

Oakland University Flexible Work Arrangements Employee Frequently Asked Questions

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) resource is for exempt employees in non-represented (academic or non-academic) classifications. Collective Bargaining Unit employees (i.e., represented) must comply with rules outlined in their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements. Please review the [Flexible Work Arrangements Guidelines](#) for details.

ELIGIBILITY/PROGRAM

1. What are Flexible Work Arrangements?

Flexible Work Arrangements are work schedules that fall outside of a unit’s usual work schedule and will have a plan, such as an expected start date or length of time. Additionally, supervisors are encouraged to support reasonable, non-disruptive, occasional work arrangements, at management discretion.

2. What types of Flexible Work Arrangements are available?

Oakland University offers the following types of Flexible Work Arrangements (refer to the Guidelines for details):

Term	Definition
Adjustable Meal Period	Using up to two hours of a meal period to take care of personal business while still working a full work day
Compressed Work Week	40-hour work week compressed into fewer than five work days 80-hour work week compressed into fewer than ten days
Flex Time	Fixed starting/ending in which the employee works a 40-hour work week on a schedule other than 8am - 5pm over a five-day week. Day-to-day start and end times may vary.
Shift Swaps	Employees can exchange shifts with each other and exercise some control over when they work. In some cases they may also be empowered to take extra shifts and/or give shifts away.
Remote Work	All positions have a primary campus work location designation of an Oakland University owned or leased facility. Alternative locations may be supported for short periods and do not change the primary work location for a position. Employees may work from alternative locations, such as their home, for part of their regular work week.

3. Who is eligible for Flexible Work Arrangements?

All employees are eligible to apply for Flexible Work Arrangements. Collective Bargaining Unit employees (i.e., represented) must comply with rules outlined in their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements.

4. Are the Flexible Work Arrangement procedures different for exempt and nonexempt (hourly) employees?

No, arrangement procedures do not differ but some options do.

5. How do I initiate a Flexible Work Arrangement?

An employee should discuss options with their supervisor and must complete the [Flexible Work Arrangement Request Form](#) at least two weeks prior to beginning the proposed arrangement.

6. If approved, when would the FWA commence?

It will vary based on the lead time necessary to review onsite project requirements, plan office coverage, and implement processes to handle job duties while not present during regular hours.

7. What if I want to change an existing Flexible Work Arrangement?

The employee is required to complete a new Flexible Work Arrangement Request Form after discussion about department options with the supervisor.

8. What steps should I take to discontinue or terminate an approved Flexible Work Arrangement? What work schedule will I revert back to?

Flexible Work Arrangements can terminate naturally on the end date on the Flexible Work Arrangements Form. Alternatively, employees can request to terminate an approved Flexible Work Arrangement by submitting an FWA Termination Request on the Flexible Work Arrangements Form. The supervisor is responsible to review and approve the change, terminating the Flexible Work Arrangement.

If an employee's Flexible Work Arrangement is terminated by the employee or supervisor, the employee may return to the prior work schedule, if that schedule is still available. If the prior schedule is not available, the supervisor will determine the appropriate work schedule, based on operational needs.

9. How long can a Flexible Work Arrangement remain in place?

Once approved, Flexible Work Arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis by the supervisor to determine if the arrangement is still a viable option for the department.

10. I currently flex my schedule, which was previously agreed upon by my supervisor, prior to the rollout of the Flexible Work Arrangements Guidelines. Do I still need to formally request a Flexible Work Arrangement and complete a Flexible Work Arrangement form?

Yes, employees who have been granted a Flexible Work Arrangement prior to the roll-out of the Flextime Policy, must also complete a Flexible Work Arrangement Form.

11. If I am promoted (or transferred) into a different position in another department, while working under an approved Flexible Work Arrangement, does the arrangement follow me to my new department?

No, the Flexible Work Arrangement does not follow you when moving to a new department. An employee will have to complete a new Flexible Work Arrangement Request Form.

12. If I am promoted within my department while working under an approved Flexible Work Arrangement will I need to qualify again for the flexible schedule?

Not necessarily; however, it is up to the department manager.

13. I am an employee who may need to come in early or stay late based upon the work and deadlines. Do I need to complete the Flexible Work Arrangement Form, if I am requesting to work an adjusted schedule for other reasons, since I am not paid overtime?

For reasonable, non-disruptive, occasional work arrangements approved by the supervisor, no, the Flexible Work Arrangement Form is not needed. If requesting an ongoing schedule change as described in D as a Flexible Work Arrangement, yes, employees are required to follow the provisions outlined in the Flexible Work Arrangement Guidelines.

14. Can I be turned down if I request a Flexible Work Arrangement option?

Yes. Flexible Work Arrangements must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Flexible Work Arrangements are not mandatory, universal, nor an entitlement. Denials cannot be grieved.

15. Can my supervisor change my Flexible Work Arrangements?

Yes, Flexible Work Arrangements can be terminated at any time, although every effort should be made to provide reasonable notice to the employee. Reasonable notice may vary depending upon the department and the circumstances. Bargaining unit

agreements must be followed (i.e. OUPSA the employee must receive five working days notice before a schedule change is implemented.)

It is most critical that departments and offices have appropriate staffing; however, unforeseen occurrences may cause a supervisor to alter a Flexible Work Arrangement on short notice.

16. Is it necessary to review my proposed Flexible Work Arrangement Request with my peers?

All requests for a Flexible Work Arrangement are ultimately reviewed and determined by the supervisor. However, as a part of the review process, the supervisor will consider all factors that may impact the team's ability to perform the department's daily objectives. Once a Flexible Work Arrangement has been approved, the supervisor will communicate work schedule information with the team, as appropriate.

17. What should I do if I have been denied my request for a Flexible Work Arrangement?

Employees should speak with their supervisor to resolve the issue. Ultimately, management has the right to not approve a Flexible Work Arrangement request.

ADJUSTABLE MEAL PERIOD

1. Are lunches mandatory?

Expectation is employees will work 40 hours a week. A lunch/meal is not a part of this time. A lunch/meal is encouraged during the day. Managers have a final approval.

2. Can you move lunch to end of day?

See above.

3. Is there something in the Fair Labor Act about taking breaks?

No.

4. Could you combine your 15-minute breaks with your lunch period?

If breaks are referenced in your collective bargaining agreement, it is up to your manager.

5. What if you don't want to adjust your lunch every day but only a few days a week, can you do that?

This depends upon your department scheduling requirements.

6. Does the two hour meal period have to be consecutive?

This depends upon your department scheduling requirements.

FLEX TIME

1. What's the earliest you can start work?

This depends upon your department scheduling requirements.

2. Is 10 hours the max that an employee can work? Hard rule or supervisor discretion?

This depends upon your department scheduling requirements.

3. Is seniority going to play a role in the flex time?

This is determined at the discretion of your manager based on department needs.

4. Is flex time fixed time or can it vary by day?

This is determined at the discretion of your manager based on department needs.

5. Can you take a 1/2 hour for lunch and then take the extra time off on Friday?

This can be requested on FWA form and is subject to approval by your manager.

REMOTE WORK

1. Why are non-exempt not eligible for this?

The University needs to be compliant with all employment laws; the guidelines are being reviewed to determine if this is feasible at some point.

2. Can it be in one-hour increments?

Supervisors and employees need to discuss all options to determine if these types of special arrangements can be accommodated with department scheduling requirements.

3. Could the one day a week option be split (so not all 8 hours in one day)?

Supervisor and employees need to discuss all options to determine if these types of special arrangements can be accommodated with department scheduling requirements.

4. Is there anything specific on the website about what requirements might be needed to work from home? VPN, tech specs, etc?

Please see www.oakland.edu/uts/securityinfo and discuss Policy #860 Data Management and Information Security with your manager.

5. Monday would be my remote work day; how would holidays that fall on that day affect my work week?

That day would be considered a paid holiday.

6. Are university employees required to support technology remotely?

University employees are not required to visit and provide technical support to any location other than Oakland University officially owned or leased facilities. Those participating in Remote Work are responsible for acquiring, paying for, and trouble-shooting their own ISP service. Those participating in Remote Work are responsible for acquiring, paying for, and trouble-shooting their own computing devices, unless the department can provide a laptop. University owned devices, such as an assigned university-owned laptop, are returned to campus for service or repair. Departments are not required to purchase laptops for all employees.

FORM QUESTIONS

1. Who keeps the Flexible Arrangement Request Forms?

All Flexible Work Arrangement forms will be managed through the online request form. The employee, supervisor, and University Human Resources will retain records.

2. Is there a limit as to how many times a request can be submitted or adjusted?

No.

3. Are we required to put an end date on the form?

Not necessarily but we are recommending a one year end date during the early stages of this rollout.

4. Do you fill out the form every two weeks or just once for a one-year (or by semester) period?

There should be no need to complete a form every two weeks. When discussing your FWA requests you should determine a mutual beneficial end date with your supervisor.

5. Do you use a form to end the arrangement or is that verbal?

Complete a new form.

6. Why do you have to put a specific time for lunch - why can't we just put 30 minutes as lunch length on the form? Lunch varies day to day, so why do we have to specify? (Or drop down with 30 min, 60 min, 90 min, 120 min as an option)

Some departments need to track lunches to ensure there are proper staffing levels throughout the day. Other departments will not need a lunch time record. Review lunch / meal times with your supervisor. It is necessary to determine the work week equates for 40 hours.

7. Are there any timeline guidelines for routing for the supervisors? To ensure the form doesn't just sit there?

No, but there should not be any foreseen delays unless supervisor is out of town, for example, because you would have discussed your request verbally with your supervisor prior to completing the form.

8. For shift swap, do both parties put in the request form or just one?

Both parties submit the form.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Which groups are non-exempt?

Clerical, Service & Maintenance, Police, dispatchers, Sergeants and Confidential Assistants.

2. Does the university have late/tardy rules?

There are absent management guidelines included in the UHR Website <https://www.oakland.edu/Assets/Oakland/uhr/files-and-documents/OU%20ABSENCE%20MANAGEMENT%20GUIDELINES%20August%202015.pdf>

3. Is this a prelude to punching a time clock?

Not the intention of offering benefit.

4. Tuition Assistance policy - do we utilize this form for request taking class during work hours?

No. Schedule adjustments that fall within FWA Guidelines that an employee may desire to accommodate taking classes require completion of the FWA form.

5. If an employee is not in good standing but currently doing FWA during summer, then what? Do they lose it?

That is what the guidelines state.

6. Is it applicable to part-time employees?

Benefit eligible employees only. Not casual or part-time/non-benefit eligible.

7. My supervisor changes every four years (dept chair). What if the new supervisor doesn't agree with the agreed-upon schedule? Is it required that they resubmit the form to new supervisor?

FWA schedules are not guaranteed. It is up to the current supervisor whether to continue or support new requests.

8. Emergency closures – are those treated like holiday pay for 4/10? Still claim 8 hours for the holiday or claim 10 hours for compressed work week?

No exempt or nonexempt employee is eligible for more than 8 hours of pay per holiday or day of University closure. If the holiday falls on the employee's regularly scheduled workday, the employee will be credited with 8 hours of holiday pay for that day. Nonexempt employees may use annual leave to maintain their hours of pay for that day, or they may opt to work additional hours sometime during the workweek. For exempt employees, managers need to take into consideration the exempt employee's status of "paid to get the job done" when determining whether the exempt employee needs to utilize annual leave for the difference between the hours of holiday pay and their typical hours for that day.

9. Can we transfer phones to our cell phones or set up notifications for voicemail to talk to our Google email?

Check with University Technology Services for information about current voicemail options.