals of their units and to provide the guidance, support, training and organization for their staff to ensure success. Before consideration, consult with your own supervisor to ensure appropriateness and consistency within your unit. Also consult with [Employee & Labor Relations](#) regarding [notice requirements](#) and [alternate work schedules](#) under the [collective bargaining agreements](#). Managers/supervisors must be prepared to review employee proposals and may even be proactive in offering FWAs. In either situation, establish the following structures before discussing FWAs with employees.

- **Set the non-negotiable schedule principles:** Before getting into the details of individual schedules, decide how your business objectives dictate the department schedule. For example, the principles of your unit might be:
  - Telephone coverage must be in place five days a week, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Everyone must attend Tuesday-afternoon staff meetings
  - Everyone must be available for a weekly check-in at a mutually convenient time, and
  - Everyone must be reachable by phone or email during regular business hours, Tuesday through Thursday.
- **Establish core business hours** – The hours in a work day when the department determines that all staff are needed. Meetings are typically scheduled during this time. *Examples:* Every day from 9 to 11 a.m., or all day Tuesdays, or Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Establish bandwidth** – The daily range of hours during which managers allow flexible scheduling (includes the core period). It defines the earliest time employees may arrive and the latest time they may leave. Additionally the number of allowable telework days.  
*Examples:* 6:00am to 7:00pm. 1 – 2 days per week.
- **Establish core obligations** – The employee must be present for certain commitments, agree to be reachable during normal working hours, be available to come at short notice, and be prepared to work on a regularly-scheduled day off within reason. Supervisors and employees may schedule flexible hours around core obligations.

Communication with the entire unit is critical in establishing the availability and parameters of FWAs. A discussion of what may or may not be possible can head off unrealistic expectations and lay the groundwork for implementation. Discussion allows the group to weigh the pros and cons of given options and to problem solve together how they might work as a team to create a successful flexible work environment. Such discussions take the burden of creating shared expectations off of the manager/supervisor alone, creating an environment where all team members expect high levels of productivity, communication and problem solving from each other.

### Criteria for Considering a Flexible Work Arrangement Request:

- Operational/business needs (staffing, space, budget)
- Department restrictions or limitations
- Functions of the job
- Individual work style and performance
- Security of university materials and equipment.
- Feasibility of a longer work day (stamina, accuracy, productivity)
- Emergencies or unexpected department events ( how to respond)

Notice that personal reasons for the request are not considered in the criteria for considering a FWA. Decisions regarding the appropriateness of a FWA should be made on a case-by-case basis based upon operational/business needs and employee performance. Operational/business needs take priority in the consideration and evaluation of an employee proposal. An [Employee Relations Specialist](#) may advise the supervisor on issues such as overtime pay, Workers' Compensation, performance standards, and notice requirements under the collective bargaining agreements.

Considerations when reviewing proposals for FWAs:

- Has this employee demonstrated the ability to work independently and be trustworthy and self-directed in accomplishing their tasks?
- Does the proposal work within your established non-negotiable schedule, bandwidth, core hours and obligations?
- How will this proposal affect co-workers, scheduling and customers?
- Are the proposed communication methods feasible?
- Will the proposal work within the regulations of a non-exempt employee?
- Consider a group of proposals together if applicable.
- Feel free to negotiate the proposal.
- Grant or deny based upon operational/business reasons.

Trying it out:

- Establish a trial period and a method for measuring success.
- Complete and sign the FWA request form.
- Communicate the new arrangement to other staff in the department.
- Utilize calendar sharing to ensure the entire team can see co-worker work-place and work-time.

#### Manager/Supervisor TIPS:

- Ensure equitability when you determine and implement FWAs.
- Manage to outcomes rather than face time.
- Recognize that UC Davis is a family friendly campus that utilizes the Principles of Community to guide our decisions and direction.
- Check any personal bias you may have concerning employees attempting to integrate their work and life. Is an employee a less "serious" or effective employee if they have non-work responsibilities or activities?
- Consider that employees have different stages in their lives that necessitate different intensities of work engagement. Studies indicate that employee loyalty increases significantly when the employer understands these ebbs and flows of attention throughout the career of an employee.
- Consider the diversity and inclusion principles of UC Davis.
- There is no one arrangement that fits all situations. Be flexible and think creatively.