



## Flexible Working

### Benefits

**Flexible working can bring significant business benefits, particularly in the current climate where we all need to be aware of costs and be as efficient as possible. Therefore promoting flexible working makes good business sense and brings the following opportunities:**



- Savings on overheads when employees work from home or less downtime for machinery when 24-hour shifts are worked
- The chance to have extended operating hours, e.g. later closing times for retailers
- The business is able to attract and retain a skilled and more diverse workforce
- More job satisfaction and better staff morale
- Reduced levels of sickness absence
- Greater continuity of staff, as a better work-life balance has a positive impact on staff retention, and on employee relations, motivation and commitment. High rates of retention mean that you keep experienced staff who can often offer a better overall service providing increased customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Improved competitiveness, such as being able to react to changing market conditions more effectively

Flexible approaches to working can also benefit employees, as it gives them the opportunity to fit other commitments around working, making better use of their free time and can be particularly helpful for those employees with caring responsibilities.

### Disadvantages

Although there are distinct advantages to a flexible approach, there are disadvantages that should be considered:

- It may be difficult to provide flexible working for some jobs
- IT systems may not suit flexible arrangements
- The challenge of motivating and engaging employees who are working at different times and in different ways
- Flexible working could be, but shouldn't be an obstacle to promotion
- If not offered to all staff could create dissatisfaction between staffing groups



# Flexible Working

## Types of Flexible Working

There are a variety of different ways of working and you can use different methods to suit your organisation. Some of the different types of working include:

### Part-Time Working

Employees are contracted to work less than your standard, basic full time working week and this is the most commonly used flexible working method

### Flexi-time

The employer sets the core hours that are to be worked and employees have the ability to choose the hours outside of this.



### Staggered Hours

Having different start, finish and break times to be able to extend business opening hours.

### Compressed Working Week

The total number of hours per week is worked over fewer days.

### Job Sharing

A full time job is split, usually between two individuals, who agree how the working week will be covered between themselves.

### Time off in Lieu

Additional hours worked over contract are taken as time off, rather than paid.

### Annualised Hours

Hours of work are calculated over the whole year and the majority of time is calculated and flexed to meet

the anticipated business needs, with the remaining hours held in reserve to be called on at short notice should there be a need.

### Term-Time Working

The individual retains a permanent contract which includes periods of time off that coincides with school holidays. This time can be paid or unpaid

### V-Time Working

Individuals can reduce their hours for an agreed period of time, with the guarantee of full time work when this period ends.

### Zero-Hours Contracts

Individuals only work the number of hours actual required and this can vary on a week by week basis.

### Sabbaticals

Individuals can take time away from work for an extended period, either paid or unpaid.



## Legal Compliance

Anyone can ask you for flexible work arrangements, but the law provides some employees with the statutory right to request a flexible working pattern.

To qualify they must:

- be an employee, but not an agency worker or in the armed forces
- have worked for you for 26 weeks continuously before applying
- not have made another application to work flexibly under the right during the past 12 months

If they qualify, they have the statutory right to ask if:

- they have or expect to have parental responsibility of a child aged 16 or under or a disabled child under 18 who receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- they are the parent/guardian/special guardian/foster parent/private foster carer or as the holder of a residence order or the spouse, partner or civil partner of one of these and are applying to care for the child
- they are a carer who cares, or expects to be caring, for an adult who is a spouse, partner, civil partner or relative; or who although not related to them, lives at the same address

Under the law you must seriously consider any application, and only reject it if there are good business reasons for doing so. However, do remember that the employee has the right to request

flexible working, not the right to have it.

In addition you should be aware that there the following legislation should also be considered in some circumstances when employees are seeking to balance their working and home lives:

- Employment Relations Act
- Working Time Regulations
- Part-time Workers Regulations
- Health & Safety at Work Act
- Sex Discrimination Act
- Race Relations Act
- Disability Discrimination Act



For further advice and assistance

please contact Peta Fry, HR Director on 01793 818300 or e-mail [petaf@monahans.co.uk](mailto:petaf@monahans.co.uk)

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