

# **BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY**

### **OBJECTIVES**

This policy has been developed to increase the flexibility of the workforce to meet the changing needs of the organisation and to provide enhanced work life balance for employees.

Research has shown that flexible working opportunities which allow employees to balance their work and home lives effectively can have a positive impact on productivity as they are able to plan working time to fit with their own responsibilities.

The Council understands that in order to maximise potential in the working environment and to ensure excellence in service delivery it must look to challenge the conventional methods of service delivery and employment practice to ensure that employee's needs are linked successfully with the demands of service provision.

This policy does not provide for an automatic right to work flexibly as there may always be circumstances when managers are unable to accommodate the employees desired work pattern. However a framework is provided by which employees and managers can request different patterns of work to meet their own needs and those of the organisation.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Flexible Working scheme will enable employees to organise their working hours so that they may have some measure of freedom as to when they work.

The scheme, however, is designed and operated in such a way as to maintain the efficiency of the Borough Council and the services it provides.

The success of the scheme depends on the co-operation and goodwill of all employees. Employees will therefore be required to agree their working times with their Line Manager having regard to both their current workload and to the overall pattern of work in their section which may vary over time.

Employees will be required to obtain the express agreement of their Line Manager to their proposed 'pattern of work' within the flexi-time scheme. This is to ensure that proper cover is provided for all the offices at all times and to enable a degree of certainty as to when employees are working. Any variation of the agreed pattern of work will be by express agreement with the Line Manager.

## **SCHEME HOURS**

Employees are normally able to work between 7.30am to 7.30pm at West Street although the lock up times will vary and if you are planning to work late you should check with the caretaker as to the lock up and cleaning times for your area of work. Flexi credit will also be allowed for officers attending evening meetings beyond 7.30pm.

## **AGREED PATTERN OF WORK**

Employees will agree expressly with their Line Manager what their pattern of work will be. For example, employees may wish to start work at 7.30am every day or finish work at 6.30pm every day. This arrangement must fit in with the Section's work pattern and that of colleagues to ensure offices are satisfactorily covered at all times.

## **FLEXIBLE LUNCH BREAK**

A minimum of 30 minutes must be taken whether or not employees leave their workplace. Employees should ensure that they take a suitable rest break from their work over the lunchtime period. (See Working Time Regulations below) Such breaks should not be left to the end of the working day.

## **STANDARD WORKING TIMES**

For the purpose of crediting authorised absences the following STANDARD WORKING TIMES will apply for full-time workers (part time workers should be calculated pro rata):-

Week	37 hours
Day	7 hours 24 minutes
Half day	3 hours 42 minutes

A standard day may vary if you have a non standard working pattern and this will need to be calculated accordingly. Please speak to People Services if you require any assistance.

## **ACCOUNTING PERIOD**

The accounting period will be four weeks. This will continue to operate although there is now no limit on flexi debit/credit balances.

## **DEBIT HOURS**

DEBIT HOURS are the number of insufficient hours worked against the employees contracted hours. Employees should not consistently maintain a debit balance and are expected to work sufficient hours for the proper performance of their duties. Managers and staff are responsible for ensuring that contracted hours are worked.

## **CREDIT HOURS**

Credit hours are the number of hours worked in excess of the total hours against the employees contracted hours

## **FLEXI-LEAVE**

Flexi-leave may be taken with the prior authorisation of the line manager as necessary providing the relevant time off is recorded. The necessary credit hours need not be acquired in advance of applying for flexi-leave however flexi balances must be monitored by employees and managers to ensure contracted hours are worked.

## **NORMAL WORKING DAY**

Services to members of the public must be available throughout the NORMAL WORKING DAY.

The normal working day for office based staff is

Monday to Thursday	8.45am – 5.15pm
Friday	8.45am - 4.45pm

Arrangements will therefore have to be made, where appropriate, to ensure that sufficient employees are available during the above times.

## **TIME RECORDING & SYSTEMS**

Employees participating in the flexible working hours' scheme are required to record their working times on a daily basis using an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is displayed in a week to view format. For assistance with this spreadsheet please contact a member of People Services. Employees should ensure that their line managers have unrestricted access to their flexi records. Employees should also ensure that they maintain adequate records over a period of time. No flexi credit will be allowed if records do not exist to support this.

On arrival at the workplace at the start of each day employees are required to record their arrival by entering their arrival time onto the spreadsheet

At lunchtime employees should record the start and finish of their lunch break. Remember a minimum lunch break of 30 minutes must be taken regardless of whether they leave the office.

On final departure from your workplace for the day, you are required to record your departure.

## **OVERTIME**

Flexi-time will be taken instead of overtime payments if work is within the flexi band time for those eligible for the flexi-time scheme.

## **LEAVE**

### **ANNUAL LEAVE**

If you are on annual leave you will normally be credited 7 hours 24 minutes for one day and 3 hours 42 minutes for a half day, or the equivalent for part-time employees.

### **SPECIAL LEAVE**

When special leave is granted you will normally be credited 7 hours 24 minutes for one day and 3 hours 42 minutes for a half day, or the equivalent for part-time employees.

## **AUTHORISED ABSENCES**

### **DUTIES OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE AFTER ARRIVAL**

You will normally be required to report to your workplace prior to undertaking any official duties away from the workplace. You therefore record your arrival in the normal way.

At the end of your day you record your departure in the normal way.

If you return to your workplace during the lunch period and have not had a lunch break while away from the office you should record yourself out and in on your records in the normal way and take your lunch break. It is not permissible for you to forgo your lunch break in favour of accruing flexi time.

### **DUTIES AWAY FROM THE WORKPLACE WITHOUT REPORTING AT THE WORKPLACE FIRST OR RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE AFTERWARDS**

Occasionally some mornings you will be required to proceed direct to a location other than your workplace. In this event the start of the working day will be agreed with your line manager and should be recorded as such on your flexi records as soon as you return to base.

It may also on occasions be more convenient to proceed home direct from a location other than your workplace. In this event the end of your working day will be agreed with your line manager, again this should be recorded as such on your flexi records as soon as you return to base.

### **TRAVELLING TIME**

When you are on official duty out of the Borough Council area you will receive a credit of 7 hours 24 minutes or pro rata for part-time employees. Part time workers should not be unduly disadvantaged when on official business for more than their normal working day i.e. part time workers out of the office on official business for a full day would receive 7 hours 24 minutes credit for this.

## **ILLNESS**

If you are off work through illness you are allowed a credit of 7 hours 24 minutes for each full day and 3 hours 42 minutes for each half a day or the equivalent for part-time employees.

## **EMERGENCY ILLNESS AND DENTAL TREATMENT**

If you are taken ill or require emergency medical or dental treatment during the course of the day you will be allowed a credit for any period of absence within the normal working day up to a maximum of 7 hours 24 minutes.

## **HOSPITAL, DOCTOR, DENTAL AND OPTICIAN APPOINTMENTS**

These types of appointments should normally be in your own time. With the flexi-time provision there should be adequate opportunity for this to be accommodated. Hospital appointments for cancer screening i.e. cervical / testicular may be taken during work time where this is unavoidable and time will be credited. Where you have a hospital appointment or where appointments are unavoidable in work time you will be required to show proof of the appointment and discuss the circumstances with your Line Manager. You may be required to work back any time taken.

Attendance at Blood Donor sessions will also be credited, provided prior approval has been given by the line manager.

## **TRAINING**

If you attend a training course, anywhere other than the Municipal Buildings and are absent for a full day you will be allowed a credit of 7 hours 24 minutes. Part timers will be treated the same as for travelling time (see above).

## **DAY RELEASE, EXAMINATIONS AND PRE-EXAMINATION STUDIES**

Authorised absences for day release, examinations and pre-examinations studies in accordance with the Conditions of Service will be allowed a credit which shall not extend beyond the normal working day. Please check with People Services for specific occurrences.

## **FAMILY AND OTHER BEREAVEMENTS**

A family bereavement is an authorised absence in accordance with the Family Leave Policy therefore you will be allowed a credit of 7 hours 24 minutes. Any absence for family leave should be authorised by your line manager in accordance with the Family Leave policy and recorded as such on your leave card.

## **TRADE UNION DUTIES**

The carrying out of appropriate trade union duties will be an authorised absence in accordance with the Conditions of Service Agreement. Representatives must liaise with their line manager before absenting themselves from the workplace.

## **WORKING OUTSIDE THE SCHEME HOURS**

Where, due to the needs of the service and with the authority of your Director, you are required to work outside of normal flexi times, the time worked may be credited as working time with the agreement of your Head of Service on your flexitime records.

## **ADVERSE WEATHER AND TRAVEL DIFFICULTIES**

It is recognised that employees may in exceptional circumstances experience undue difficulty in getting to and from work because of adverse weather making driving impracticable or due to breakdowns in the public transport system. any employee who has time off work in these circumstances will either be:-

- unpaid or
- paid (taken as annual leave, flexi-leave or expected to make up the time at a later date).

This should be agreed with the relevant line manager.

A Director may agree that employees may leave work early and receive credit for the time of their departure until the finish of the normal working day.

## **MONITORING OF THE FLEXI TIME SYSTEM**

It is the responsibility of individuals to ensure that the recording of their hours of work is accurate. Line managers should be satisfied that their employees are maintaining accurate records and may carry out random audits of flexi time records to ensure the proper maintenance of the system. You may be asked to provide information relating to your records to either your line manager or People Services.

**Any abuse of the flexi time system will be dealt with under the Authority's Disciplinary Procedure.**

## **EMPLOYEES LEAVING THE SERVICE**

If you are leave the Council whilst working within the flexi scheme you must ensure that any balance of credit or debit time is cancelled out before leaving the Council's service i.e. your flexi balance should be left at zero.

Any debit time will be deducted from payment of final salary in the same way that annual leave is deducted. Any credit time owed will be lost if not taken.

## **NEEDS OF THE SERVICE**

It may be necessary from time to time for managers to restrict flexible working hours due to needs of the service.

## **ALTERATIONS TO THE FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS SCHEME**

It may be necessary in light of experience to alter or amend the scheme but you will be informed in advance if there are any changes. The scheme will be altered or reviewed as found to be necessary.