

FLEXITIME AND ATTENDANCE SYSTEM

1.0 Introduction

This Flexitime System is applicable to all staff who are covered by the Scheme of Conditions of Service for NJC Local Government Services (Green Book).

The scheme enables staff to vary the times when they start and finish work, provided that they can still do their job properly and the work of the Section or Department does not suffer. Office opening hours are from 0830 to 1700 Monday to Thursday and 0830 to 1630 on Friday. These are known as standard hours. Flexitime working must not result in a reduced service. Staff may vary their start and finish times and lunch period in accordance with the rules of this scheme as detailed below and where stipulated must obtain approval from their line manager.

Firewatch is the Service's attendance system for all staff. Green Book staff must record their attendance Monday to Friday on the timesheet tab on their personal Firewatch record.

2.0 Who Can Give Approval for Flexitime?

Approval to vary your working hours should be sought from the relevant line Manager or Function Head.

3.0 How the Flexitime Duty System Works

The following information includes some words and phrases that staff need to understand.

a) Standard Hours

These are the number of hours an individual is contracted to work.

The average week is 37 hours, (pro rata for part-time staff) excluding any meal breaks. If it is necessary for work to take place during an evening or at a weekend this will be arranged in advance with the relevant Manager, this arrangement will include the scheduling of appropriate compensatory time off, or the payment of overtime in exceptional circumstances. (See para.5.0 Work Outside Bandwidth for further guidance).

b) Accounting Periods

The number of hours worked in each **four week** period for full-time staff (to match the pay period) equates to **148 hours**, this is the Accounting Period. The hours for part-time staff will be pro-rata.

c) Bandwidth

This is a term for the period between the earliest time you can start and finish work (subject to the relevant approval), that is from 07:30 to 18:30 hours daily. Any approved time worked within the bandwidth will be credited for Flexitime.

d) Core Time

During a normal working day staff **must** be at work (whether at their base or away from it) between 1000 and 1200 hours and from 1400 to 1500 hours. Staff must not be absent from work during core time unless there are special circumstances (e.g. hospital appointment where there is no alternative time) prior approval must be obtained from their line manager.

e) Flexible Hours

These are the times within the bandwidth when start and finish times can be varied, with the approval of the relevant manager as explained, and are the difference between the bandwidth time and the core time: -

- i) During the morning 07:30 to 10:00

Approval required for working before 08:00
No approval needed between 08:00 and 09:00
Approval required for flexitime between 09:00 and 10:00

- ii) At lunchtime 12:00 to 14:00
Approval required as in (f) below
- iii) During the afternoon 15:00 to 18:30
Approval required for flexitime working between 15:00 and 16:30
No approval needed after 16:30 (16:00 Friday)
Approval required to work beyond 17:30

f) Lunch Break

Lunch can be taken any time between 12:00 and 14:00, subject of course to work commitments and manager approval. The minimum lunch break is 30 minutes and the maximum lunch break is 2 hours. Normally the lunch break will be a minimum of ½ hour; prior approval must be sought for any variation above the standard 1 hour. If an individual has a working lunch (a meeting that continues through the lunch period, but a meal is provided during the meeting) they will be credited with the time less 30 minutes for the minimum lunch break.

g) Credit Time

Credit time is the total amount of time in any accounting period which is **in excess** of the standard **148 hrs**. Staff will be allowed to carry forward **up to 15 hours credit time** from one accounting period to the next. There is no limit to the amount of credit time which can be accumulated during each accounting period, but **any time in excess of 15 hours credit will be lost** (Pro rata for part-time employees – See Appendix A) except where flexitime cannot be taken to reduce any balance in excess of 15 hours without adversely impacting on sufficient staff cover; the individual's work and/or the service to the public.

Any excess over 15 hours can either be paid as overtime (to staff up to SCP 23 or in line with the Overtime policy) or be allowed to be carried forward into a future period; both will approval of the line manager.

h) Debit Time

Debit time is the total amount of time in any accounting period which is **less than** the standard **148 hrs**. Whilst there is no limit to the amount of debit time which can be accrued during a week there can only be **up to 4 hours debit time** carried forward from one accounting period to the next. If an individual is unable to reduce their debit time to 4 hours or less by the end of the accounting period, due to sickness or other special circumstances, they must advise their line manager as soon as possible and alternative arrangements will be made in the special circumstances. This could include permission being given to carry the debit forward into the next accounting period, or for a deduction of pay for hours not worked in that period, to be agreed with the individual and recorded in a note for case, signed by the individual and line manager, and sent to Personnel for processing and filing on PRF. (Pro rata for part-time employees – See Appendix A).

i) Flexitime Leave

With the approval of their line manager, individual members of staff can choose to work a pattern that will allow them to accrue flexi-time in order to take up to **two full days or four half days flexi leave in each accounting period**. Flexitime leave may be taken, subject to an overall limit of the equivalent of **26 full days** per calendar year, based on the person working a 5 day week (pro rata for less days see Appendix A).

Flexitime leave can only be taken when there is sufficient staff cover; the individual's work and the service to the public or other users does not suffer.

4.0 Work Outside Bandwidth Hours

- a) Where it is has been considered necessary for work to take place during an evening or at a weekend, this will be arranged in advance with the relevant Manager. This arrangement will include the scheduling of appropriate compensatory time off, or overtime payment if agreed with the line manager. See Overtime Policy and Procedure.
- b) Overtime is only payable if the manager has arranged a budget provision for this work and the member of staff is on spinal column point 23 or below. In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to the payment of overtime to staff above spinal column point 23, but this must be arranged in advance and approval sought from Corporate Management Board.

5.0 Absences

Staff can be credited with time for when they have been working away from the office or when they have been absent for other reasons. A standard 'positive hours' day is 7 hours 30 minutes (7 hours on Fridays); a standard 'positive hours' half day is 3 hours 45 minutes (3 hours 30 minutes on Fridays).

6.0 Annual Leave

When annual leave is taken this should be recorded as leave and the number of hours that should have been due to be worked that day should be credited, normally Monday to Thursday 7hrs 30 minutes, Friday 7 hours. Where staff work to an agreed alternative, e.g. part-time or compressed hours then the actual normal hours for that day will apply.

7.0 Public/Extra Statutory Holidays

Generally these days will be taken as they occur and credit will be recorded as the standard hours for each day's holiday. Where it is necessary for the day to be worked and appropriate notice provided for the employee concerned the required additional payments will be made and compensatory time off in lieu given. (These hours will be pro rata for staff who work part-time or compressed hours systems).

8.0 Sickness

Credit will be recorded as the standard hours for each day's sickness. If an individual is taken ill during the day and has to leave work, they will be credited with time up to a standard day.

9.0 Training Courses

Credit will be recorded for the relevant number of hours up to a standard day or half day, dependent upon the length of absence from work.

10.0 Hospital Visits

In most cases credit will be recorded as the actual time spent away from work, up to a maximum of a standard day or half day. It is accepted that individuals may be required to attend hospital appointments during core time. Nobody will be prevented from attending, but staff should inform their line manager beforehand. Wherever possible employees should attend work before and after the visit. Credit time for hospital appointments applies.

11.0 Medical Visits

Wherever possible, arrangements for visits to the Doctor, Dentist, Optician etc, should be made during flexible hours and NOT during core time. Credit time **will not be** recorded for medical visits except in the following circumstances:

- i) for ante-natal care (but not for relaxation classes);
- ii) for cervical smear tests;
- iii) for eye tests for VDU operators

12.0 Compassionate/Special Leave

If approval has been given by the line manager to take paid special or compassionate leave, credit will be recorded for the amount of time spent away from work up to a maximum of a standard day for each day of approved absence.

13.0 Business away from the Office

When you are working away from your normal place of work you should record your credit time as the time you reach your destination. Where the journey takes longer than your normal home to work journey the difference may also be added to your credit time.

e.g. Meeting/seminar in London. You are required to travel the night before and return late the next day. Credit time will include your journey to and from London and the duration of the meeting/seminar the next day.

14.0 Travelling Time

Travelling time to attend meetings during the normal working day will be credited in the usual way as part of the employee's work, for Business away from the Office see paragraph 14 above.

15.0 Other Absences

Time spent away from the office on approved Trade Union Duties, Jury Service or Public Duties (including Magisterial Duties) will be credited as the actual hours away from work (up to a standard day of 7.5 hrs).

16.0 Opting out of the Flexitime Scheme

Opting out of the Flexitime Scheme can only be agreed with the Function Head and in consultation with Personnel in order to amend the contract of employment. Once this has been agreed the individual will still be required to complete the Firewatch attendance record to show their standard work hours and to indicate when they are absent for any reason.

17. Attendance

All support staff must record their attendance, morning and afternoon, on the Timesheet tab on their personal Firewatch record. Recording attendance is mandatory.

18.0 Termination of Employment

Where an employee is working notice, any Flexi debit time must be cleared prior to the final day of service. Any debit time which is outstanding will be regarded as unpaid leave and will be deducted from salary. Any Flexi credit time which is outstanding must also be cleared, as payment for credit hours will not be made.

19.0 Manager and Employee Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for ensuring effective and adequate service delivery and the availability of sufficient staff to ensure this. With regard to flexi-time the role of the manager is to:

- Approve flexi-time working where it does not impact detrimentally on service provision.
- Ensure that employees take their minimum breaks
- Ensure that employees know that they must record their working hours on the Firewatch Timesheet
- Consider requests for flexi-leave
- Regularly check their employees' Timesheet on Firewatch
- Monitor employee working arrangements. Investigate any instances of excessive credit or debit hours, and take action if necessary.
- Give employees fair and reasonable access to flexi-time.
- Ensure employees always record their actual morning and afternoon attendance times

Employees who use the scheme are responsible for keeping their colleagues and managers informed of their plans and for ensuring that their work is properly covered to meet client's needs. All employees using flexi-time should ensure that they:

- Do not harm the service or their colleagues by their use of flexi-time
- Communicate with their team and help to organise cover for their flexi-time absences.
- Work their contractual hours within each accounting period, and do not exceed credit and debit limits within the scheme conditions.
- Record hours accurately and promptly, using the Timesheet tab on their personal Firewatch record, and abide by the flexitime rules in this policy.
- Give sufficient notice to their manager of a flexi-leave request to allow for cover to be arranged.
- Always enter their start and leave times morning and afternoon so even if flex is not taken, attendance is recorded.

20.0 Recording Flexitime

- a) Follow this [link](#) for a copy of instruction on how to record on the Firewatch system
- b) Timesheets are completed in 28 day accounting periods and all times are entered in 24 hour clock mode with a colon between e.g. 09:30; 15:10.
- c) No employee can accrue/take more than the scheme maximum for full time, or pro rata for part-time staff, in any accounting period
- d) Any queries about the Flexitime Scheme and its rules should be directed to Personnel

21.0 Breach of Rules

Any employee who records their time falsely may be subject to disciplinary action as will any employee discovered assisting another employee to falsify records. This would be considered fraudulent and could lead to dismissal.

The Service reserves the right to withdraw the facility to work the flexitime scheme if there is non compliance with the scheme rules.

APPENDIX A

PART TIME STAFF CREDIT/ DEBIT TIME & FLEXIDAYS

Credit, Debit and Flexitime leave is calculated on a pro rata basis in accordance with a part time employee's contracted hours – as follows:

Formula for credit & debit time:

Maximum credit or debit to carry over = weekly hours/full time hours x maximum credit or debit hours:-

Example 1

Employee working 20 hours per week can carry forward

$20/37 \times 15$ hours = **8 hours Credit** and $20/37 \times 4$ = **2.1 hours Debit**

Example 2

Employee working 18.5 hours per week can carry forward

$18.5/37 \times 15$ hours = **7.5 hours Credit** and $18.5/37 \times 4$ hours = **2 hours Debit**

Example 3

Employee working 25 hours per week can carry forward

$25/37 \times 15$ hours = **10 hours Credit** and $25/37 \times 4$ hours = **2.7 hours Debit**

If a part time employee's normal working day is for example 6 hours, then taking 6 hours flexi will count as one day flexi leave. Taking 3 hours off is counted as a half day flexi leave

Were an individual works 18.5 hours over 3 days then the average day is 6 hours and 10 minutes, however it is more likely that the person work one 6.5 hours and two six hour days, a full or half day therefore equates to the hours that would have been worked that day.

Formula for Flexidays:

The 26 flexi days per year should be divided by 5 and multiplied by the number of days worked per week this provides the maximum number of flexidays the person can then take per the Flexitime System.

Example 1 – 3 day week

$26/5 \times 3$ = 15.5 days

Example 2 – 4 day week

$26/5 \times 4$ = 21 days

Example 2 – 2 day week

$26/5 \times 2$ = 10 days