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ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

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I. PURPOSE

This chapter establishes policies and procedures for the CDC¹ Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) program effected in cooperation with the Labor Management Cooperation Council (LMCC).

II. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 (P.L.95-390) authorized AWS as an experimental program in 1978. In 1985, legislation providing permanent authorization for agencies to use AWS was enacted (P.L.99-196). The act authorizes Federal agencies to allow employees the flexibility to vary their daily arrival and departure times and, under some options, to vary the length of their workday or workweek.

Supervisors are encouraged to provide maximum flexibility for their employees. However, because of specific job requirements in the Centers, Institute, or Offices (CIOs) of CDC, the same degree of personal choice may not be possible for all employees. Supervisors have the authority and responsibility to require work hour adjustments to meet special work situations and the responsibility to account for the overall performance of the organization.

Employee participation in AWS is subject to management approval. In addition, supervisors may require an employee's presence during specific hours for a certain period or a particular meeting. Management may at any time alter a previously approved schedule to accommodate the requirement for meetings, travel, training, conferences, and other essential work-related activities.

¹ References to CDC also apply to ATSDR.



The EPC supports the concept of AWS which includes the use of all the approved options listed in Section V below. The needs of the employees must be balanced with the ability of CDC to accomplish its mission. Supervisors are expected to work with employees to allow maximum flexibility utilizing AWS, while at the same time ensuring the mission is accomplished. The EPC encourages managers and supervisors to utilize a team-based approach in establishing AWS.

III. REFERENCES

A. 5 U.S.C. Chapter 61, Subchapter II: Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules

B. 5 C.F.R. Part 610, Subpart D: Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules

IV. REQUIREMENTS

A. Participation

B. Types of AWS Authorized

The term "alternative work schedules" encompasses two work-schedule variations--the flexible schedule and the compressed schedule.

1. A **flexible** schedule can split the workday into two distinct kinds of time--core hours and flexible hours or bands. Under most flexible schedule arrangements, all employees must be at work during core hours, but they may establish their arrival and departure times during the flexible bands.

2. **Compressed** schedules are fixed schedules in which employees can complete the 40-hour workweek in fewer than 5 days or the 80-hour biweekly pay period in fewer than 10 days.

C. Responsibility

1. Supervisor

a. Supervisors should approve or disapprove a flexible or compressed work schedule within an organizational component only after a consultation with the immediate work group. A proposed schedule should be disapproved only if it would have an adverse impact on the mission (e.g., a reduction in productivity, a diminution in the level of service to our customers, or a documentable increase in the cost of operations).

b. Supervisors are expected to plan and organize assignments to provide work and measurement of accomplishment during the employee's hours. Although AWS provides greater freedom for all employees to choose their working hours, it must be remembered that field offices, State agencies, other Federal agencies, etc., may be on

different schedules. For this reason, it is imperative that adequate coverage be provided during official operational hours. This will be the responsibility of the supervisor to manage within his/her staff. In addition, there will be no routine overtime or compensatory time granted in order to provide adequate supervision or telephone coverage; needs should be anticipated and schedules made accordingly. Supervisors must assume responsibility for proper record maintenance, certification, and reporting of information to timekeepers. Supervisors should also ensure that each employee knows who to contact in the event of an emergency.

2. Employee

AWS gives each employee a measure of personal control over the work environment which previously had not been possible. This new freedom is accompanied by an equal degree of responsibility. Each employee is expected to be present during the core period on scheduled workdays and to fulfill the commitment to account for a full 80-hour biweekly period for full-time employees or a prearranged schedule for part-time employees.

Each employee is expected to cooperate with coworkers and supervisors to ensure effective use of AWS. While supervisors are expected to make every effort to schedule meetings and other special activities during core times, there may be times when a supervisor will ask an employee to arrange his/her schedule to meet program needs. When possible, the employee will be given advance notice of the special need.

D. Program Criteria

1. Operational Hours

The CDC official operational hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except at the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) where the operational hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The operational hours at the Pittsburgh field site are Monday through Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Supervisors must ensure that organizational components are sufficiently staffed to function adequately during these hours.

2. Basic Work Requirement

a. Flexible Schedules: The basic work requirement for a full-time employee will consist of 8 hours in a day, 40 hours in a week, and 80 hours in a biweekly period. For part-time employees, the number of hours to be worked in a given period will be determined by the employee and supervisor.

b. Compressed Schedules: A full-time employee must work 80 hours in a biweekly period but may be scheduled to work fewer than 10 workdays. A part-time employee may be scheduled to work fewer than 80 hours in a biweekly period in fewer than 10 workdays.

c. In (a) and (b) above, the biweekly period must coincide with the civil service pay period.

3. Overtime, Holiday, and Compensatory Time

Overtime, holiday, and compensatory time provisions have not changed. For example, overtime must be requested and authorized by supervisors in advance; if an employee is in any way **required** by management to work hours which are in excess of the basic work requirement, such hours **are not** credit hours. These hours **must** be compensated as either compensatory time or overtime in accordance with the premium pay provisions of Title 5 and Title 38 of the United States Code and the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

4. Lunch Periods

The official lunch period is 30 minutes and should begin no earlier than 11:00 a.m. and conclude no later than 1:00 p.m. Employees cannot save lunch time in order to leave early.

5. Work Schedule Designations

All work schedules must be approved/disapproved by the immediate supervisor and reviewed by the next or higher level supervisor as determined to be appropriate by the CIO Director or his/her designee. Employee requests for AWS will be submitted no later than two full pay periods prior to the proposed effective date. The effective date must coincide with a scheduled pay period. All schedule preferences must be recorded on Form CDC 0.841A, Work Schedule Designation. The completed form must be retained by the immediate supervisor for 1 year from the date the schedule is terminated or the request is disapproved.

6. Time Accounting

Employees will report their time and attendance in accordance with the requirements of CDC Human Resources Management Manual Chapter 610-3, Recording and Reporting of Time and Attendance. Falsification of time records by an employee may result in disciplinary action, including removal from Federal service.

7. Training

Employees attending conferences or training courses will be guided by the schedules for conferences or training courses and will alter their AWS accordingly. This normally will involve reverting to the 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. workday. Training courses or conferences will not alter the requirement for all employees to account for their approved work schedule.

V. ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE OPTIONS

A. Authorized flexible schedules

1. Flexitour

This schedule allows an employee to select arrival and departure times within a flexible time band; however, once selected, the hours become the employee's regular work schedule.² The basic work requirement is the traditional 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, and 80 hours in a biweekly pay period.

2. Flexitime

This schedule allows employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within the established flexible band. The basic work requirement is the same as under Flexitour.

The following core hours and flexible hours will be observed in the establishment of flexible work schedules.

- **Core Hours** are those hours when all full-time employees on flexible schedules must be on duty during their scheduled workdays or in an appropriate leave status (including credit hour time off). The CDC core hours are 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (morning core band) and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (afternoon core band), Monday through Friday.³ Meetings are to be scheduled during core hours unless it is not feasible to do so. Also, with prior approval, lunch breaks may be used during core hours. Part-time employees continue to work originally appointed hours unless the employee and supervisor agree on changes.
- **Flexible hours** are those hours of the workday within which the employee has the option to select and/or vary the arrival and departure times. The CDC flexible hours are 12:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (Morning flex), 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Midday flex), and 3:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. (Evening flex band), Sunday through Saturday.⁴ Employees must obtain supervisory approval before working credit time. Employees must be on an approved Flexiplace Agreement before working credit time at home. For employees on a flexitime schedule, the midday flex band allows employees to extend their lunch periods up to an additional 1 1/2 hours and add the extra time at the end of the day. For example, an employee

² Employees may select an 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. tour of duty as a flexitour schedule to benefit from the credit hours provisions under Section V, paragraph A3.

³ Except at NCHS, where the morning core band is 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; NIOSH-Spokane, where the afternoon core band is 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.; and at the Pittsburgh field site, where the afternoon core band is 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

⁴ Except at NCHS, where the morning flex hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and the midday flex hours are 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; NIOSH-Spokane, where the evening flex hours are 2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. NOTE: If any element of this revised policy conflicts with an existing Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), bargaining unit employees must adhere to the CBA until it is changed.

can begin work at 6:00 a.m., take an 1 1/2 hour lunch (or personal) break and end work at 3:30 p.m. Employees working a flexitour or compressed schedule do not have this discretion since these are fixed schedules.

3. Credit hours

a. Credit hours may be worked **only** by employees covered by an authorized flexible schedule. Credit hours are those hours which are in excess of an employee's basic work requirement and which the employee may be allowed to work so as to vary the length of a succeeding workday or workweek. The earning and use of credit hours must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Employees may work up to 4 credit hours on a particular workday or 8 credit hours during a nonworkday. Full-time employees may accumulate more than 24 hours during a particular pay period but may not carry over more than 24 hours from one pay period to the next. Part-time employees may accumulate more than 25 percent of their biweekly work hours. However, the maximum carryover for part-time employees is not to exceed 25 percent of their biweekly work hours. Credit hours may be earned and used in increments of 1/4 hour. *Employees working under a compressed work schedule cannot earn credit hours. Commissioned officers and SES members may not earn credit hours.*

b. An employee in travel status may earn credit hours at a temporary duty location if the employee continues to work on a flexible schedule.⁵ The rules governing credit hours for work at the official duty station apply to employee's electing to work credit hours at the temporary duty location (i.e., the same procedures for requesting and approving credit hours in the office will apply for credit hours at the temporary duty location). *However, an employee may not earn credit hours for actual travel time because travel in connection with Government work is not voluntary in nature.* Under certain conditions, time spent in a travel status may be compensable as overtime hours.⁶

B. Authorized compressed schedules

1. 4-Day Workweek

This "4/10" schedule allows employees to work 10 hours a day, 40 hours a week, with 1 nonworkday each week of the pay period. Employees preselect fixed arrival and departure times and two fixed nonworkdays. Starting times may be scheduled between 6:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

⁵ Except where the employee reverts to a traditional fixed schedule while attending a conference/training (see Section IV, paragraph D7).

⁶ Employee may be entitled to overtime compensation (i.e., paid or compensatory time) under either 5 USC 5542 or the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for time spent in a travel status outside of his/her regularly scheduled hours. If an employee is not covered by FLSA ("FLSA exempt"), the travel must meet one of the four conditions specified in 5 USC 5542(b)(2)(B). For "FLSA nonexempt" employees, the requirements of FLSA must be met (see 5 CFR 551.422).

2. "5-4/9" Plan

This schedule allows employees to complete the pay period in eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day with 1 nonworkday each pay period. Employees preselect fixed arrival and departure times and a fixed nonworkday. Starting times may be scheduled between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

C. Restrictions

1. Employees must work or account for their basic work hour requirement by sick or annual leave, compensatory time off, leave without pay, credit hours, or excused absence.
2. Employees wishing to terminate their flexible or compressed schedule may do so at the end of the current pay period. The schedule to which the employee will return will be approved by the supervisor.
3. Employee requests to change to a different work schedule will be considered each calendar quarter. Such requests must be submitted at least two full pay periods before the start of the quarter and, if approved, will be effective at the beginning of the first pay period after January 1, April 1, July 1, or October 1 of each year.
4. Debit hours (i.e., taking time off from the basic work requirement in advance of accruing the requisite number of credit hours) are not permissible.
5. If a supervisor determines that the work schedules within an organization are adversely affecting the ability of a group or unit within the organization to accomplish the work efficiently and/or provide service to the public and/or the schedule increases significantly the cost of the operations, the supervisor may adjust employees' choices of arrival and departure times, adjust the use of credit hours, or explore other options, including discussions with the work group, prior to terminating an individual from participating in AWS.