



OHRM-2005-01

Office of Human Resources Management Policy Memorandum

Subject: Alternative Work Schedule (AWS)

This memorandum sets forth the policies and procedures for transitioning and superseding OHRM's Alternate Work Schedules (AWS) Pilot OHRM-2004-03 program, to a regular on-going AWS Program. This memorandum also supersedes the Limited Alternative Work Schedule Program (Flexi Tour) Program, policy memorandum, OHRM-2003-01. The International Trade Administration (ITA), Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), AWS Program is now implemented. ITA OHRM's AWS program will cover all full-time ITA OHRM employees. Supervisors are excluded from working compressed work schedules, but may elect to work flexible work schedules and are eligible to earn and accrue credit hours. These policies and procedures are being established for the efficiency and operations of OHRM.

Approved

Doris W. Brown
Human Resources Officer

March 1, 2005

Date

e-Attachments

Attachment A: Employee Work Arrangement Request

ITA OHRM - AWS

WORK SCHEDULES

An AWS is an umbrella term that refers to compressed work schedules (CWS) and flexible work schedules (FWS). Compressed work schedule means a fixed work schedule (no flexible time bands) in which a full-time employee can complete the biweekly work requirement in less than 10 workdays. Flexible work schedule mean workdays with (1) core hours and (2) flexible hours. Core hours are the designated period of the day when all employees must be at work. Flexible hours are the part of the workday when employees may (within limits or “bands”) choose their time of arrival and departure.

The types of work schedules that ITA OHRM covered employees may request are as follows:

CWS – As described above, this is a fixed schedule. Employees may not vary their arrival and departure times. In general, the 5/4/9 schedule is the only CWS available. Under the 5/4/9 schedule, employees work 9 hours for 8 days, 8 hours for 1 day, and have the 10th day off. Arrival times for a CWS may begin as early as 7:00 am but not later than 8:30 am and departure times will not be later than 6:00 pm.

Flexitour – a FWS in which employees are scheduled for 8 1/2 hours per day, 5 days per week, including ½ hour for lunch, but may select the arrival and departure times as long they are present for work during the “core hours” (9:30 am – 3:30 pm). The arrival and departure times are fixed, consequently, once selected they may not be varied from day to day. Arrival times must be between 7:00 am and 9:30 am. Departure times may not begin before 3:30 pm and must not be later than 6:00 pm.

Gliding Schedule – a type of FWS that is identical to flexitour, except that employees may vary their daily arrival and departure times. The arrival time may not extend beyond 9:30 am, the beginning of the “core hours”, without charge to leave. Departure times may not begin before 3:30 and must not be later than 6:00 pm.

Maxiflex – a type of FWS that contains core hours on fewer than 10 workdays in the biweekly pay period and in which a full-time employee has a basic work requirement of 80 hours for the biweekly pay period, but in which an employee may vary the number of hours worked on a given day. Core hours will be 9:30 am – 3:30 pm. Arrival times must be between 7:00 am and not later than 8:30

am. Departure times may not begin before 3:30 and must not be later than 6:00 pm. Employees may request a flexible 5/4/9 schedule under this option.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to begin a FWS or CWS, employees must meet all of the following criteria:

- Have an established pattern of regular work attendance as evidenced by a minimum leave balance of 40 hours each of annual and sick leave;
- Have an established pattern of requesting annual leave in advance;
- Have a full-time work schedule
- Not be on leave restriction and
- Have acceptable work performance.

Employees who have annual and sick leave balances of less than 40 hours will not be considered eligible except for employees new to the federal government, those who have had a major illness/hospitalization, or comparable circumstance. Employees who have frequent (2-3 instances within 30 workdays) unscheduled leave use, a part-time work schedule, unacceptable work performance, or are on leave restriction will not be eligible.

In order to remain on an AWS, employees must meet all of the following criteria:

- Have an established pattern of regular work attendance as evidenced by limited (2-3 instances) of unscheduled leave usage in a quarter;
- Maintain a pattern of requesting annual leave in advance;
- Have a full-time work schedule;
- Not be on leave restriction;
- Have acceptable work performance.

The employees' supervisor may, if circumstances warrant, terminate an employee's AWS, if it is determined that the employee has established a pattern of unacceptable work performance or behavior. For example, an employee's AWS may be terminated based on valid customer complaints related to untimely responses or missed customer service standards. Supervisors should maintain documentation on any and all established patterns. Supervisors may reinstate the AWS at their discretion.

RELATIONSHIP TO TELEWORK

Telework is the ability to do your work at a location other than your official duty station. Eligible employees may telework from a location such as home or a telework center. To be eligible for telework, employees must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in ITA's

Telework Policy in addition to the OHRM eligibility criteria for a FWS or CWS. Supervisors must assess an employee's request and provide the OHRM HR Officer with a written recommendation for approval or disapproval. Requests for telework will be considered only on an episodic basis. Employees who are approved to telework must complete telework orientation and sign a telework agreement (employees should refer to ITA's Telework Policy for specific details). Only employees approved by the OHRM HR Officer may telework.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All requests to begin a FWS or CWS must be approved in writing using the Employee Work Arrangement Request (Attachment A), prior to beginning the schedule. The timekeeper must have the original of the AWS approval prior to recording time and attendance (T&A) under the new schedule. The approval should be maintained in the employee's T&A file. The request must reflect the employee's effective date and pay period to begin the AWS. If the request is for a CWS, the time of arrival, departure and the day(s) off must also be indicated. A CWS must be made effective the beginning of a pay period and can only be terminated effective the end of a pay period. Employees have the option of changing their CWS (i.e., day off or 8-hour day), subject to supervisory approval.

Employees approved to work a FWS must use sign in/sign out sheets to document their arrival/departure times. Each employee shall enter his or her arrival/departure times as they occur as well as any periods of absence during the workday. An employee must not enter any other employee's time. If this occurs, disciplinary action could result for all employees involved.

Supervisors retain the right to respond to changing conditions and, therefore, may change an employee's work schedule. Any indications of abuse by an employee will be grounds for changing an employee's present schedule.

For part time employees that have a day(s) off during the normal workweek, the day off is fixed and may not be switched for the employee's convenience or accommodation. An employee may request a schedule change not more than once each quarter. The quarters are:

January - March	July - September
April - June	October - December

Exceptions to the "frequency of change" policy may be approved only for hardship cases as determined by the employee's supervisor and with documentation provided by the employee.

CREDIT HOURS

Credit hours are the hours within a flexible work schedule that an employee elects to work in excess of his or her basic work requirement so as to vary the length of a workweek or workday. There is no legal authority for credit hours under a CWS program. The law provides for credit hours only for flexible work schedules, i.e., flexitour, gliding schedule, or maxiflex. Approval to work credit hours must be obtained by the immediate supervisor in advance using the on-line Web Time and Attendance (T&A) system. Employees must include a brief description of the work to be performed in the “Remarks” text box within Web T&A.

LEAVE

Employees who want to take leave must request approval from their supervisor prior to being absent. Any time off during the workday, including late arrivals must be charged to an appropriate leave category, compensatory time off, or to excused absence, if warranted. Late arrivals may not be made up at the end of the scheduled workday to avoid a charge to leave. A full-time employee under a 5/4/9 schedule who takes 1 day of annual leave will be charged leave for either 9 hours or 8 hours depending on the employee’s schedule for that day.

Any time off during an employee’s basic workday requirement must be charged to an appropriate leave category, compensatory time off, or to excused absence, if warranted.

There is no requirement that employees use the flexible hours part of a gliding schedule for medical appointments or other personal matters and extend the workday within prescribed limits to cover the absence. If an employee wishes, they may charge the absence to leave following established procedures. Employees may not work beyond the normal workday allowed which is 6:00 pm unless pre-approved for compensatory time or overtime.

HOLIDAYS

FWS- If a Federal holiday falls on Saturday, the employee’s preceding workday (Friday) is designated as the “in lieu of” holiday. If a Federal holiday falls on Sunday, Monday is designated as the employee’s holiday.

On holidays, employees who work a FWS are limited to 8 hours of basic pay (see 5 USC 6124). In the event the President issues an Executive Order granting a “half-day” holiday, full-time FWS employees are entitled to basic pay for the last half of their “basic work requirement” (i.e., non-overtime hours) on that day not to exceed 4 hours.

CWS- When an employee has 3 consecutive non-workdays off and a Federal holiday falls on the employee’s first non-workday, the preceding workday is designated as the “in lieu of” holiday. When the holiday falls on the second or third non-workday, the next workday is designated as the “in lieu of” holiday.

Example: Employee has selected Friday as the “off “ day.

Friday “ off”	Saturday non-work	Sunday non-work	Monday work
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- If the holiday falls on Friday, the preceding workday (Thursday) is designated as the “in lieu of” holiday i.e., the employee will be off on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.
- If the holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday, the next workday (Monday) is designated as the “in lieu of” holiday, i.e., the employee will be off on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Employees who work a CWS are normally excused from work and entitled to basic pay for the number of hours of his/her CWS on that day. In the event the President issues an Executive Order granting a “half-day” holiday, full-time CWS employees are normally excused from work during the last half of their “basic work requirement” (i.e., non-overtime hours) on that day.

OVERTIME

FWS- Overtime hours are all hours of work in excess of 8 in a day or 40 in a week that are officially ordered or approved in advance by management but does not include hours worked as part of an established maxiflex schedule, i.e., flexible 5/4/9.

CWS- Overtime hours are all hours the employee is ordered to work in excess of the compressed work schedule. If an employee is required to work on his/her normal day off, he/she is entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time. Since a CWS is a fixed schedule, supervisors may not require employees to switch their day off in order to avoid overtime.

TRAINING

FWS- An employee attending an all day training session shall follow the schedule at the training site. When local training on any day is less than the full workday, the employee is expected to return to work to complete their normal workday, unless doing so would be unreasonable or create an unnecessary hardship. Duration of the training/assignment and distance from the regular worksite should be major factors in making such determinations.

CWS – An employee scheduled for training shall follow the training schedule. The employee shall revert to the standard 8 hour, 5 day workweek for the entire pay period whenever training is not local or scheduled on the employee’s CWS day off. If local training is not scheduled on the employee’s CWS day off, the employee may continue on his/her CWS schedule if he/she fulfills the total workday requirements. This may require the employee to report to work prior to training and/or return to work to work after the

end of the training day, unless doing so is unreasonable or creates an unnecessary hardship.

MEAL/LUNCH BREAKS

- Employee_meal breaks must be concluded by 2:00 p.m.
- Employees may vary the time each day at which they take their lunch break. However, they are expected to schedule their lunch break in accordance with their work assignments for that day.
- If employees wish to taken a longer lunch than they are normally scheduled, they are required to take leave for any additional time and follow normal leave request procedures.
- Management recognizes that certain situations may require employees to change their lunch break occasionally out of the above time period, and employees may do so; however, they must first discuss this with their supervisor. However, a lunch break will not be taken at the end of the day to leave early, nor can it be used to makeup for a late arrival.
- All employees will take their time off for lunch.
- Management will honor lunch breaks and will not interrupt employees to the fullest extent possible.
- Management reserves the right to schedule lunches, if workload or other requirements necessitate such action. For example, management may schedule lunch breaks to ensure adequate office/phone coverage or to schedule meetings.

