



ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

Effective Date:	January 1, 2016
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department (ARA or Department) is committed to providing its employees with alternative work schedules where such arrangements can be designed to benefit both ARA and the employee while maintaining or improving City of Houston (City) operations and service delivery. Alternative work schedules may be offered to employees when a division head determines that they can be effectively utilized.

2. POLICY PURPOSE

To allow employees to request a biweekly work schedule other than the standard schedule of five eight-hour days each week. All alternative work schedules shall be subject to operation efficiency, public accountability, City and Department policy and procedures, and other applicable laws.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all regular full-time, non-probationary ARA employees.

4. DEFINITIONS

Alternative Work Schedule: A schedule that differs from an eligible employee's standard work schedule. This includes flextime schedules and compressed work schedules. For the purposes of this policy, telecommuting is not considered an alternative work schedule.

Flex Time: Arrangements that vary the start and end time of a workday while maintaining required core hours.

Division Head: The person, as assigned by the Department Director, in charge of a Department division.

Compressed Work Week: An arrangement in which an employee works forty hours but less than five eight-hour days within a week, or eighty hours but fewer than ten eight-hour days within a two-week period. Examples of compressed work week arrangements include, but are not limited to, a four-ten (4/10) and a nine-eighty (9/80) schedule.

Four-Ten (4/10) Schedule: A compressed work week comprised of a work schedule which allows employees to work ten hours per day for four days weekly. This schedule is available to both exempt and non-exempt employees.

Nine-Eighty (9/80) Schedule: A compressed work week comprised of a work schedule which allows employees to work nine hours per day for eight days every two weeks. For the remaining two days, the employee works one, eight-hour day and has one day off. This schedule is available only to exempt employees.

5. POLICY DETAILS

5.1 ARA divisions are encouraged to implement alternative work schedules for employees in recognition

Approved:

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of the positive impacts such schedules have on commuter stress, traffic congestion, public accessibility to ARA services, and employee morale. Alternative work schedules can both serve the needs of ARA and grant a greater degree of personal freedom to employees. Such schedules are to be subject to work needs and the provision of service to the Department's clients.

- 5.2 The alternative work schedule shall not interfere with services to the public; shall meet the needs of the Department; and be to the advantage of both the Department and employee. All existing City and Department policies, rules, and regulations shall continue to apply. If any conflict or problem results from the alternative work schedule, the existing policies, rules, and regulations shall prevail.
- 5.3 Alternative work schedules are considered an option that an employee may request and are available upon approval of the employee's immediate supervisor and division head. Work schedules may not be feasible for certain employees due to the design and preset schedule of a particular position or the operational needs of the division.
- 5.4 An alternative work schedule is not a right conferred upon an employee.
 - 5.4.1 Any employee's alternative work schedule may be revoked at the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor, division head, or Department Director with, at a minimum, two weeks' written notice provided to the individual employee, except in cases of emergency. Discontinuation of the alternative work schedule must coincide with the end of a pay period.
 - 5.4.2 Alternative work schedules may be revoked at the discretion of the Department Director to all employees if the Department Director deems it appropriate with, at a minimum, two weeks' written notice, except in cases of emergency. Discontinuation of the alternative work schedule must coincide with the end of a pay period.
 - 5.4.3 Any employee that is not performing satisfactorily will be immediately notified by his or her immediate supervisor that he or she is ineligible for an alternative work schedule at the end of the two week pay period. This does not preclude the employee from future application for an alternative work schedule, following a six month suspension period.
- 5.5 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 forty in a given work week. Employees in such non-exempt positions are therefore ineligible to participate in an alternative work schedule that allows over forty hours of work in any given seven-day period.
- 5.6 Employees working compressed work week schedules will not be permitted to flex time. Sick or vacation time will be used to cover the time off.
- 5.7 Exempt employees not on a compressed work week schedule wishing to flex time may not exceed 4 hours in a work week.
- 5.8 An employee wishing to request an alternative work schedule shall complete and submit the Alternative Work Schedule Request Form to his or her immediate supervisor for review and approval or disapproval. An alternative work schedule must be mutually agreed upon by the employee, the immediate supervisor, and the division head. An employee may decide to return to a regular work schedule by giving two weeks' advance written notice to the immediate supervisor.
- 5.9 Should a conflict arise between two or more employees concerning an alternative work schedule, the division head shall have final authority to resolve the matter in a way which ensures uninterrupted service to the public and coverage of job duties.
 - 5.9.1 In those instances where multiple employees in a subsection, section, or division wish to take advantage of an alternative work schedule, the supervisor and/or division head will establish a ranking system by which employees may choose alternative work schedules (e.g., a seniority

based ranking system). Division heads will inform employees of the ranking system before implementing the system and demonstrate application of the system in the event of a conflict.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Each employee desiring an alternative work schedule is responsible for initiating the request by submitting a completed Alternative Work Schedule Request Form.
- 6.2 Immediate supervisors are responsible for reviewing employee requests for alternative work schedules, discussing the requests with division heads, and providing written notice granting or denying requests and written notice of reasons for denial of requests to employees.
- 6.3 Division heads are responsible for developing and submitting to the Department Director an alternative work schedule division plan which provides for appropriate supervision of employees using alternative work schedules, reviewing employee requests for alternative work schedules, granting or denying requests, and informing the Department Director of all employee requests granted for alternative work schedules.

7. PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Employee makes written request by completing and submitting the Alternative Work Schedule Request Form and submits it to immediate supervisor.
- 7.2 The immediate supervisor reviews the request and seeks input or clarification, when necessary, from the employee.
 - 7.2.1 The immediate supervisor may request a written analysis of workload from employee.
- 7.3 The immediate supervisor reviews employee request with division head.
- 7.4 The division head has final authority to grant the employee's alternative work schedule request.
- 7.5 The immediate supervisor informs employee in writing of granting or denial of request for alternative work schedule and of the date the schedule will be implemented. If denied, the immediate supervisor provides the employee with a written explanation of why the request was denied.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

- Alternative Work Schedule Request Form