



Flexitime And Time-Off-In-Lieu Policy

Introduction

The aim of the flexitime scheme is to provide flexibility in working arrangements for both managers and employees. The provision of cover is a joint responsibility of both management and employees.

The workplace must be staffed throughout normal working hours (including lunch time) in order to maintain service cover.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all employees.

Operation of the Scheme

1.1 Application

1.1.1 The standard working week for full-time staff is 37 hours. The application of this scheme is governed by these hours, or pro rata part thereof for part-time staff.

1.1.2 Staff are expected to comply with all policies and requirements of the Council in force from time to time in relation to the recording of Working Time. In this respect, the Council has developed a Flexi-time Scheme.

1.2 Hours

1.2.1 As outlined above, the standard full-time working week is 37 hours. The details of your starting and finishing times will be agreed with your manager. It is important that your manager and your colleagues know the hours which you will normally work, including your start and finish times. It is important to be clear that flexi-time does not mean that staff can vary their normal working hours on an ad hoc basis.

1.2.2 The flexi-time scheme divides the normal working day into two parts:

- Core time, the fixed period of time during which staff must be at work, and;
- Bandwidth, the time during which staff have the opportunity to vary their working hours, and/or vary their start/finish times on particular days. Within this period, staff must adopt a 'standard' or expected start and finish time.

1.2.3 The core times are stated in your contract.

Unless otherwise agreed by the manager, there must be staff cover at the office during the public opening hours. These hours may vary from time to time as agreed by the Council.

1.3 Breaks

1.3.1 Staff may take a maximum lunch break of two hours between 12.00 - 14.00 hours. The manager may authorise departure from this period in special circumstances.

Staff are entitled to take a twenty minute break after a period of six hours continuous working.

Lunch breaks and the twenty minute break are unpaid.

1.4 Period of Scheme

1.4.1 A four-weekly accounting period is used. Over each accounting period full-time staff must account for 148 hours (i.e. 37 hours per week x 4 weeks). The same formula is applied to part-time staff.

1.4.2 All staff work to the same accounting period. For example, day 1 week 1 will be the same for all staff. New starters will join the scheme wherever the accounting period is on their start date.

1.5 Accumulated Time

- 1.5.1 You may work more or less than your normal hours each day/week as long as you are at work at all agreed core time periods. Up to a maximum of five hours' flexitime credit or five hours' flexitime debit may be carried forward between accounting periods, pro rata for part-time staff.
- 1.5.2 If there are more than five hours' flexitime in credit at the end of an accounting period, those hours will be lost unless otherwise authorised by the manager.
- 1.5.3 Members of staff in debit at the date of leaving the Council's employment will have their final salary payment adjusted accordingly or be invoiced for the outstanding debt.

1.6 Leave Credits

- 1.6.1 Time accumulated may be taken as flexi leave, provided that not more than one standard working day (7.4 hours for full-time staff, pro rata for part-time staff) is used as 'flexi leave' in any one accounting period. Such leave must be approved by your manager in the same way as annual leave.

1.7 Standard Working Day

- 1.7.1 The standard working day for full-time staff is a period of 7 hours 24 minutes based on a 37 hour week.
- 1.7.2 The standard working day for part-time staff will be calculated pro rata based on a full-time week of 37 hours. Each member of staff will be notified what is their standard working day.
- 1.7.3 This figure should be used for recording absences in respect of annual leave, flexi-time, sickness, training courses and other authorised absences (see paragraph 3.5 below) and for calculating when overtime is payable (see paragraph 1.8 below).

1.8 Overtime

- 1.8.1 Overtime may continue to be worked according to existing Conditions of Service. For staff who are part of this flexi-time scheme, overtime will not be calculated until a standard working day has been worked in any one day and may only be claimed in respect of hours in excess of the contracted number, in any four-weekly accounting period. All overtime working must be specifically approved in advance by the relevant manager. Claims for overtime payments will be made in respect of each accounting period and payments will be made on the next date available following its close.

See also paragraph 2 Time Off In Lieu

2. Time-Off-In-Lieu: Working Outside 'Flexi-time' Limits

- 2.1 Where you are required to work outside the bandwidth, these hours of work may be credited as time-off-in-lieu with the authorisation of your manager.
- 2.2 Time-off-in-lieu operates outside the flexi-time scheme. An employee may "bank" hours credited as time-off-in-lieu. The maximum number of time-off-in-lieu hours that may be banked is five hours.

(NOTE: an employee can not have more than five hours in total flexi and TOIL each month)

- 2.3 Time-off-in-lieu credits must be taken by the end of the annual leave year during which they were earned, unless the Staffing and Employment Committee authorises that they may be carried over to the next annual leave year.
- 2.4 Attendance on training activities will not qualify under this provision and time spent on such activities will be recorded as either one half or one whole standard day (3 hours 42 minutes or 7 hours 24 minutes for full time staff, pro rata for part-time staff).
- 2.5 Overtime and time-off-in-lieu cannot be claimed in respect of the same hours.

3. The Recording System

3.1 Record of Hours

- 3.1.1 You are required to enter your time of arrival and departure on the flexi-timesheet record of hours worked for each working period including before and after lunch or other agreed break (either manual or electronic).

3.2 Starting or Finishing at Another Location

- 3.2.1 Where you start or finish the working day at a location other than your usual signing in/out point, you should indicate this on the timesheet. The actual times of starting or finishing must be added to the timesheet alongside this entry at the first available opportunity after the event.

3.3 Travel Outside Normal Area of Work

- 3.3.1 Where you are required to travel outside your normal geographical area of working, travelling time in excess of that usually incurred in travelling to your normal registration point may be claimed as working hours. Appropriate entries allowing for travelling time will be made in the timesheet as in 3.2 above.

3.4 Recording of Flexi Leave and Time-Off-In-Lieu

- 3.4.1 When an employee takes a full day off as flexi leave, zero hours are recorded on the timesheet for that day. Where an employee takes part of the day as flexi leave, the actual hours worked are recorded.
- 3.4.2 Where an employee takes time-off-in-lieu, the number of hours taken will be recorded as a credit on the timesheet.

3.5 Annual Leave and Other Leave of Absence

- 3.5.1 The number of hours taken as annual leave should be recorded as a credit in the timesheet. For example, if the employee takes a full day as annual leave, this is recorded on the timesheet as being 'worked' a standard day. A week's leave for a full-time member of staff would be recorded as 37 hours, pro rata for part-time staff.
- 3.5.2 Other leave of absence requests, for example, hospital appointments, will be considered in accordance with the Council's policies.

3.5.3 Where leave of absence is authorised with pay, and where the employee attends at work for part of this day, the hours actually at work should be recorded and credited hours recorded for the remainder of the day up to the standard working day for that employee. Where the employee is absent for a full day, a standard working day should be recorded

3.5.4 Where a visit to a medical or dental practitioner forms part of a planned series, you are expected to arrange such visits during your own time. In the case of staff participating in the flexi-time scheme, these visits can be arranged outside core time and the time actually worked on that day recorded.

3.6 Bad Weather & Other Disruptions

3.6.1 As a general rule employees working fixed hours who are unavoidably delayed have any lost time disregarded. As a principle, where the majority are affected, staff working flexi-time will be treated in the same way as those working fixed hours. Where the employee attends at work, a standard day should be recorded. Non-attendance should be taken as annual leave, or recorded as zero hours, on the flexi record. Where management decides to release staff early due to bad weather, a standard day's time should be recorded.

3.7 Flexi-time Record Sheets (Manual or Electronic)

3.7.1 Times shown on flexi-time record sheets will be limited to the two starting and two finishing times during the working day; details of non-standard circumstances need not be shown. The calculations of time worked will be made by you in your own time during the accounting period and the flexi-time record sheets will be retained on the staff file in accordance with the Council's retention policy. Managers should regularly review staff hours.

3.8 Audit of Records

3.8.1 Timesheets will be periodically checked by the manager. Any instance where it appears that the scheme is being incorrectly applied or abused will be investigated by the manager. Abuse of the flexi-time scheme is a disciplinary matter, and could be considered as gross misconduct.

4. General Conditions

4.1 Pattern of Hours

4.1.1 You will be required to agree a general pattern of hours with your manager who will have discretion to authorise necessary departures from that pattern. Arrangements will be made by the manager to ensure that the Council can continue to operate efficiently and that its services are not impaired.

4.2 General Operation

4.2.1 Operation of the flexi-time scheme is introduced on the understanding that it shall not interfere with or reduce the efficiency of the normal activities of the Council. The manager may change the working arrangements at any time if this condition is not being met. The opportunity to participate in this scheme may be withdrawn by the manager from any member of staff if he/she has consistently not met the requirements of the scheme in any respect.

Reviewed: 27 July 2023 and 30th May 2024

Review Date: May 2025