



Australian Women in Resources Alliance

GUIDE TO
FLEXIBLE WORK



Background

The Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA)

AMMA is Australia's national resource industry employer group. Since 1918, AMMA has been delivering superior workforce services to Australia's resource industry.

As a member-based organisation, our vision is to ensure Australia's resource industry is an attractive and competitive place to invest, employ people and add value to the nation's wellbeing and living standards.

AMMA's vast membership covers employers in every allied sector of this diverse and rapidly evolving industry, directly and indirectly employing more than half a million people across the Australian resources, related construction and allied services sectors.

In addition to its consulting services and advice, AMMA works with its powerful network of likeminded organisations, professionals and experts to represent the resource industry on federal and state policy matters, achieving significant outcomes for all resource employers.

With a national presence and the most specialised resources industry knowledge in Australia, members of AMMA can be assured their views on all industry and workplace matters are heard.

The Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA)

AWRA is a national workforce gender diversity initiative delivered by Australia's resource industry employer group, AMMA. In 2011, AWRA was formed in response to the growing aspirations of AMMA members to increase the representation of women at all levels in their organisations.

AWRA's charter is to assist employers on their gender diversity journey with the overarching goal to increase women's participation in the resources, allied and related construction sectors to 25% by 2020, thus delivering a diverse mix of skills and talent to drive productivity and innovation in Australia's resource industry.

AWRA facilitates programs and provides support and guidance materials that help employers attract, retain and develop female talent, build their gender diversity capability, become an employer of choice for women and realise the advantages of a gender diverse workforce. Through these support programs, AWRA can help you navigate the challenges of workforce diversity to achieve positive outcomes.

Welcome



Steve Knott

AMMA Chief Executive

AMMA and the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) are pleased to present this *Guide to Flexible Work* for the use and benefit of mining, oil and gas, construction and supply chain employers linked to Australia's resource industry.

The resource industry is traditionally male dominated, with women comprising 15% of the workforce as of 2016. As AWRA works toward having women represent 25% of the resource workforce by 2020, assisting employers with the implementation of flexible work practices to support their organisational diversity is critical.

While this guide focuses on flexible work in relation to gender, it's important to note that diversity encompasses many other demographics including age and culture. You may wish to use this guide to assist with other types of workforce diversity strategies.

I also encourage you to consider how this workplace flexibility guide could be utilised alongside other AWRA programs and initiatives designed to assist you in your diversity journey. Thank you for choosing AMMA and AWRA as your preferred partners in achieving valuable workplace diversity outcomes.



**Senator the Hon.
Michaelia Cash**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Women

Minister Assisting the
Prime Minister for the
Public Service

On behalf of the Australian Government I am delighted to endorse the AWRA Guide to Flexible Work as an important practical tool to assist in the workplace flexibility practices of Australia's resource industry employers.

With the jobs of the future set to be more flexible and agile, the ability for employers in male dominated industries to implement valuable and practical options for workplace flexibility will be vital to their success in attracting and retaining more diverse workforces.

Through our partnership with the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) and its AWRA initiative, collectively we are helping remove barriers for women to enter the resource industry, and in particular increase their representation in on-site and operational roles.

As Minister for Women and Minister for Employment, I passionately believe in women having the same career opportunities as men and that no sector of our economy should be more difficult for a woman to succeed in than a man.

Whether you are at the start, middle, or well advanced in your diversity journey, I hope AWRA's Guide to Flexible Work assists your organisation in achieving its diversity objectives and contributing to greater workforce participation across a diversity of occupations and industries.

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How to use this guide

AWRA's Guide to Flexible Work is designed to provide resources, related construction and allied services sector organisations with a comprehensive knowledge base on workplace flexibility that can be considered for, and adopted to their workplaces.

AWRA has compiled extensive research from a number of expert sources across industry, government and not-for-profit organisations that specialise in workplace flexibility arrangements.

Recognising that many resource industry workplaces are unique and complex, this guide is intended to provide you with information to assess the viability of various flexible work arrangements and the tools to introduce those which suit your work environment.

The guide contains the following information sections:

- Overview: Providing an introduction to the importance of workplace flexibility and what it means for resource industry organisations.
- The process of flexibility: A general guide for management in considering and implementing workplace flexibility arrangements within their organisation.
- Types of flexible work: Detailing 13 specific types of flexible work arrangements, including key considerations and example policies for your organisation's use.
- Case studies: Useful examples of how various resources and related sector organisations have incorporated flexible work practices within their workplaces.
- Templates: For use as a guideline when seeking to adopt and incorporate different types of flexibility arrangements into your workplace.

This information should be used to complement and build on existing tools and information your organisation may already have on workplace flexibility. You can use this material to analyse the current workplace flexibility capacities of your organisation and assess new options for added flexibility offerings.

As you browse this information, think about how your management decision-making process and organisational culture might need to be addressed to support flexible work.

DISCLAIMER:

The Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) and the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) is dedicated to providing you with information you can practically adapt to your unique workplace environment.

The material and advice contained in this guide is of general nature. Readers are not obliged to adopt any of the information, strategies and guidelines provided. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation please contact us at awra@amma.org.au or on 1800 627 771.

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Overview

The rise of workplace flexibility

Workplace flexibility involves employees and employers agreeing on when, where and in some cases how long work activities are undertaken. Such arrangements offer employees the ability to balance their work-life goals, while also providing employers with greater flexibility to help meet changing operational needs.

Although not a new concept (for many years the need for greater flexibility in work was primarily driven by senior businesswomen), the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008 rapidly brought these human resources strategies mainstream.

For instance, a 2010 employer survey on the GFC and flexibility by Aequus Partners found one-in-three employers used flexible work options, such as reduced hours, purchased leave, sabbaticals and extended leave¹ as a strategic response to managing the downturn and retaining staff during challenging market conditions.

In 2016, work flexibility has come a long way. Many industries have identified the evolving needs of modern employees, driven by social and labour force changes such as an ageing workforce, more agile working patterns preferred by younger generations, and a greater focus on gender diversity.

The Randstad World of Work Report 2013/14 clearly demonstrates how the benefits of flexible work flow both ways. Most employees surveyed said their ideal working arrangement would involve 70% office-based work and 30% remote-based work², while 41% of employers believe workplace flexibility boosts employee engagement and satisfaction.

Flexible work in the Australian resource industry

The challenge for the Australian resource industry lies in implementing arrangements in workplaces that have historically proven uncondusive to flexible work options. For example, employment in the resource industry often requires travel to remote locations where projects operate on a 24-hour basis with strict health and safety rules impacting employee movements.

However, as the industry evolves, so too do the broad range of working options within it. For instance, the onset of new technology innovations is seeing a greater demand for skills at remote operating centres at corporate headquarters and other metropolitan locations.

Of course, this isn't to say flexible working arrangements are unachievable in remote or other fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) locations. While each workplace is unique and needs to be assessed on its individual needs, often how well an employer is able to leverage flexible work options to their advantage comes down to culture, leadership and 'thinking outside the box'.

1. http://www.aequus.com.au/flexibility_and_global_downturn.html

2. <http://www.fastbusiness.com.au/business-owners/creating-a-flexible-workplace/#sthash:j962pm56.dpuf>

Making flexibility work

Some resource industry organisations can find implementing flexible work arrangements initially challenging, with operational and safety requirements limiting the number of viable options.

Research into what prevents Australian businesses from implementing flexible work indicates two primary reasons: a lack of trust or know-how in flexible work; and concerns over the impact flexible work arrangements may have on organisational performance, in particular meeting client demands.

Employers should be aware, however, that it is a legislative requirement to properly consider requests for flexibility. Most notably, the *Fair Work Act 2009* provides employees with children under school age and/or dependants under the age of 18 with a disability the right to request a flexible work arrangement.

In exploring options for flexible work, consider how flexible work practices can be formal or informal:

Formal arrangements:

An Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA)³ is a way of formalising a flexible working agreement. Employees with other forms of individual arrangements that are within the parameters of an award or agreement may have unique working arrangements prescribed in their contract of employment.

Informal arrangements:

These arrangements can be adopted on a short-term or long-term basis. According to the Australian Workplace Relations Study (AWRS) out of the employees who made a request for flexible working arrangements, 62% made the request verbally. This indicates that the majority of employees who wish to work on a flexible basis prefer to have informal agreements with their employer.

Ensuring a positive relationship between flexible working arrangements and employee/employer outcomes comes down to choosing the right type of arrangement for the workplace, characteristics of the employee and leaders, and the degree to which the 'normal' workplace culture values flexible work.

In essence, many employers are embracing workplace flexibility as a key component of their attraction, recruitment and retention strategies. Flexibility in where, when and how work is performed is a particular priority for employers to attract and retain talented and quality staff from a more diverse demographic base.

Best practice employers have processes in place that ensure their flexible work options meet all legislative requirements, are non-discriminatory and address the objectives and requirements of both the business and its employees.

A survey by consultancy Managing Work | Life Balance⁴ showed 47% of respondents who seek flexibility in the workplace are stalled by leaders within their organisation who find it difficult to change their views about the value of flexible work. 26% also felt their leaders weren't competent enough to manage flexibility within their work teams.

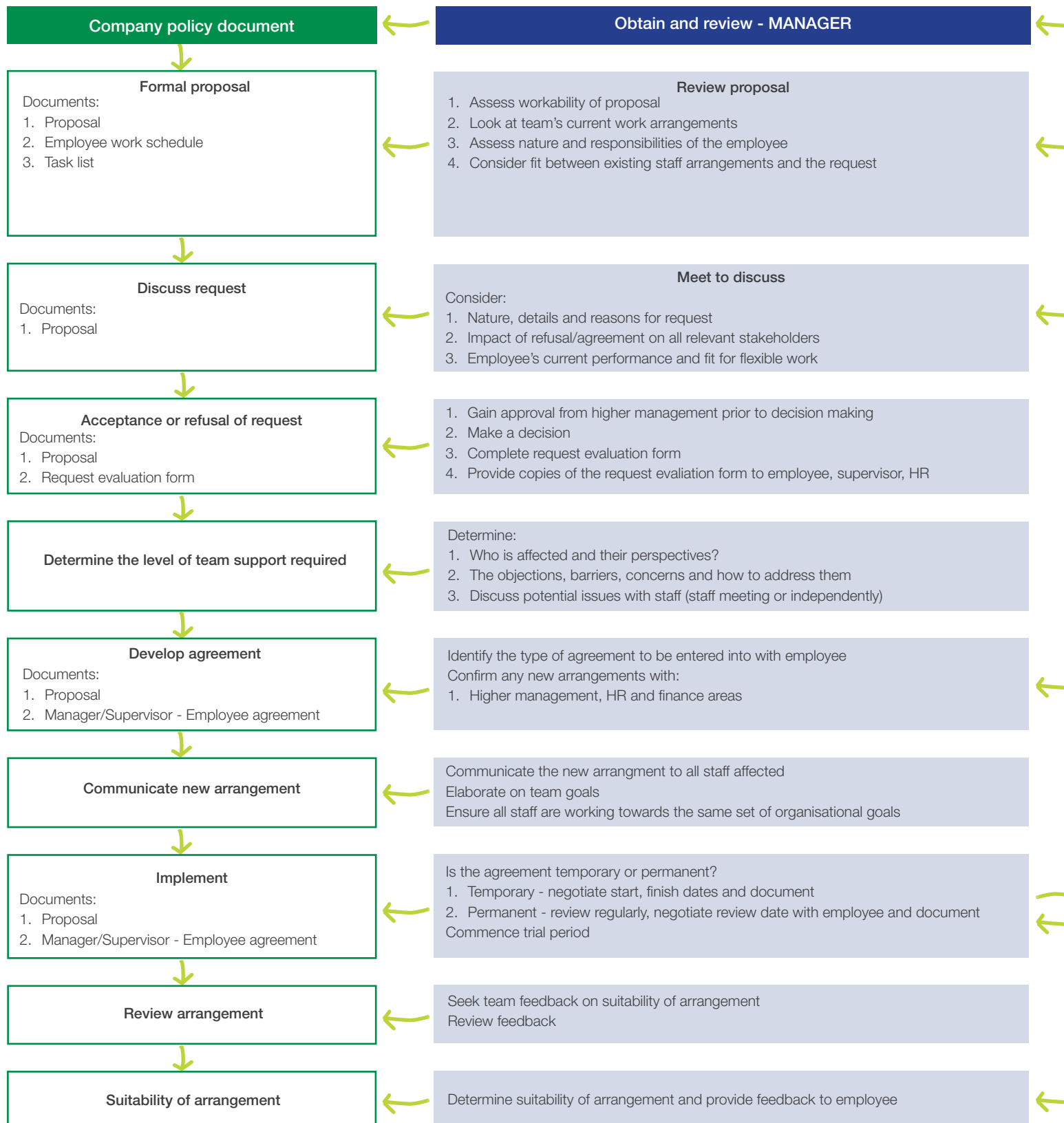
³. IFA - a documented record of an arrangement, outside the parameters of the award or agreement, that can vary a range of terms and conditions of employment, including when work is performed, and is signed by both the employer and employee.

⁴. <http://www.worklifebalance.com.au>

The process of flexibility

The following process is a general guide to dealing with employee requests for flexible work. These steps provide managers with progressive tools to effectively assess, implement and review flexible work arrangements.

When applying these steps it's critical to consider the National Employment Standards, Modern Awards and other workplace relations obligations. AMMA's employee relations consultants can assist where required.



Obtain and review - EMPLOYEE

Complete proposal

Things to include:

1. Current and proposed work arrangements
2. Reason for proposal
3. Benefits to employee and organisation
4. Impact on team and other stakeholders
5. Proposed solution to impacts
6. Equipment required

Meet to discuss

Case Spotlight: Refusing a flexible work request

In the case of *AMWU v Mildura Rural City Council* [2012] FWA 4308, the applicant, a single parent, sought to enter into an IFA to move his standard working times back one hour for up to 12 months so that he could take his son to school until he found a suitable before-school care arrangement. The request was refused on operational grounds and for work health and safety reasons.

The employee challenged the refusal through the Fair Work Commission on the basis that his right to request flexible work was prescribed in the company's enterprise agreement. Ultimately, the FWC found that the employer's refusal was reasonable given it took into account close examination of a number of operational issues that would arise if the request was approved.

This decision highlights the importance of properly considering an employee's request for flexible working arrangements in light of the business operational needs. Employers should keep appropriate documentation of its decision making process, particularly where a request is declined.

Legal Spotlight: Individual Flexibility Agreements (IFA)

The Fair Work Act 2009 seeks to promote workplace flexibility through the use of IFAs, which allow for variations to modern awards or enterprise agreements that genuinely meet the needs of both employers and employees while also upholding minimum entitlements and protections.

Flexibility terms within modern awards will only allow IFAs to vary: 1) arrangements for when work is performed; 2) overtime and penalty rates; 3) allowances; and 4) leave loading. Therefore, variations relating to any of these matters can be made by agreement as long as the employee is 'better off overall' under the IFA than the relevant modern award.

An IFA made under an enterprise agreement can only vary those terms of the enterprise agreement that are set out in the agreement's 'flexibility term'. This means those matters that can be subject to work flexibility must be agreed by the parties when the EA is being negotiated and ratified.

Note that an IFA can only be made after an employee has commenced employment, meaning an employer cannot ask a prospective employee to agree to an IFA as a condition of employment. Further, IFAs cannot include unlawful terms such as discriminatory or objectionable matters.

Assist manager to identify the type of most suited type of agreement

Assist manager with the implementation process

Commence trial period

Receive employer feedback on suitability of arrangement and seek alternative if required

Legal Spotlight: Flexible Work and the National Employment Standards

The National Employment Standards in the Fair Work Act provide the following categories of employees with a right to request a change in working arrangements:

- are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is of school age or younger
- are a carer (within the meaning of the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*)
- have a disability
- are 55 or older
- are experiencing violence from a member of their family, or
- provide care or support to a member of their immediate family or household, who requires care or support because they are experiencing violence from their family.

Importantly, employees who do not fall into one of the above categories are not prevented from making a request for a flexible working arrangement. However, if an employee in one of the above categories makes a request for a flexible working arrangement, the Company should be aware of its obligations in the Fair Work Act.

Further considerations for your flexibility process

It is important to remember that the privacy and confidentiality of discussions and the actions taken during this entire process is of utmost importance. Information with regards to actions that may affect the team and organisation's operations can be disclosed to relevant stakeholders with the consent of both the employee requesting the flexible work arrangement and their direct manager.

The section below discusses additional considerations for when approaching and implementing a flexible work arrangement in a manner demonstrated in the previous flow chart.

Formal proposal

- When looking at the current work arrangements of the team:
 - » Map existing arrangements using an employee work schedule to know who is working when and how.
 - » Use a task list to map work undertaken by each person and the alternate people to contact in their absence.
- While assessing the nature and responsibilities of the employee, consider:
 - » Is there client contact? Is it face-to-face or remote?
 - » Does the employee have managerial/supervisory responsibilities?
 - » Do your workplace relations arrangements allow work to be undertaken outside regular business hours?
 - » Can the job be divided into separate tasks?
 - » Is there a need for the employee to be present in the workplace?
- If the employee has a right to request under the Fair Work Act, provide a written response within 21 days.
- Consider each proposal on its own merits and give equal consideration to all requests.
- Explore how jobs can be structured to better match business and employee needs.

Acceptance or refusal of request

- If you have decided that the proposed arrangement is unsuitable to the current work environment, alternative and reasonable changes to make it work should be considered. Encourage the employee to re-write the proposal, if possible.
- It may not be considered reasonable to refuse a request because:
 - » The job has never been performed that way before.
 - » The employee's contract of employment indicates that it is a full time role.
 - » It is a senior or managerial role.

Develop agreement

Examples of types of agreements include:

- A formal Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA) in accordance with the Fair Work Act. IFAs are used to make alternate arrangements to an award or registered enterprise agreement but cannot be used to reduce or remove employee entitlements. Rather, IFAs should mutually benefit both the employer and the employee, though remember it is the employer's responsibility to determine that the employee is not worse off under the IFA, all things considered.
- A written contract between the employer and the employee that outlines the terms and conditions of employment. This is a type of employment contract and should not offer anything less than the legal requirements (on a pro-rata basis if part-time) as set out in awards, enterprise agreements and the National Employment Standards.

One option is to undertake a trial period for whatever type of agreement you and your employee agree to. Both parties must come to an agreement on how the trial will be implemented and what criteria will be used to assess the success or the failure of the arrangement.

Implementation

- In most cases it is important to communicate to other members of your team that arrangements for flexible work have been made with their colleague. This clarifies that a formal process has been implemented and may encourage others to assess their flexibility options.
- Performance management of employees on flexible work arrangements should be the same as for all other employees.
- Ensure that productivity and outcomes are the focus of supervision and management of staff working flexibly.
- Identify areas which may present a challenge due to the changes, which in turn may assist to identify the tasks and activities that require additional support.

Suitability of arrangement

- If the arrangement is successful during the trial period, continue to implement.
- If the first proposed arrangement is unsuccessful, alternative arrangements/amendments should be considered before reverting to previous work arrangements.
- Some examples that may trigger a modification to the arrangement or refusal include:
 - » Changing business needs
 - » Change of job requirements
 - » Change of current staffing/team needs
 - » Feedback from other employees, clients, co-workers or managers.

Are we implementing flexible work practices for the right reasons?
How will we gauge and measure our success?
Do we have any existing policies or procedures that could be built on?
Do our managers have the skills to manage a flexible workforce?
How can we set our employees' expectations and ensure flexibility works for all parties?

ASK YOURSELF

Absolute beginners

If your organisation is an beginner in this journey, here are a few things to consider and put in place prior to actioning the items mentioned above:

- Firstly ask yourself:
 - » Are we implementing flexible work practices for the right reasons?
 - » How will we gauge and measure our success?
 - » Do we have any existing policies or procedures that could be built on?
 - » Do our managers have the skills to manage a flexible workforce?
 - » How can we set our employees' expectations and ensure flexibility works for all parties?
- Undertake Research. Company needs and operating environments vary; just because a particular type of arrangement worked for one company or one project, does not mean that it will work for your company.

- Develop a business case for implementing flexible work arrangements within your organisation.
- Gain support from the leadership team.
- Have a clear vision of what the organisation would look like when such strategies are incorporated into the day-to-day operations.
- Create your organisation's workplace flexibility guidelines, strategy, systems and incorporate into the organisational policies. Consider steps to ensure that new policies are attuned to existing company objectives.
- Set clear and targeted objectives on how you will achieve workplace flexibility within your organisation to achieve your 'vision'.
- Understand how your organisation and your team understands flexibility. Flexibility means different things to different people.
- Ensure that business needs are met by maintaining control of the flexibility program/s. Business objectives must remain at the heart of any discussion.
- Evaluate flexible work programs on a regular basis with continuous improvement to ensure evolving business and employee needs are met. This also needs to be clearly communicated to all employees so they understand why some staff work flexibly.

Legal Spotlight: Discrimination

Unlawful workplace discrimination occurs when an employer takes adverse action against a person who is an employee, or treats an employee less favourably than another employee in the same or similar circumstances because of a particular attribute of the person such as their:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • race | • marital status |
| • colour | • family or carer's responsibilities |
| • sex | • pregnancy |
| • sexual preference | • religion |
| • age | • political opinion |
| • physical or mental disability | • national extraction or social origin |

In considering a proposal for flexible work, employers should not unfairly discriminate against the employee on the basis of one of the attributes listed above. For advice on what constitutes discrimination please contact an AMMA employee relations consultant.

Managing teams with employees on different arrangements

Flexible working requires managers to consider how they develop and lead their teams. As these arrangements may change the team dynamic, necessary efforts and steps need to be put in place to ensure that it is a positive change.

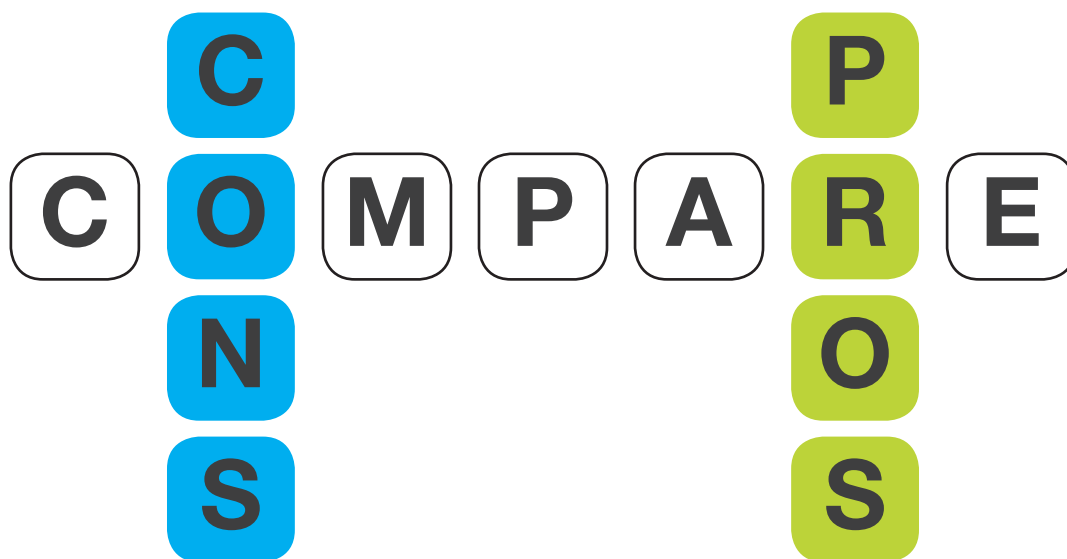
Individual attention needs to be given to each employee's request to ensure that the best possible decision is made and put into practice benefitting both the individual and the organisation.

When the manager is able to understand individual requests and the potential opportunities and challenges of them, they can look into the possible options/alternatives to address the circumstances.

Strategies for successful implementation

Here are some strategies to ensure the practice of flexible work is smooth:

- Have policies and guidelines consistent with relevant legislative obligations.
- Educate managers and employees on the different types of flexible work practices and ways to maximise their benefits.
- Foster a culture of acceptance of flexible work arrangements through information and training to all employees.
- Ensure all employees know where to find and have access to documents for continuity of work.
- Have at least one other employee who has enough knowledge about the work done by an employee on a flexible work arrangement.
- When teleworking or working on location, phones should be transferred to mobile phones or to phones at the alternative work location.
- Ensure all employees are able to attend team meetings and training, regardless of their flexible working arrangement.
- Provide a standard script to all employees who answer phone calls and correspond to messages to and from those who are working outside the office.
- Share calendars to create transparency of employees' work arrangements and allow professional handling of work transitions.
- Clearly communicate employees' work arrangements such as start and finish times, in and out times, and days off to all relevant staff.
- Set up an out-of-office message, highlighting work times, return dates and alternative contact.
- Ensure employees communicate their availability (e.g. part-time working hours) and presence in the workplace through a suitable communication tool, for instance an e-mail signature block.



AWRA's 8 Steps to developing a culture of workplace flexibility



Types of flexible work

It is apparent that innovative workplace flexibility arrangements are developing as employers continue to test out the options that will address their work environments and productivity needs as well as the increasing need of employees hoping to balance their work and personal aspirations.

The types of flexible work arrangements discussed in the following section are intended to demonstrate the variety of flexible work options available.

The flexible work types explored are:

- Part-time work
- Reduced-hours
- Casual employment
- Job sharing
- Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE)
- Working on location | away from home
- Telecommuting | teleworking
- Compressed working hours
- Flexible working hours (flex-time)
- Purchased leave
- Expanded leave
- Shift work
- Phased retirement

When assessing which type/s of arrangements may work in your workplace, consider the following question.

Is this arrangement suitable for?

- The employee;
- The line manager;
- The team;
- The organisation; and
- The clients

Keeping the objectives of both the working team and the broader business front of mind may assist in making a decision best suited to your organisation and specific work environment.

Part-time work

☐ Corporate ☐ Onsite ☐ Both

What is it?

Part-time employment is work scheduled with set, regular hours each week. A part-time employee usually works on average less than 38 hours a week and may be employed on a permanent or fixed-term basis.

How can this be practically applied at work?

There are multiple options for part-time work, with some common arrangements including:

- Three days a week at 7.5 hours a day.
- Four days a week at six hours a day.
- 90% time = 36 hours (for a 40 hour work week).
- 9am-3pm, Monday to Friday.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Ability to improve productivity and performance by meeting peak demands.
- Attraction and retention of quality staff who are unable to work full-time.
- More motivated and committed employees.
- Reduced staff training costs through increased talent retention.
- Reduced absenteeism.

How will this benefit employees?

- Ability to maintain employment and skills while balancing personal interests/commitments.
- Increased life satisfaction through improved balance of activities.
- Ability to secure employment opportunities other than full-time opportunities.
- Flexibility to alter daily schedule in response to home or work demands.

Considerations for implementing part-time work arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » Part-time employees are paid on a pro-rata basis – they receive the same benefits as full-time employees but a proportional amount. For example, if an average full-time employee works 40 hours a week and earns \$100,000 a year and the part-time employee chooses to work 36 hours a week (90% of a full-time work week), they should be paid \$90,000 a year.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » The same leave entitlements apply (sick leave, annual leave) but on a pro-rata basis, based on how many hours a week they work with the exceptions of special leave (emergent, compassion grounds) and bereavement leave, which will be the same as a full-time employee.
- Other
 - » Ensure part-time employees are not expected to undertake the same workload as full-time employees.
 - » Staff training/meetings should be conducted at suitable times to include all.
 - » In cases of positions/opportunities not being suited to part-time employees, consider if these positions can be re-designed to provide these employees equal opportunity.
 - » Potential need to change job duties of other team members to fit in the needs of the part-time employee and the potential conflict of interest which could arise from it.

Reduced hours

☐

Corporate

☐

Onsite

☐

Both

What is it?

Reduced hours is an arrangement where an employee agrees with their employer to work fewer hours than a full-time position. Part-time agreements fall into this category, as do other flexible options.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Voluntary part-time work: An employee chooses to work fewer than 35 hours per week even when full-time work is available.
- Part-year arrangements (seasonal work): An employee works only a certain number of months per year.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Ability to attract and recruit high-level talent and retain top performers.
- Access to a larger pool of talent at low cost.
- Potential increase in staff motivation and morale, leading to reduced turnover.

How will this benefit employees?

- No relative loss of entitlements as employees get access to wages and entitlements on a pro-rata basis.
- Flexibility for family and leisure commitments.
- Access to employment opportunities for those unable to undertake full-time work, for example, people approaching retirement age, new parents.

Considerations for implementing reduced hours arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » As with part-time employees, those on reduced hours are paid on a pro-rata basis – they receive the same benefits as full-time employees but a proportional amount. For example, if an average full-time employee works 40 hours a week and earns \$100,000 a year and the part-time employee chooses to work 36 hours a week (90% of a full-time work week), they should be paid \$90,000 a year.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » The same leave entitlements apply (sick leave, annual leave) but on a pro-rata basis, based on how many hours a week they work with the exceptions of special leave (emergent, compassion grounds) and bereavement leave, which will be the same as a full-time employee.
- Other
 - » Plan carefully to ensure these staff are not expected to fulfil the duties of full-time employees.
 - » Staff training/meetings should be conducted at suitable times to include all staff.
 - » Open communication between the employee and employer is vital.
 - » Potential need to change job-duties of other team members to fit in the needs of the employee on reduced hours, and the potential conflict of interest which could arise.
 - » Equal consideration needs to be given to all staff requests to maintain morale.

Casual employment

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Corporate

☐

Onsite

☐

Both

What is it?

Employees working casually may be contacted regularly by their employers to arrange working times from week to week. They have no guaranteed hours of work and usually work irregular hours. There is also no expectation in a casual work contract between employee and employer of ongoing work and employees can usually refuse a specific work opportunity at any time.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Week 1 - Saturday and Sunday, Week 2 - Monday to Wednesday, Week 3 - No work
- Week 1 - Monday to Friday, Week 2 - No work, Week 3 - No work, Week 4 - Sunday

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Coverage of a full or over-time position while maintaining continuity of operations.
- Coverage for permanent staff during periods of leave.
- Allows temporarily increased work demands to be met e.g. longer business hours, end of financial year events, shutdowns.
- There is no obligation for employer to provide employee with ongoing work.

How will this benefit employees?

- Ability to maintain and develop skills while meeting personal obligations.
- Opportunity to work casually for more than one employer to diversify skill set and experience.
- Provides employment opportunities for those who cannot commit to a permanent arrangement.

Considerations for implementing casual employment include:

- Payroll
 - » A casual employee is paid at a higher hourly rate than equivalent full-time or part-time employees. This higher rate is paid in lieu of receiving other entitlements such as annual leave and sick leave.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Not entitled to any form of paid leave (except long service leave in some cases) or redundancy benefits.
- Other
 - » Casual employment may be terminated with limited notice. Carefully check the requirements under any relevant enterprise agreement or modern award for guidance.
 - » Consider if casual staff should be expected to fulfil the duties of full-time or part-time employees, or if a separate set of expectations and duties should be applied.
 - » Requirement of a system to keep track of the number of hours worked by an employee.
 - » Making employees aware that working on a casual basis does not have the same entitlements as other types of work such as personal and annual leave and redundancy benefits.

Job sharing

☐

Corporate

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Onsite

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Both

What is it?

This is when two or more employees share the duties of one job on an ongoing or short-term basis.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Two employees share one position and all tasks but work on different days, no overlaps.
- Two or more employees share one position but take on different aspects of the job. A good option for employees with different skill sets.
- Two employees work three days per week with one day overlap when both are at work.
- Two employees work alternate weeks. For example, one employee could work the first week and take the second week off while the other employee takes the first week off and works the second week.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Reduced rate of absenteeism and staff turnover due to increased staff motivation.
- Ability to maintain continuity of operations due to coverage of a full-time position.
- Collaboration for better performance – ‘Two brains are better than one’.
- Coverage and continuity of work performance during periods of leave.
- Increased flexibility when job sharers can share peak workloads.
- Attracts and retains skilled employees who cannot work full-time.

How will this benefit employees?

- Retains the skills development, networks and responsibilities of a full-time position while working part-time.
- Job satisfaction through sharing responsibilities for less stimulating tasks.
- Builds skills such as teamwork, negotiation, time management and work planning.
- Ability to maintain employment and skills while having a work-life balance.
- Provides employment opportunities for those unable to work full-time.

Considerations for implementing job sharing include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid on a pro-rata basis.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » On a pro-rata basis.
 - » Entitled to receive the same leave entitlements (sick leave, annual leave), based on how many hours a week they work with the exceptions of special leave (for example, on compassionate grounds) and bereavement leave, which will be the same as a full-time employee.
- Other
 - » May have difficulty sourcing compatible employees to job share.
 - » Allow extra time for employees to hand over work from one job-sharer to other.
 - » Issues with scheduling staff meetings and training when all staff are present.
 - » The need for time management, communication and annual leave coordination strategies to ensure efficient and effective hand overs.

Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE)

☐ Corporate ☐ Onsite ☐ Both

What is it?

This type of flexible work strategy focuses on the results of an individual employee rather than the number of hours they spend in the workplace. It is recommended to try this strategy with small groups, re-assess and revise before rolling it out organisation-wide.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- The employee has the ability to undertake whatever work related activity they want, whenever they want, as long as the work is completed.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Develops trust between the employer and employee, with the potential to boost productivity and morale.
- Workforce retention and the opportunity to rejuvenate the workplace culture.
- Builds a results-focused and goal-driven work environment.

How will this benefit employees?

- Gives employees the flexibility to choose when, where, and for how long they work.
- Work-life balance, with the option to undertake work when they are most productive.
- Potential to avoid a stressful commute to work, e.g. for parents with commitments.
- Works well with staff who are required to deliver measurable, standardised pieces of work to a deadline.
- Gives employees clear objectives on what needs to be achieved to meet organisational goals.
- Gives employees a sense of ownership of, and accountability for, their work.

Considerations for implementing ROWE arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid according to the employee's rate of productivity. However, organisations need to ensure that this rate of pay meets the National Employment Standards. Modern Awards also prescribe a minimum safety net for piecework. General information about pieceworkers can be found at: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages/piece-rates-and-commission-payments>.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Receive the same leave entitlements as a full-time employee, but depends on the number of hours worked.
- Other
 - » The applicable Modern Award may restrict access to this form of flexible work.
 - » Requires a change in people's core beliefs and behaviours.
 - » Trust is crucial for successful implementation.
 - » May give rise in involuntary turnover as managers can identify underperforming staff.
 - » Difficulty measuring staff performance in a workplace where each task is unique.
 - » May be unsuitable for new/inexperienced staff needing more direction.
 - » Requires provision of clear instructions to employees on goals and responsibilities.
 - » Requires management to set realistic deadlines and ensure employees don't exaggerate on the completion timeframe.
 - » If not managed correctly, lack of team communication.

Working on location | away from home

☐ Corporate ☐ Onsite ☐ Both

What is it?

This is an arrangement where employees work for an extended number of days, often away from home, and then have an extended number of days off.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Three weeks on, one week off.
- 10 days on four days off roster.
- Nine days on and five days off.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- A practical solution for particular types of roles where employees are required to be on-site or elsewhere for a period of time.
- Allows employers to tap into a larger talent pool (e.g. nationwide).
- Workforce portability - the ability for employees to work on projects outside their residential location.
- More cost effective than paying for the relocation of the employee and family.

How will this benefit employees?

- Access to opportunities and benefits not available to 'standard' employees.
- Rostered days off can be used for activities such as travel, parenting, paying bills or study.
- Employees may earn a higher than average salary and be entitled to various travel and living allowances.
- Not having to relocate to change jobs.

Considerations for implementing working on location/away from home arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid at the rate of a full-time employee. However, most employees working away from home usually work extended hours in addition to the standard working hours for the role, therefore, over-time may be required to be paid.
 - » Allowances such as accommodation, travel and meals may have to be covered by the organisation based on an employment contract or enterprise agreement.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Receive the same leave entitlements as a full-time employee, but depends on the number of hours worked. If a shift worker, the entitlement to annual leave increases to a minimum of five weeks per year.
 - » Normal rostered time off work is not considered annual leave.
- Other
 - » Ensure that during the recruitment and induction phases, new employees are made aware of the time they will be away from their family and friends.
 - » Consider support programs to provide employees and families with coping strategies for when the employee is living on-site.
 - » Ensure employees have access to communication channels to connect with family and friends.
 - » High rate of voluntary turnover due to the nature of the work.

What is it?

This is where an employer has permitted an employee to work away from the central workplace and from a remote location, often at home. It can be on set days or as per work/personal needs.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Employee logs in to the company network and works permanently from home or other location.
- Employee works at the usual business premises during their normal working hours and then logs in to the company network after hours to perform additional work from a home office or elsewhere.
- Teleworking can be combined with part-time, casual or other flexible work types.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- May enhance productivity and quality of work due to less interruptions.
- Enables employees with physical and/or transportation difficulties to continue work.
- Reduced absenteeism and maximised efficiency.
- Develops outcome-focused management skills and self-managing employees.
- More committed, motivated employees as their needs are met.
- Ability to attract, recruit and retain talented, high calibre employees.
- Reduced turnover, therefore reduced costs.

How will this benefit employees?

- Improved time management and organisation skills.
- Ability to meet personal needs including parental responsibilities.
- Time and cost savings on transport.
- Ability to perform better in a more relaxed working environment.

Considerations for implementing telecommuting/teleworking arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid at the rate of a full-time employee (if engaged in that capacity).
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Receive the same leave entitlements as a full-time employee (if engaged in that capacity) and varies according to the number of hours worked and leave hours accumulated.
- Other
 - » Lack of networking and social interaction opportunities for employees.
 - » Potential for a decline in productivity as not all employees may work productively under such arrangements.
 - » Differences in technology available in the mobile environment and work environment, therefore an initial set up cost incurred by the employer to facilitate and support such arrangements.
 - » Technical issues preventing staff to perform their task in the mobile environment.
 - » Managers need to monitor outcomes, rather than day-to-day tasks when supervising projects and offering performance appraisals.
 - » Staff training or meetings need to occur at appropriate times to include all staff.
 - » Importance of open communication to ensure employees are included in ongoing functions of the office and do not miss out on opportunities.
 - » May not be practical for roles that require, for example, a lot of face-to-face contact with clients, use specialised non-portable equipment and/or that require direct supervision.
 - » Performance management should be based on clear expectations of the standard of work required and feedback to the employee should provide specific information on how they can improve or sustain their performance.

Legal Spotlight: Telecommuting/flexplace and work health and safety considerations

In accordance with the relevant work health and safety laws in place in each state and territory, it is important that:

- A telework-based work site is a safe area to work.
- Systems of work undertaken in a home-based work site are safe.
- Staff working from home are provided with appropriate training to enable them to perform their work safely.
- All incidents are investigated and hazards are adequately controlled.
- In some cases home work environments may require formal inspection and approval.

Compressed working hours

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Corporate

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Onsite

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Both

What is it?

This is an arrangement where an employee works their normal, full-time hours over less than the five standard work days.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Employee works a 40-hour work week by working four x 10-hour days.
- Employee works a nine day roster where a full-time schedule is accomplished in two weeks by working 80 hours in nine days (8 x 9-hour days and 1 x 8-hour day)

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Easier to schedule meetings, coordinate with co-workers and communicate with clients due to the predictability/consistency of the arrangement.
- Ability to monitor work performance of staff.
- Ability to extend hours of workplace operation and meet peak demand periods.
- Ability to attract, recruit and retain high calibre employees who may require compressed working hours.
- New skills being learnt by employees covering for co-workers on different schedules. This cross training benefits the employee, the unit and the organisation.
- Potential for reduced absenteeism among staff.
- Potential to boost staff morale and improve organisational performance.

How will this benefit employees?

- Retention of full wage and entitlements.
- Reduction in costs (e.g. commuting, childcare and elder care).
- Better work-life balance with the ability to perform and pursue other interests.
- Ability to be more productive due to less distraction outside the traditional work hours.

Considerations for implementing compressed working hours arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid at the rate of a full-time employee. However, employees working compressed hours work extended hours in order to meet their weekly working hours quota, therefore employers may have to pay overtime rates for those additional hours worked.
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Leave entitlements are similar to that of a full-time employee and depends on the number of hours worked.
- Other
 - » Employee may not be as productive due to longer work days. These arrangements should be appropriately risk assessed.
 - » Employee may not receive the supervision they require at all times.
 - » May cause understaffing at times.
 - » Some schedules, such as 80 hours over nine days, may be challenging to supervisors due to non-exempt staff members, as overtime must be paid to these staff members who work more than 40 hours in a given week.

Flexible working hours

☐ Corporate ☐ Onsite ☐ Both

What is it?

This is an arrangement that allows staff to work the usual hours with either early or late start and/or finish times.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Fixed schedule that differs from the normal hours, for example, 7am-3pm daily instead of 9am-5pm.
- Core hours within a variable schedule, for example, employee is present every day from 10am-2pm but the other four hours vary per day.
- Expanding the spread of ordinary working hours, for example 7am-7pm instead of 8am-6pm.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Reduced absenteeism as employees are offered more options to manage personal obligations.
- Enables longer business operation hours without additional costs.
- Mutual consent among the team allows peak work demands to be met.
- Increases competitive edge in attracting and retaining employees.

How will this benefit employees?

- Employee retains full pay and benefits.
- Competing responsibilities and interests can be met more easily.
- Greater job satisfaction as work can be done when energy levels and motivation are optimal.
- Ability to attract, recruit and retain high calibre employees who are unable to work the standard hours.

Considerations for implementing flexible working hours include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid at the rate of a full-time employee (if engaged in that capacity). However, if an employee works outside the standard working hours of employment, for example, outside 9am-5pm, employers may have to pay overtime rates for those additional hours worked. Generic information available at: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/hours-of-work-breaks-and-rosters/hours-of-work/when-overtime-applies>
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Leave entitlements are similar to that of a full-time employee and depends on the number of hours worked
- Other
 - » Management may not be able to provide staff supervision at all times.
 - » May create difficulty in keeping track of hours of work for every employee.
 - » Consideration should be given to the security of the building/office and staff during extended work hours.

Purchased leave

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Corporate

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Onsite

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Both

What is it?

This arrangement lets employees take extra leave each year by averaging the employee's pay over the full year so they get more leave but at a lower annual pay. Also known as 'flexi year' or 'buying leave'.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- 48/52 weeks – employees take an extra four weeks unpaid leave per year but their income (48 weeks' worth) is averaged over the entire year (52 weeks).
- 3/4 years -employees work for three years but take the fourth year as unpaid leave and their income from the three years worked is averaged over the four-year period.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Easier to retain experienced and skilled employees, especially during downturns.
- A good option to offer employees transitioning to retirement, while retaining talent for longer.
- Reduction in recruitment and training costs due to reduced turnover.
- Potential for salary savings if a replacement is not needed when an employee is away.
- Allows better workforce planning for peak and quiet times.

How will this benefit employees?

- Ability to combine work with other responsibilities and interests.
- Beneficial to working parents who wish to take additional leave for school holiday periods.

Considerations for implementing purchased leave arrangements include:

- Employer may need to fill the temporary vacancy when an employee is away.
- More management time may be required to negotiate conditions with employees who take extra leave.
- It is recommended that the employment arrangements should be developed between the employer and employees for the effective operation of the scheme.
- For full-time employees, the reduction in salary will result in less superannuation unless additional payments are made.
- The necessity of ongoing communication and sources keeping employees up-to-date with new developments and opportunities while on leave.

Expanded leave

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Corporate

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Onsite

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Both

What is it?

This is where employees have greater flexibility to request extended periods of time away from work without losing their rights as an employee. Expanded leave can be granted on a paid or unpaid basis and is used for a number of reasons, including sabbaticals, education, community service, family and medical care.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Leave without pay: an employer agrees to an employee taking a period of time off without pay.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Attracts and retains experienced, skilled employees interested in expanded leave.
- Increased staff motivation as their personal and work needs are being met.
- Provides opportunities for career development for other employees while covering the shift of the employee who is away.

How will this benefit employees?

- Provides job security and continuity while on extended leave.
- Ability to combine work with other responsibilities and interests.
- Provides leave without pay for an extended specified period with the potential to return to a position at the same level*.

*Employees will need to check such provisions against their relevant award or industrial agreement.

Considerations for implementing expanded leave arrangements include:

- Payroll
 - » This type of leave is granted on a paid or unpaid basis.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Depends on the number of hours worked per year. However, leave does not accumulate during the time they have off.
- Other
 - » It is recommend that a contractual agreement consisting of terms and conditions such as period of leave, entitlements, position level to which the employee will be returning to should be negotiated.
 - » The employer may need to fill the temporary vacancy when the employee takes leave. Having a register of past employees (retirees, part-time staff) could be beneficial.
 - » It is recommended to have a management briefing covering work issues during period of employee absence.
 - » Leave without pay will result in less superannuation unless other arrangements are made.
 - » Depending on the amount of leave taken, job skills may lapse.
 - » May hinder career development opportunities on return to work for the employee in the short-term.
 - » An arrangement could be made to send relevant material to the employee so they are up-to-date on work related matters while away.

Shift work

☐ Corporate ☐ Onsite ☐ Both

What is it?

This is an arrangement where work falls outside the 'normal' spread of hours fixed by awards for day workers. This is also a popular strategy used among resources and related sector operations as well as during shutdown.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- One shift of workers are replaced by another shift of workers (continuous shift work), for example, day and night shifts.
- Workers are permanently working a shift outside normal business hours, for example, night shift.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Ability to meet project demands for continuous operations.
- Allows a 24-hour, seven-day coverage of operations.
- Ability to attract, recruit and retain talented, high calibre employees who are unable to work full-time (i.e. employee's working a standard work week) as well as employees who may prefer to work nights.

How will this benefit employees?

- Days off during the 'working week' can allow the shift worker to fulfil caring responsibilities or other commitments.
- Availability to attend appointments and meet other personal commitments during traditional business hours.

Considerations for implementing shift work include:

- Payroll
 - » Paid at the rate of a full-time employee (if engaged in that capacity). However, most employees working away from home on shift usually work extended hours, therefore, over-time pay may be required. Rates of pay may vary according to the type of shift work undertaken (day or night shift).
- Superannuation
 - » Superannuation contributions are mandated by a superannuation guarantee which provides that employers must pay a minimum of 9.5% of an employee's ordinary time earnings (which is the amount of money an employee is paid for their ordinary hours of work). The amount of superannuation contribution may vary depending on what industrial instrument applies to the employment. Some awards or enterprise agreements may provide for extra terms that are received on top of the superannuation guarantee.
- Leave entitlements
 - » Receive the same leave entitlements as a full-time employee, but depends on the number of hours worked.
- Other
 - » When designing these rosters, consider work health and safety issues and the needs and preferences of employees. It is recommended to keep long work shifts to a minimum.
 - » Give staff their work roster ahead of time to re-arrange any personal commitments.
 - » Make sure the employee has adequate supervision and training.
 - » When embarking on shift rosters for the first time it is recommended to consult with people specialising in design of shift work rosters to obtain advice on best-practice initiatives.
 - » Shift work may suit the lifestyle of some and may hinder others.

Phased retirement

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Corporate

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Onsite

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Both

What is it?

This is where an employee's full-time work commitments are gradually reduced over time. At the end of the specified time period, the employee might leave the former employer and choose to:

- Leave the labour force permanently; or
- Leave the labour force temporarily; or
- Enter into a job share arrangement; or
- Look for work with a different employer or become self-employed.

How can this be practically applied at work?

- Over time the employee could reduce their working days from five to four per week, then three days per week, then two days per week until they retire.

What are the benefits for the organisation?

- Retention of knowledge and talent of the ageing workforce.
- Skills transition from retiring employees to both established and junior employees.
- Increased workforce capability through the recruitment of experienced employees who prefer working with an organisation that meets their desire to phase retirement.

How will this benefit employees?

- The ability to stay in the workforce with a continued stream of income, while having more personal time.
- Ability to pass on their knowledge during phasing-out period.
- Ability to build their professional network for a longer period of time.

Considerations for implementing phased retirement arrangements include:

- Employer's benefits policy may specify or constrain employee access to pensions and retirement benefits.
- Could create changes to current benefits such as health insurance.
- At the end of the specified time period, the employee might leave the former employer regardless of the changes/adjustments made to accommodate them.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AREA: Flexible working arrangements and your organisation

Type of arrangement	Used previously	Reason for removal	Currently in use	Arrangement suitable for the organisation	Suitable role/s	Potential to implement in future
Example:	Y	Change of project phase	N	Y	Operators, Administrators	Y
Part-time						
Reduced hours						
Casual employment						
Job sharing						
ROWE						
Working on location						
Tele-work						
Compressed hours						
Flex-time						
Purchased Leave						
Expanded leave						
Shift work						
Phased retirement						

Case studies

*Please note: These case studies have been produced from publicly available information.

Calibre Group

A global provider of engineering, project delivery and asset management services to the resources and infrastructure markets.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexible work/new-parent support

Calibre Group makes flexible working arrangements available at the request of employees, including accommodating staff on part-time and casual arrangements.

Outcome:

Work-life balance is promoted to demonstrate the organisation's shared value of 'Commitment to Wellbeing'.

The future

In alignment with the National Employment Standards, Calibre Group has committed to continue promoting flexible work practices, especially for personnel returning from parental leave or with parental responsibilities. These practices are monitored to ensure mothers returning to work receive appropriate support in taking on flexible work arrangements and to ensure facilities such as breastfeeding/expressing spaces are available.

BlueScope Steel

A global industrial manufacturing company.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexi-leave

From November 2008, employees were offered a variety of ways to take leave, including: reducing working hours to a part-time load (e.g. six hours a day or three/four days); taking accrued annual leave at half pay; taking accrued long service leave at half pay; or purchasing additional leave of between one and four weeks.

Outcomes

The flexi-leave options provided a viable alternative to redundancies, with approximately 665 employees from a 9,000-strong Australian workforce taking up one of the four options in 2009. It is estimated that 50 employees (in addition to those already working part-time) reduced their load to part-time, 487 took annual leave at half pay, 58 took long service leave at half pay, and 60 purchased additional leave. Notably different options appealed to different demographic groups, e.g. for mature age employees the long service leave option was preferred, whereas women preferred to purchase additional leave. Further, for the first time, more senior men took up the reduced-hours option.

The future

BlueScope Steel has indicated it would continue three of the four flexi-leave options. Its policy of long service leave at half pay proved to be the more difficult to retain given the implications for backfilling positions for lengthy periods.

Rio Tinto Iron Ore⁵

A global leader and supplier of metals and minerals.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexible work arrangements

Rio Tinto Iron Ore offers flexible work arrangements including part-time employment, job-sharing, phased retirement, working from home and flexible working hours.

Outcomes

The appointment of two senior leaders in a job-share arrangement has provided an excellent example to showcase how job sharing can work. Two women share the role of General Manager Business Improvement, which is responsible for further developing the business improvement capability, driving system value and providing leadership on major improvement initiatives across the Pilbara business.

The future

In Rio Tinto's Iron Ore business, the flexible work arrangements policy mandates that all employees have the right to request flexible working arrangements and that all requests must be given due consideration on a case-by-case basis. The company has a gender-neutral approach to this policy, encouraging both female and male employees to make use of the arrangements available. Coaching to educate leaders on the commitment to flexible working arrangements is rolled out across the business on a regular basis.

Newmont Mining Corporation

One of the world's leading gold producers.

Flexibility initiative(s): Boddington Hot Seaters

The Hot Seaters program, sometime referred to as 'Mother's shift' trains and employs local parents to relieve full-time operators at Newmont's Boddington gold mine as needed between 9am and 2pm (in-between school drop off and pick up). 'Hot seating' is when employees change equipment as quickly and safely as possible.

Outcomes

From an operational perspective the Hot Seaters program covered the production downtime during the breaks of full-time equipment operators with an estimated 120 to 160 hours of equipment operational time gained, dramatically increasing production. The move to employ locals won Newmont the Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA's (CMEWA) '2012 Outstanding Company Initiative' award and the Australian Mines and Metals Association's (AMMA) '2012 Innovation in Training and Development' award.

The future

Following the success of this program, Newmont is also working to lift the number of Indigenous people employed at its Boddington gold mine with a goal to double Indigenous workforce participation to 100 employees. The company is also placing a greater emphasis on the retention of Indigenous employees and the creation of alternative employment pathways

5. https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Rio_Tinto_case%20study_new%20template_tag.pdf

Woodside Energy

An Australian oil and gas company with a global presence.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexible work arrangements

As reported in its 2013/14 Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) submission, Woodside offers the following flexible work arrangements to all employees: time-in-lieu; flexible hours of work; telecommuting; part-time work; job sharing; carer's leave; purchased leave; unpaid leave; compressed working week (offered in a rostered format for day staff at its Karratha site).

Outcomes

According to Woodside, these arrangements led to an increased use of flexible work practices within the organisation, enabled employees to better balance work and home priorities, and benefitted the community through the increased number of available childcare facilities in Karratha, WA (Woodside provided additional funding for these facilities to be run efficiently). Woodside also saw an increase in women returning to work after parental leave and believe flexible work arrangements helped to support a greater number of women reach senior positions.

The future

Woodside believes that flexible working arrangements are important to retaining a diverse workforce and can lead to greater employee satisfaction as it continues to provide employees access to these arrangements in 2016 and beyond.

Caltex Australia

A leading transport fuel supplier and convenience retailer.

Flexibility initiative(s):

Caltex's 2013 flexible work survey results revealed that 70% of respondents participated in some sort of working from home arrangement and 86% have flexible start and finish times. Across the organisation, many teams have implemented innovative flexible working arrangements. For example, two Process Control Engineers at the Lytton Refinery spent the year working three months on, three months off in a job share arrangement. This has given them flexibility as they approach retirement, and given Caltex significant lead-time for succession planning and training for their replacement.

Outcomes

The organisation's commitment to flexibility is met through developing its leaders' skills and confidence in delivering flexible work solutions and also through the provision of technology that facilitates more effective work practices from non-office based locations.

The future

Caltex has stated it is committed to continue building a more flexible work culture within the organisation and considers the implementation of flexible work practices a vital component of upholding its reputation as an employer of choice.

Mirvac

A leading Australian property development and management company.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexible work practices

Mirvac's flexible work policy allows an employee to request various flexible work arrangements. For example, a number of employees have agreements that allow them to work from home.

Outcomes

Mirvac believes its flexible work policy has influenced many positive business outcomes. As one example, during the 2011 financial year, Mirvac saw a reduction in workforce turnover from 43% in 2010 to 29%.

The future

Mirvac's CEO Susan Lloyd-Hurwitz is a champion of work flexibility for both women and men, and works hard to lead by example. She clearly communicates to employees the importance of producing quality work over the amount of hours spent working. This culture is promoted throughout the organisation.

As a commitment to workplace flexibility, Mirvac also signed up to Workplace Gender Equality Agency's (WGEA) Equilibrium Man program. Launched in 2015, the Equilibrium Man program promotes flexibility for men and highlights the stories of a number of men across Australia as they transition to working flexibly in order to achieve equilibrium in their lives. Mirvac believes that workplace flexibility is a strategic imperative for organisations and not just a 'working mother's problem'.

Alcoa of Australia

Alcoa's Australian operations represent the world's largest integrated bauxite mining, alumina refining and aluminium smelting system.

Flexibility initiative(s): Flexible work arrangements/maternity and paternity leave

Alcoa's purely residential workforce benefits from a range of different rosters. Full-time employees below management level are offered one leisure day off (LDO) each month. If they do not take the LDO, they are paid out for those days in December each year. Other flexible work arrangements include job-sharing across some roles, work-from-home arrangements, part-time arrangements for women returning from maternity leave, and flexible start and finish times where appropriate. The company also offers 16 weeks of fully paid maternity leave, and paid paternity leave.

Outcomes

Alcoa's approach to flexible work and paid maternity/paternity leave saw it receive a Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) 'Employer of Choice' citation for the 14th consecutive year in 2015.

The future

Alcoa is focusing on business sustainability through talented people, by providing equal opportunities for employees, especially women to realise their career potential. Flexibility remains a major part of this mantra.

Useful templates

- Template 1: Employee proposal
- Template 2: Employee work schedule
- Template 3: Task list
- Template 4: Request evaluation
- Template 5: Manager/supervisor – employee agreement
- Template 6: Review of arrangement
- Other
 - » Script for people working out of the office
 - » E-mail signature showing days/times out of office

**The templates provided in the following section are of basic nature. They may be used as a guideline to help you set up the relevant documentations required to implement flexible work practices within your organisation. Organisations may adapt them according to workplace needs and the type of flexible work strategies adapted.*

Template 1

Employee proposal

Employee	
Name:	
Job title:	
Work unit:	

Manager	
Name:	
Telephone number:	Email:

Flexible work arrangement	
Current work arrangement:	
Proposed work arrangement:	
Reasons for proposal and benefits to you:	
Additional equipment required? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>If yes, please state.</i>	
Impact on your work unit:	
Impact on clients:	
Proposed solution to impacts:	
Benefits to [name organisation]:	
Proposed implementation and review Arrangement: <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Trial period? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date of review:	
Other comments:	

Template 2

Employee work schedule

This template similar to the sample template below can be used to assist you, as a manager map out the existing work arrangements of employees within your team, your department and/or your organisation.

Employee Name	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Key Projects/ Tasks
Employee 1 Phone: Email:	6:30am-5:30pm	6:00am-5:00pm	6:00am-5:00pm	Working from home 8:30am-4:00pm	6:00am-5:030pm	6:00am-5:00pm	9:00am-1:00pm	List major tasks
Employee 2 Phone: Email:	6:00am-6:00pm	6:00am-6:00pm	6:00am-6:00pm	6:00am-6:00pm	On call	On call	On call	List major tasks
Employee 3 Phone: Email:	6:30am-5:30pm	6:00am-5:00pm	6:00am-5:00pm	6:00am-5:30pm	RDO	RDO	RDO	List major tasks
Employee 4 Phone: Email:	8:30am-5:00pm	8:30am-5:00pm	8:00am-6:00pm	6:00am-6:00pm	8:30am-5:30pm	8:30am-5:00pm	Working from home 8:30am-1:00pm	List major tasks
Employee 5 Phone: Email:	9:00am-2:00pm	9:00am-2:00pm	9:00am-2:00pm	9:00am-2:00pm	9:00am-2:00pm	Day off	Day off	List major tasks

TIPS:

- Include contact information of employees on the schedule, especially, if working out of office.
- Distinguish clearly between employees working out of the office (telecommuting) and those on a day off.
- Make the work schedule a wall chart, so everyone can see.
- Update the roster regularly.

Template 3

Task list

Employee Name	Key Projects / Tasks	Work - Buddy
Employee 1	Project 1 Task 1	Employee 3
	Project 2	Employee 2
	Project 3 Task 1	Employee 6
	Project 4	Employee 6
Employee 2	Project 1 Task 2	No-one
	Project 2	Employee 1
Employee 3	Project 1 Task 1	Employee 1
	Project 5	Employee 7
Employee 4	Project 3	Employee 7
Employee 5	Project 5	Employee 7
Employee 6	Project 3 Task 1	Employee 1
	Project 4	Employee 1
Employee 7	Project 3	Employee 4
	Project 5	Employee 5

TIP:

Sometimes an employee may prefer to work in isolation and not have a formal “Work Buddy” (for example Employee 2 on Project 1 in this template). If this is the case, allocate another employee to familiarise themselves with the role and responsibilities just in case you need someone else to take over the work in the future.

Template 4

Request evaluation

Name of employee			
Department/Division		Job Title	
Age		Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Flexible Working Arrangement			
Nature of request			
Details of request			
Reason(s) for request			
Impact of refusal			
Impact of agreement on the employer	Additional costs to the employer		
	The employer's capacity to reorganise work arrangements		
	The availability of competent replacement staff		
	Any loss of efficiency in the conduct of the employer's business		
	The impact of the employee's absence or temporary absence on the operations/clients		
Management decision (Please circle)			
Request refused		Request approved	
If request refused, provide detailed reasoning			
If request approved	Provide details of agreement in a separate form attached to this		
	Employee	Manager/Supervisor	
	Date:	Date:	
	Signature:	Signature:	

Template 5

**An Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA) made in accordance with the Fair Work Act will need to incorporate a number of things which aren't set out in this agreement. This should be noted.

Please contact AMMA for advice before entering into an IFA.

Manager/Supervisor – Employee Agreement

for flexible working arrangement

Name of employee		
Job title/s		
Department/division		
Contact Information	Phone number	Work
		Home
		Mobile
	Email address	
Managers Information	Name	
	Contact number	
	Email address	

.....[Manager's name]..... and[Employee's name].... have agreed to trial the following flexible work arrangement/s for ...[X]... day/month period.

(Please tick all applicable boxes)

- ☐ Part-time work
- ☐ Reduced hours
- ☐ Casual work
- ☐ ROWE
- ☐ Working on location/away from home
- ☐ Flexplace (telecommuting)
- ☐ Compressed working hours
- ☐ Flexible working hours (flex-time)
- ☐ Job share
- ☐ Breastfeeding breaks
- ☐ Shift work
- ☐ Phased retirement

If agreed, separate agreements are available for the following leave arrangements.

(Please tick all applicable boxes)

- ☐ Purchased leave
- ☐ Expanded leave
- ☐ Carer's leave
- ☐ Parental leave
- ☐ Special leave

Manager/Supervisor – Employee Agreement

for flexible working arrangement (continued)

Work hours and location

This agreement is reflected in the schedule of work hours and location below.

WEEK 1							
Day	Start time	Finish time	General break (lunch)		Location of work (home/office/site)		
			From	To			
Mon							
Tue							
Wed							
Thu							
Fri							
Sat							
Sun							
Total hours worked in week 1							
WEEK 2 (only to be completed for compressed work on a fortnightly basis)							
Day	Start time	Finish time	General break (lunch)		Location of work (home/office/site)		
			From	To			
Mon							
Tue							
Wed							
Thu							
Fri							
Sat							
Sun							
Total hours worked in week 2							

The agreement

- Period

The agreement commences on ...DD/MM/YYYY... and remains in force until ...DD/MM/YYYY... unless revoked by mutual agreement between the employee and the relevant manager.

- Review

After the first period of the agreement being in force between the dates outlined above, the agreement will need to be reviewed by the employee and manager, if continuation of the agreement is to occur for a further period, If continuation is to occur a new agreement needs to be established.

Agreed date of review is ...DD/MM/YYYY...

- Amendments

This agreement can be discussed and amended at any time due to changed employee or employer circumstances, subject to organisational/departmental approval and reasonable periods of notice.

Any amendments to this agreement must be signed by all parties prior to the employee changing work patterns and/or location duties. A copy of the agreed amendments should be attached to the original agreement and a copy given to all relevant parties.

- Costs

If there are costs associated with the implementation of this agreement they should be discussed between the employee and the manager and an agreement reached on how the costs will be shared.

Responsibilities

- Employee

- » Read and familiarise yourself with the relevant departmental flexible work policy
- » Organise for a workplace health and safety check to be completed if you are going to be telecommuting/ working from home
- » [List additional responsibilities]

- Employer

- » Read and familiarise yourself with the relevant departmental flexible work policy
- » Discuss and establish appropriate communication processes to keep employee informed of relevant work issues and workplace changes
- » [List additional responsibilities]

Acknowledgment

The employee and employer acknowledge that they have read this agreement, understand the contents and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions.

Signatures:

Employee:.....

Date:.....

Manager:

Date:

Template 6

Review of arrangement

for flexible working arrangement

Name of employee		
Job title/s		
Department/division		
Contact Information	Phone number	Work
		Home
		Mobile
	Email address	
Managers Information	Name	
	Contact number	
	Email address	

This document reviews the following work arrangement(s) agreed between[Manager's name]..... and [Employee's name].... on [date the agreement was signed].....

(Please tick all applicable boxes)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time work | <input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding breaks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Shift work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casual work | <input type="checkbox"/> Phased retirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROWE | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchased leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working on location/ away from home | <input type="checkbox"/> Expanded leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexplace (telecommuting) | <input type="checkbox"/> Carer's leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compressed working hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible working hours (flex-time) | <input type="checkbox"/> Special leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Share | |

Issues for consideration and discussion:

To evaluate the trialled flexible work arrangement(s), the manager/supervisor and the employee need to discuss and record how well the arrangement(s) is/are working for both parties.

The discussion could be based on the following questions:

- Have the arrangements provided a working solution to the employee's work-life balance needs?
- Are the costs for the organisation associated with the arrangement(s) sustainable? (benefits that may justify these costs)

Other

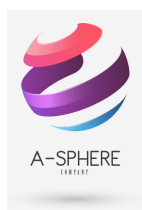
Script for people working out of the office

- Provide appropriate contact details of employees who work from home or outside the office to each employee. Due to privacy reasons, employees should clarify which contact details can be provided to external clients.
- If call cannot be forwarded directly to a mobile or to the home office, it is recommended that employees are provided with a script to ensure clear communication of information. A sample script is as follows:

A sample script is as follows:



E-mail signature showing days/times out of office



Jane Doe

Senior Geologist
A-Sphere Company

Direct: 07 1234 5678
Email: jane.doe@pretend.com

In office: Monday - Thursday

More information on Project X can be provide by Joe Bloggs via 07 2345 6789 on Friday - Sunday.

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