GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Flexible Work policy being implemented?
   This policy applies to staff only and Ohio State has moved forward with this policy for several key reasons, including:
   - Recognition of the growing demands on staff.
   - Increasing the ability to find new and better ways to serve customers and meet goals.
   - Providing a way to successfully manage people, time, space, and workload.
   - Achieving a highly productive work environment that enables staff to balance work and personal needs while providing workforce predictability and stability.
   - Helping move Ohio State toward an eminent culture and incorporating a best practice of top employers.
   - Aligning with the university’s strategic plan to achieve our six goals and become an even higher performing organization.

2. What is a “flexible work arrangement”?
   A flexible work arrangement could take a variety of forms. Examples of flexible work arrangements include:
   - Flextime. Work schedules that permit flexibility within limits set by the unit. A flextime schedule requires a standard number of hours to be worked within a given time period, usually 40 hours during a week. Flextime options include fixed starting/ending times that change periodically, starting and ending times that can vary daily and variations in the length of days (e.g. six-hour day followed by a 10-hour day). Departments may develop flexible schedules for nonexempt staff within the standard 40-hour workweek. Any work time authorized over 40 hours of active pay status is subject to overtime pay or compensatory time off.
   - Compressed workweek. 40-hour work week compressed into fewer than five work days (e.g. four 10-hour work days).
   - Telecommuting or flexplace. Some or all work hours are completed at a location other than the campus workplace.
   - Temporarily changing appointment percentage (may impact benefits – see benefits eligibility hr.osu.edu/benefits/benefitseligibility). For example: dropping from full-time to less than 75% FTE for a specified period of time and returning to full-time at a later date; gradually increasing one’s appointment to 100% when returning from parental leave; increasing one’s appointment for a short time due to increased workload; etc.
   - Job-sharing (alternate weeks, share workdays, overlap schedules). An arrangement under which two or more individuals share the duties and/or budget line of one FTE (may impact benefits).

3. Is an employee covered under workers’ compensation if the employee has an injury while performing their work tasks at home?
   Yes, an employee performing their work tasks from home is covered under workers’ compensation. The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation will determine benefit eligibility. All claims will be investigated.

4. Who should I contact if I have further questions?
   For questions about the Flexible Work policy or flexible work arrangements within your department, contact your Human Resources Professional, the Work Life Manager in the Office of Human Resources, or visit hr.osu.edu/worklife/flexiblework.

5. Our department already offers flexible work arrangements for staff. How does this policy change what we are already doing?
   There are in fact many instances of flexible work arrangements that are already in place for staff. This policy merely reiterates what we are doing in many areas and supports the continued use of flexible work where appropriate.

6. Does a flexible work arrangement need to be documented?
Yes, the arrangement should be documented outlining the arrangement, schedule, location, and how, when and where the work is going to be completed.

7. Is there a standard timeframe placed on flexible work arrangements?
   Flexible work arrangements covered in this policy are two months or longer, though flexible work may occur for a shorter or longer period.

STAFF QUESTIONS

8. If I’m out of vacation and need a day off can I flex my time?
   You can flex your time if your supervisor agrees but flexible work should not be used as an ongoing substitution for using sick or vacation time (policy 6.12 only covers those Flexible Work Arrangements that are longer than 2 months).

9. How will holidays be paid?
   Check with your department/college Human Resources Professional or visit Holidays Policy 6.20.

10. How will benefit costs change based on the flexible work arrangement?
    If you decrease your FTE from 75-100% to less than 75% then your health benefit premiums will increase, so you should check with your department or college Human Resource Professional, contact the Office of Human Resources, Benefits Services, or visit hr.osu.edu/benefits.

11. How do I know if I’m a good candidate to request a flexible schedule?
    To determine whether or not you are a good candidate for flexible work and to consider the implications of certain types of flexible work visit hr.osu.edu/worklife/flexiblework.

MANAGER QUESTIONS

12. How as a manager can I make fair decisions about who can and cannot participate in a flex work arrangement especially if there are limited opportunities?
    Review the requests and consider individual performance and work history. If you have many employees and limited opportunities, ask them to come up with a rotating schedule.

13. How can I be sure that those working from home don’t have their children with them?
    You can’t, which is why it is imperative that you review the policy and Manager Guidelines, before approving a flexible work arrangement. Having a culture of trust and performance measurements in place helps when having these conversations.

14. How can I be sure that those working from home are ensuring the security of materials and data in that environment?
    Flexible work arrangements must be in compliance with university electronic security and data policies, as well as all university policies cio.osu.edu/policies.

15. How do I know if someone is a good candidate for flexible work?
    See the Considerations of Working a Flexible Schedule by visiting hr.osu.edu/worklife/flexiblework.

16. What impact does the Flexible Work policy have on my department?
    The Flexible Work policy should serve as a reference point for having conversations with your staff members who are interested in flexible work arrangements. The policy does not mandate any changes in your department, and serves as a
general guide for evaluating staff requests. There likely will be many cases in which flexible work arrangements are not feasible given the nature of some operations.

17. What if I can’t support a request for a flexible work arrangement based on my department operations?
A flexible work arrangement should always make sense in the context of department operations, and should not be approved if it will negatively impact the work of the department. If you cannot support a flexible work arrangement in your department, you should discuss the matter with the employee making the request and explain the rationale for not approving the request in a timely manner.

18. If I approve a flexible work arrangement, can I end it at any time?
If it becomes necessary to discontinue an established flexible work arrangement, you should give as much notice as possible to the employee who will be impacted (preferably four weeks). You should discuss a plan with the employee that will help create a smooth transition out of the flexible work arrangement and allow the employee to continue balancing their personal life with their work responsibilities.

19. What if I am approving a flexible schedule on a temporary/trial basis, do I need to provide anything in writing to my employee?
The expectations for a flexible work arrangement should be discussed and documented. If the arrangement is going to have a trial period, the relevant timeframe should be clearly communicated and agreed upon by the supervisor and the employee and documented. At the end of the trial period the supervisor and employee should revisit the arrangement and decide if it is feasible to continue.

20. I work in a department that has many different types of positions. Based on operations and job duties, I am able to allow certain staff a more flexible schedule than others. Is this okay?
It is understood that operations vary by department, and that staff members within each department have different responsibilities. While it is permissible to have flexible work arrangements with some staff members and not with others, the reason for this difference should be clearly communicated to alleviate perceptions of inequity.

21. I am worried that if I approve one flexible work arrangement then I will receive many more requests.
While the university promotes flexible work arrangements, it also recognizes that not all requests can be granted. If only a certain number of requests can be granted within a department, a fair process should be developed for allowing as many staff as possible to take advantage of flexible work arrangements.

22. What information do I have to provide my employee if I am denying their request for a flexible schedule?
When denying a request for a flexible schedule, a clear rationale should be given to the employee, including facts about the department’s operations and relevant facts about the individual employee’s status (orientation periods that must be completed, the employee’s role within the department, performance considerations, etc).

23. My staff member is in corrective action. Can I use that as a reason to deny a flexible schedule request?
Performance concerns and corrective action should be considered when evaluating a request for a flexible work arrangement and may be an appropriate reason to deny the request.

24. Where Can I Obtain Additional Information?
• Contacting Katie Purcell, Work Life Manager, at 614-292-0583, purcell.59@osu.edu
• Visiting hr.osu.edu/policy Policy 6.12