

FLEXTIME

Guidelines for Flextime

Lehigh University

Human Resources

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FLEXTIME PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

“Flexitime” means a work schedule that includes designated hours during which an employee may, with the approval of the supervisor and under work unit plans approved by the department head, elect an alternative time of arrival and departure from work. It may also include required days or hours during which an employee subject to the work schedule must be present for work. Working hours must be balanced to meet the operating needs of the department and, if possible, an employee’s own personal preferences as to work hours.

OBJECTIVES OF FLEXTIME

The primary objectives of management are as follows:

1. To maximize productivity while maintaining or enhancing the level of service
2. To retain qualified employees
3. To improve the use of physical resources
4. To increase flexibility in meeting irregular scheduling needs
5. To minimize tardiness by providing make-up time within the flexible schedule
6. To reduce short term absences by providing opportunities for employees to conduct personal business without taking paid or unpaid leave.

The benefits for the employee are as follows:

1. To improve the work environment and thus, morale
2. To add significant privilege to those privileges already available
3. To accommodate those persons for whom rigid work hours constitute a hardship, a barrier to other privileges, or even a barrier to employment.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The supervisor reserves the right to approve or deny an employee’s proposed flexitime schedule if it will interfere with the work to be done or the services to be provided. The supervisor may approve a flexitime schedule if effective and efficient operations are ensured. Use of flexitime is at the discretion of the supervisor. The flexitime work schedule allows employees latitude in scheduling their working hours within the specified limits set forth in this policy.

Individual departments may use a flexitime work schedule, subject to the following conditions:

- The implementation, continuance, discontinuance, or modification of flexitime is at the discretion of the Department Head/Chair in consultation with the VP/Provost/Dean responsible for the area.
- Adequate staff coverage sufficient to meet the operating requirements of the department will be maintained at all times.

- The normal Lehigh business hours are 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. (Monday – Friday, with some exceptions). Nonexempt staff members normally work 37.5 hours and exempt staff members work a minimum of 40 hours.
- Departments that want to implement flextime must first pilot a program (typically for 3 to 4 months). If flextime is currently in place, the department may consider moving to the evaluation stage.
- Department Heads/Chairs should assess any reports about significant changes resulting from flextime.

DEFINITIONS

Flextime is a schedule by which an employee may – on a daily basis and within specific limits dictated by the needs of the job – start work at a time of his/her discretion as long as the employee completes the required number of hours of work per day (7.5 for nonexempt or 8 hours for exempt). Time limits are placed on the amounts of “flex” an employee has by establishing “core hours” and a “bandwidth.” This may vary depending on the type of plan selected.

- *Core hours* are the hours during which all employees must be on the job unless they are scheduled to be out of the office for vacation, excused absence, or on a “flex day” resulting from a compressed work week.
- *Bandwidth* is the span of time beginning at the earliest time an employee may start work and ending at the latest time an employee may stop work. (This concept may not apply to departments that work 24 hours a day or that have more than one shift).

Nonexempt staff may, with management approval and because of business necessity, work more than 7.5 hours in one day. This option, however, still requires that an individual work a 37.5-hour, five-day workweek between Saturday and Sunday. Any hours worked over 37.5 hours are considered overtime and must be compensated accordingly.

The regular University lunch break is one hour. An employee may, however, shorten or lengthen his/her lunch period within the limits of the flexible lunch period as long as management approval is obtained and the operations of the department are not disrupted. If the lunch break is less than 20 minutes, the employee must be paid for the length of the break.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resources does not approve or deny requests but will monitor flextime to ensure it is administered in a consistent and equitable manner throughout the University. **Human Resources** also ensures that flextime schedules conform to appropriate state and federal laws and University policy.

Department Management ensures that flextime is administered in a consistent and equitable manner within the department and that flextime arrangements conform to University policy.

Department Management also ensures that staffing is available at all times to meet the operational requirements of the department.

The **Employee** plans and organizes his/her time to meet the job requirements as established by the supervisor. One or more employees may assume coverage responsibility with the supervisor's concurrence. For example, in a two-person department, one employee may opt to work from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the other from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If a change in schedule is required by one employee, that employee must arrange substitute coverage and inform the supervisor. Employees are expected to work together to accommodate each other's needs.

Lehigh University expects supervisors to make reasonable efforts to accommodate employee requests for flextime. If an employee requests a flextime schedule, the Department Head/Chair is urged to consider the options and examine the feasibility of implementing a flextime schedule.

PROCEDURES

Piloting Flextime

Department management interested in piloting a flextime program will receive approval for piloting the program from the VP/Provost/Dean responsible for the stem.

Department management maintains records to facilitate evaluation of any significant changes resulting from flextime scheduling. The information should include data regarding:

- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Overtime for nonexempt employees
- Service levels (examples: number of complaints; phone calls; flow of customers during extended hours.)

The information collected will be evaluated by the department management to determine the feasibility of continuing with flextime.

After completing the pilot, the department management prepares a short report that includes information on absenteeism, turnover, personal business days taken, nonexempt overtime, service levels, and other indicators. This report is submitted to the VP/Provost/Dean for review and approval for continuing with the flextime program.

Work Schedule Coverage Requirements

The following format is suggested for the work schedule coverage plan. One copy of the plan should be forwarded to the next level of management; the other is to be used in discussions with employees during employee briefing meetings.

Example:

Department	Function	Total Employees	Employees Needed for Coverage		
			8:15 – 9:30	11:30 – 1:30	3:30 – 4:45

Time Management and Administration

The process for planning and developing a flextime schedule is a dynamic process that involves employees as well as supervisors. All members of the group must consider events and schedules and assume the responsibility to make flextime work. Even those who decide to retain the standard schedule must agree to support the efforts surrounding flextime. Without the support of all staff members, including those who choose not to participate, flextime will be a challenge.

Each participant should organize his/her work schedule to ensure that the policy and operating requirements for the department are met; that each individual’s responsibilities for maintaining adequate work coverage are understood; and that proper time-keeping records are maintained.

Experience and Evaluation Phase

Each supervisor assures that the policy and operating requirements are understood and are being met within the work unit.

Reporting Vacation, Overtime, and Sick Leave

Reporting hours away from the office is the same for employees working flextime as for those working on a standard schedule. Current practice is to report exceptions to the normal schedule. Payroll reports are submitted using hours away from the job for vacation, sick time, or excused absence. This practice will continue and personnel responsible for completing time sheets must be careful to use the correct number of hours. The normal hours will no longer be 7.5 for nonexempt or 8 for exempt; they will vary depending upon the flextime schedules selected.

GUIDELINES

Bandwidth:	Suggested time during which employees <i>may</i> be on the job: Exempt: 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Nonexempt: 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Standard service day:	The time during which normal service and functional operations must be available: Exempt: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – 5 days/week Nonexempt: 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. – 5 days/week
University core time:	The time when all employees, both exempt and nonexempt, are to be on the job unless specifically excused – 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Flexible time:	Designated time when employees may or may not be present. It is the same for exempt and nonexempt staff – 6:30 to 9:30 a.m.; 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; 3:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Regular hours:	The total number of hours that must be accounted for during a normal workweek. Exempt: 40 hours Nonexempt: 37.5 hours
Accounting period:	Time period over which work hours can be accumulated in one week for both exempt and nonexempt staff – 12:01 a.m. on Sunday to 12:00 midnight on Saturday.
Lunch break:	The time an employee is off the job during the midday flex period. It is the same for exempt and nonexempt staff – A minimum of ½ hour and a maximum of two hours.
Regular hours:	The <i>Lehigh University Staff Guide</i> states that nonexempt staff are expected to work 7.5 hours per day and exempt staff 8 hours per day.
Maximum weekly hours:	The number of hours that may be worked by nonexempt staff without requiring overtime pay at time a one-half is 40 hours.

**COMPRESSED WORKWEEK:
9/80 OR 9/75 PLAN**

Compressed workweek refers to a workweek (37.5 or 40 hours long) that is condensed into fewer than five days. Several options for an exempt employee include (nonexempt would be calculated using 75 hours over two weeks):

1. Four 10-hour days
2. Four 10-hour days with alternating Mondays and Fridays as the day off (4 day/alternating)
3. A week of five 9-hour days followed by a week of three 9-hour days and one 8-hour day (the 9/80 plan)

Employees who select this plan will establish a new standard work schedule.

Nonexempt: Sample Schedule

Week #1	Monday through Friday	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a one-hour lunch period	40 hours
Week #2	Monday through Wednesday	7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a 30-minute lunch period	35 hours 75 hours worked
	Thursday	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a one-hour lunch period	
	Friday	Day Off	

Exempt Sample Schedule:

Week #1	Monday through Friday	7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with a one-hour lunch period	45 hours
Week #2	Monday through Wednesday	7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with a one-hour lunch period	35 hours 80 hours worked
	Thursday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM with one-hour lunch period	
	Friday	Day Off	

Federal laws clearly define acceptable overtime practices and we must implement compressed workweeks carefully to avoid violating these laws. Implementing a 9/80 or a 9/75 schedule must be coordinated with Lehigh University's regular payroll cycle to avoid unnecessary overtime.

A standard schedule for nonexempt employees consists of 37.5 hours each week. Hours worked up to 40 hours are paid at straight time. All hours worked in excess of the standard 40 hour workweek must be paid at time and one-half. Overtime must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

We will continue to observe the LU holiday schedule with each person receiving eight hours of pay on each holiday. For holidays that occur on a 9-hour workday, work schedules will need to be adjusted. A simple solution is to take one hour of vacation or to alter the flextime schedule for the week.

Recommended Procedure:

1. Establish supervisory teams. Determine which supervisors will be present on alternate Fridays.
2. Identify those employees who wish to retain the current schedule. (Schedule C)
3. Identify alternating schedules for other employees. (Schedules A and B)

With implementation of the 9/75 or 9/80 plan, department management is responsible for ensuring that a viable team is available every Friday to meet customer demands. Each department should align its staff with the necessary skills and resources to meet customer needs, ideally targeting 50 percent of the employees working alternate Fridays.

Determine start date for compressed workweek: _____

Schedule A: Off alternate Fridays, beginning _____

Schedule B: Off alternate Fridays, beginning _____

Schedule C: Maintain current work schedule at work each day Monday – Friday, every week.

Other schedules may be implemented along with the 9/75 or 9/80. The number of variations is limited only by creativity.

SAMPLE FLEX TIME SCHEDULES USED BY DEPARTMENTS ON CAMPUS

Office A:

Flexible schedules are used year-round with some people starting earlier than the standard 8:15 a.m. starting time and quitting earlier than the standard 4:45 p.m. quitting time; while other people start later than 8:15 a.m. and quit later than 4:45 p.m.

Office B:

Flexible schedules have been used during the summer months only. Staff members have the option of working from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., while others start somewhat later and finish at 5:00 p.m.

Office C:

During the summer months, this office uses flexible schedules on a rotating basis as follows:

- Seven of the ten staff members work four days and take the fifth day (Friday) off.
- Three staff members work from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. five days per week.

Office D:

- Exempt staff members use flextime informally. Daily time logs are kept. Honor system is used.
- Nonexempt staff members have not been given the opportunity to use flextime.

Office E:

Office is staffed by nine nonexempt and two exempt employees each with their own working schedules. Starting times include 7:30, 7:45, 8:00, 8:15, and 8:30 a.m. Staff are permitted to alter their schedules with advance notice.

General criteria: Office must be staffed during normal working hours; there can be no reduction of customer service; each individual's job must be completed. Non-compliance of pre-arranged schedule could mean loss of privilege.

This office is open during lunch. Staff members have the option of taking ½ hour lunch on days they are assigned to work between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m.

Staff members keep time sheets to track their time.

Office F:

The office staff member use flexible schedules throughout the year. There are, however, major differences between the academic year schedules and summer schedules.

During the academic year, staff members have the option (non-mandatory) of starting earlier than 8:15 a.m. and working later than 4:45 p.m. Examples are:

- One staff member works from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. with a 1-hour lunch.
- One staff member works from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. with a 1-hour lunch.
- One staff member works from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. with a 1-hour lunch.
- Two mechanics work from 6:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. with a 1-hour lunch.
- Two mechanics work from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. with a 1-hour lunch.

Staff often request, and are granted, other options (½ hour lunch, etc.) as the need arises.

During the summer months, one staff member works four 10-hour days per week. Another staff member works a similar shift but supplements the 5th day off with some vacation. Non-office staff members work 9 days and have the 10th day off.

Certain rules apply which help to make all of the above work:

1. Vacations have priority over flextime.
2. Work must be completed.
3. University events take priority over flextime.
4. Cooperation among staff members is crucial.
5. Some cross-training is necessary.

FLEXTIME APPLICATION

NAME: _____

CURRENT HOURS: _____

REQUESTED/ HOURS: _____

How will this benefit:

Employee:

Department:

University:

Anticipated problems which might occur:

Solutions in the event of above mentioned problems:

MANAGER'S FLEXTIME WORKSHEET

Once the parameters of the flextime program have been determined, department managers should:

1. Analyze departmental staffing and work flow configuration to determine critical aspects of introducing flextime in the department. Some of the aspects to be considered are:

Peak service or demand times:	AM	PM
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Daily:
Weekly:
Monthly:
Quarterly:

Regularly scheduled meeting times:

Current standard workday:

Ideal work schedule coverage (extended hours with gap period; other **daily, weekly, quarterly** configuration that would improve the match between workforce availability and work flow demand):

Bandwidth available to _____ employees (core hours plus beginning and ending flexible options).

Coverage if scheduling changes are approved as requested:

Adjustments to be made: _____

2. Hold meetings with staff members to discuss concept, answer questions, and get their input on procedures and scheduling approaches.
3. Design guidelines for the department.
4. Schedule meetings with employees to review guidelines and procedures for selecting schedules.
5. Accept employee applications, review them, and announce final approval of schedules.
6. Pilot the flextime schedule for three to four months.
7. Evaluate and report the results of flextime pilot.