

## Alternative Work Schedules

Policy Number: 2021-0005  
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Replaces: PER 18-1 (AEP)

### PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedures which encourage the use of alternative work schedules in order to reduce traffic congestion by enabling employees to travel off-peak and meet transit and ridesharing schedules; to extend office hours, thereby improving public accessibility to county services; and to help employees accommodate both personal and professional responsibilities. All alternative work schedules shall be subject to operational efficiency, public accountability, applicable laws, and collective bargaining agreements.

### POLICY APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all employees in the executive branch departments, offices, divisions and agencies, including the Assessor's Office and King County Elections. This includes all career service, provisional, temporary, probationary, and appointed employees.

### DEFINITIONS

"*Alternative Work Schedule*" means any of the following:

"*Fixed Flex*" means a work schedule divided into "core" time, during which the employee must be at work, and "flex-time bands" at either end of the core time, during which employees may adjust the times they begin and end their workday, subject to prior approval.

"*Full Flex*" means a work week consisting of the hours (either 35 or 40) and days (five in a seven-day period) that would be worked by an employee on a regular schedule, but in which the daily hours worked may vary from day to day in order to meet the professional requirements of the position.

"*Compressed Work Week*" means a work week of fewer than five days in a seven-day period or fewer than ten days in a 14-day period.

"*Regular Work Schedule*" means five 7-hour days (35-hour-week schedule) or five 8-hour days (40-hour-week schedule).

### POLICY

King County agencies are encouraged to implement alternative work schedules for employees in recognition of the positive impacts which such schedules have on commuter stress, traffic congestion, public accessibility to county services, and employee morale. Alternative work schedules can both serve the needs of King County government and grant a greater degree of personal freedom to employees. Such schedules are to be subservient to work needs and the provision of service to the county's clients.

Implementation and termination of alternative work schedule policies within individual agencies will be at the discretion of agency heads (division managers and agency administrators) with the approval of respective department directors. Each agency choosing to implement such a policy shall develop procedures for administering alternative work schedules per [INF-7-4-EP](#) "*Drafting and Implementing Executive and Department Policies*" prior to implementation.

An alternative work schedule is not a right conferred upon an employee. Any individual's alternative work schedule may be rescinded at the discretion of the supervisor or division manager at any time with, at minimum, two weeks' written notice provided to the individual employee, except in cases of emergency.

Federal law requires that employees in positions subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) be paid overtime for all hours worked in excess of 40 in a given work week. Employees in such non-exempt positions are therefore ineligible to participate in an alternative work schedule that allows over 40 hours of work in any given seven-day period. For example, such an employee would be prohibited from working a "9/80" schedule resulting in one "day off" every two weeks.

An employee wishing to request an alternative work schedule shall make written request to their immediate supervisor for review and approval or disapproval. An alternative work schedule must be mutually agreed upon by the employee, the immediate supervisor, and division manager; any changes to the schedule must be approved by the immediate supervisor and division manager. An employee may decide to return to a regular work schedule by giving two weeks' advance written notice to the immediate supervisor. Emergency requests for immediate changes will be considered by the supervisor and division manager on the merits of each request.

Should a conflict arise between two or more employees concerning an alternative work schedule, the division manager shall have final authority to resolve the matter in a way which ensures uninterrupted service to the public and coverage of job duties.

A rest break cannot be taken at the beginning or end of the workday nor can it be combined with a lunch break in order to further change an employee's start or ending time.

Employees may, at the discretion of the supervisor, be called to work during their scheduled time off to meet workload requirements. Compensation for such work shall be as determined by overtime/compensatory time provisions of appropriate statutes, ordinances and guidelines.

Paid time off for holidays will continue to be the equivalent number of hours as provided for by a regular work schedule: 84 hours per year for a 35-hour work week and 96 hours per year for a 40-hour-week schedule. For any given holiday, in a 35-hour "regular work schedule," the excess of a person's scheduled workday over seven hours must be charged to vacation or leave without pay. Compressed work weeks may be suspended by agency heads during those weeks in which a holiday occurs, provided that affected employees are notified in writing a minimum of two weeks prior to the suspension. Written notice may be provided at the beginning of a calendar year and may address all holidays or may be given on a holiday-by-holiday basis.

Vacation and sick leave benefits will accrue at the same rate as for an employee on a regular work schedule. Vacation and sick leave benefits shall be expended on an hour-for-hour basis equal to the number of hours absent from a scheduled work period. For example, if an employee is scheduled to work 8-3/4 hours on a day they request to take as a vacation or sick day, 8-3/4 hours will be charged against accumulated vacation or sick leave for the day.

Unless otherwise provided for by ordinance, employees on a four-day work schedule shall be entitled to use bereavement leave and family care sick leave for the equivalent number of hours as provided for employees on a regular work schedule. For example, three days of bereavement leave would be the equivalent of 21 hours for a 35-hour-per-week employee and 24 hours for a 40-hour-per-week employee.

## **PROCEDURES**

**Action By:** Employee

**Action:** Makes written request and submits it to immediate supervisor.

**Action By:** Supervisor

**Action:** Reviews request and discusses it with employee. May request a written analysis of workload from employee. Discusses employee request with division manager or agency administrator.

**Action By:** Division Manager or Agency Administrator

**Action:** Grants or denies employee request. If denies request, orally provides reasons for denial to supervisor.

**Action By:** Supervisor

**Action:** Informs the employee in writing of granting or denial of request for alternative work schedule and of the date the schedule will be implemented. If denied, provides the employee with a written explanation of why the request has been denied.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employees shall ensure that a high level of public service is maintained, and that abuses of this policy do not occur. If desiring an alternative work schedule, employees shall initiate a written request.

Supervisors shall review employee requests for alternative work schedules; discuss the requests with division managers or agency administrators, and provide written notice granting or denying requests and written notice of reasons for denial of requests to employees.

Division Managers shall:

- Review employee requests for alternative work schedules; grant or deny requests; and inform their director of all employee requests granted for alternative work schedules; and
- periodically review the division's "Alternative Work Schedules Policy" to determine if changes should be made or if the division's policy should be rescinded. They are also responsible for preparing changes to their existing policy or preparing a written notice of rescission of their policy and providing such notice to all affected employees.

## **QUESTIONS**

Refer questions or comments to your agency's [Human Resources Manager](#) or the Department of Human Resources.