

I am a new employee. Can I apply for a flexible work agreement?

New employees will not be eligible until after their initial appointment period of 90 days. This allows appropriate job training to take place. This time could be extended if the supervisor feels the employee needs more time in the office to understand processes and programs.

When should I apply for a flexible work agreement?

The application process is a rolling one so once you are able to process through the Flexible Work Eligibility Questions and Department Assessment with your supervisor and co-workers, you can submit your application.

What if I already have an agreement with my supervisor about remote and/or a variable schedule?

To maintain consistency across departments, you will need to follow the steps outlined in the policy which includes meeting with you supervisor and office/area co-workers to work through the provided Flexible Work Eligibility Questions and Department Assessment. Once that is complete, you will be able to submit the form with your requested flexible work arrangement request.

I have an official accommodation through human resource services to work remotely. Do I need to fill out the form?

No. Since you have gone through the accommodation process, that will supersede this process.

I am a supervisor and all of my staff are requesting flexible work agreements. How do I schedule them to make sure we maintain face-to-face customer service?

We understand there can be scheduling challenges and hope that you as the supervisor can be creative in allowing individuals a flexible work schedule within the confines of job and area responsibilities. During peak times of the year in your area, you may require everyone to be in the office. Be sure to give anyone with a flexible work agreement plenty of notice for those times.

I have spoken with my supervisor and they have denied my flexible work request, but I don't think it is fair as I can do my job within the confines of a flexible work schedule. Is there a way to appeal?

We believe supervisors and department heads/deans have the best knowledge about how their area's work best and we encourage employee to work with them to find a solution. If one cannot be reached, please contact HR and we will work with you and your supervisor/department head/dean to explore possible options.

Human resources denied my request for a flexible work schedule. Who can I appeal to?

Through the approval process, HR will utilize a number of factors in the decision-making process. It remains the goal of the university to continue to provide excellent services that are consistent with our values of in person relationships, community and student-centered services. If your request is denied, please contact HR for a face-to-face discussion. Understand that if your job responsibilities have you supervising students and other employees or makes you a front facing employee who primarily provides services face-to-face with students and/or employees, you will not necessarily qualify for all flexible work options.

There are multiple people in my office area that can help with face-to-face interactions. Do I qualify for a flexible work schedule?

Maybe. We encourage you to work with your supervisor on a schedule that allows you and others in your office an opportunity for a flexible work schedule that does not interfere with your work or the work of your office.

I need to adjust my schedule this week because of my child's school schedule. Do I need to submit a flexible work request?

Nope! You can work with your supervisor for these types of one-off events. You should only submit a flexible work request if you plan on doing it consistently.

Can a flexible work arrangement be altered or terminated?

Yes. If the situation in your area changes, you are unable to maintain work efficiently, unable to communicate quickly and/or unable to perform your job responsibilities within your flexible work agreement, it can be altered or terminated. You will be given two weeks' notice for changes to your flexible work agreement.

My flexible work agreement has been approved. Should I let others know?

Yes! We suggest leaving an away message or contacting those you work often with letting them know your variable work schedule or where you are working from each day. That may not be necessary if you are easy to communicate with via Teams or promptly with emails.

How long is my flexible work agreement good for?

There is currently no end time once a flexible work agreement is approved. However, there will be periodic check-ins to ensure things are going smoothly. As a reminder, a flexible work agreement can be terminated or altered for any reason and employees will be given two weeks' notice.

What happens if a meeting, training session or important event is scheduled when I am supposed to be off or a day I'm working remotely?

It is important to remember that the work of the university and the department must not suffer as a result of employees using flexible work options. There will be events or meetings that cannot be scheduled around your flexible schedule. The employee and supervisor would need to discuss and determine how it will be handled. In some cases, the employee may have to come in. The schedule for non-exempt employees would have to be adjusted so that overtime would be avoided.

What else should I know?

During peak times of the year, your supervisor may suspend the flexible work agreement and require everyone to be in the office to perform job duties. You should also expect to be on campus for scheduled meetings, even if it's outside of your variable work schedule or during one of your remote days. Other departments should not have to schedule around your flexible work arrangement.

Remote Work

I have been approved for remote work, but don't have a university provided laptop. Where can I get one?

Unfortunately, the university cannot provide every employee with a laptop. If you do not already have one assigned to you, you will need to utilize a personal computer.

Working remotely is a privilege that may be provided to employees at no additional cost to the university. The university will not provide funds to furnish a remote work space, including additional office supplies.

I've been approved for remote work. Why can't I work remotely five days a week?

Whitworth strongly believes in building community within a department and comradery between departments. The best way for this to occur is through in person contacts so it is important that individuals are on campus each week. It should be the goal of the supervisor to ensure that everyone in their area is working on campus at the same time to foster a sense of community.

I'm having a hard time getting a hold of someone in another department because they are working remotely. What should I do?

We encourage you to work with your supervisor to contact the individual's supervisor to let them know what the concerns are. If the problem is not resolved in a timely fashion, please contact HR.

I'm leaving for vacation, but will have some down time that I could work remotely. Can I do this and save some vacation time?

No! Go enjoy your vacation! Remote work is not to take place of vacation or sick days, nor is it a substitute for dependent care.

What is the purpose of seasonal remote work?

During certain times of year, office traffic may slow down. This may lend to an opportunity for employees to work remotely for a short time frame. An example of this might be during the summer when less day students are around campus.

Variable Work Schedule

What are variable work schedules?

Variable work schedules allow the employee a few different options to complete your hours within a Whitworth defined work week (Saturday midnight- Friday 11:59 p.m.) and Whitworth's core business hours (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday). The variable work schedule allows the employee flexibility in start and end times during the work week to adjust for life circumstances. In some area's a compressed work week may be an option. Examples of a compressed work week include four, 10-hour days.

Why would I want variable work schedule?

Variable work schedules could help with any delayed school starts, allow you change the times you either pick up or drop off a child or allow you consistent late starts to do simple things like grocery shopping or utilize your tuition remission perk and take a class.

What else should I know?

For non-exempt employees, a variable work schedule should not create overtime. Employees should continue to aim for 40 hours a week during a Whitworth's defined workweek.

There may be times a supervisor schedules a meeting outside of your variable work schedule and may require you to come in during a normal scheduled off time. Hopefully this doesn't happen often, but work with your supervisor so you can plan accordingly.