

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT

**COMPRESSED
HOURS WORKING
SCHEME**

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COMPRESSED HOURS WORKING SCHEME

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Single Status Agreement, the Authority is committed to the introduction of opportunities for compressed hours working, which are both of assistance to employees and suitable from a service needs perspective.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Scheme is to give existing employees the opportunity to compress their current working week/fortnight to assist with out of work responsibilities and activities and, where possible, to seek improvements to service availability.
- 1.3 In future, the Scheme may be extended to potential, in addition to existing, employees. This should prove useful in attracting employees with caring responsibilities and in combating skill shortages.
- 1.4 The Authority recognises that there are a number of potential advantages and disadvantages to both the employer and the employee in setting up compressed hours working opportunities. These are summarised as follows:

Employer Advantages

- the opportunity to extend service availability beyond the standard day
- the provision of a quiet time for work at the beginning and/or end of the day

Employee Advantages

- the provision of larger “chunks” of non-working time to pursue other interests, whilst retaining the salary of the full time post

- the possibility of finding quiet time at the beginning or end of the working day
- the opportunity to travel to/from work outside the rush hour

Employer Disadvantages

- need for extra attention to ensure that the team's work is arranged so that there are no gaps on the day, or half day, when the postholder is not at work
- there may be management or support requirements for the job outside the standard hours, which will involve, for example, the alteration of other employee's working hours
- need for consistency of approach (e.g. in management style) or of service (e.g. due to the complexity/nature of the work undertaken), that can only be provided by the same postholder, on a 5 day/week basis.

All of the above should be taken into account when considering requests/applications to work on a compressed week/fortnight basis and when identifying opportunities to promote this initiative.

2. Employees covered by this Policy

- 2.1 This Scheme applies to all employees covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, other than those staff employed by schools operating with fully delegated personnel powers.

3. Accessibility

- 3.1 Copies of this Scheme will be available, upon request, from the Directorate Personnel Officer.

4. General Principles

- 4.1 Compressed hour working facilities will not be granted where it is considered by the Head of Service that the efficiency of the service will be adversely affected. Changes to the existing working arrangements for a particular job shall be determined by the Head of Service concerned, in consultation with the employee(s) involved.

In determining whether the post is considered to be suitable for compressed hours working, the factors outlined in the Employer/Employee Advantages and Disadvantages in paragraph 1 above will be taken into account.

- 4.2 In order to ensure consistent and fair treatment of employees, all compressed hours working within the Authority will comply with this Scheme subject to employee consultation and a phased transition.
- 4.3 The Compressed Hours Working scheme will initially be piloted on a trial basis for a specified periods of time. The terms of each pilot will be set out in writing and signed by the employee and his/her Head of service. These terms will include the right to terminate the facility on either side with appropriate notice (a minimum of one month).
- 4.4 In the interests of consistency, the Head of Strategic Personnel will be available to assist all Heads of Service in considering requests for revised working practices in accordance with this Scheme.
- 4.5 The Authority is committed to an ongoing review with the Trade Unions of all flexible working arrangements, including compressed hours working.

5. **Eligibility**

- 5.1 Eligibility to participate in this Scheme is open to both male and female employees (as defined in paragraph 2.1 above). It is expected to be of particular benefit to those with caring responsibilities.
- 5.2 Applicants for the Scheme should complete an application form (See Appendix Ai). They need not disclose why they are interested in compressed hours working. The proposed use of their free time will not be used as a reason to reject an applicant or terminate a job unless it involves an alternative employment or activity which may:
 - involve breaches of the employment contract;
 - involve a breach of the Working Time Regulations 1998, particularly cumulative hours in excess of the 48 hour average working week;

- lead to a financial or other conflict of interest which may weaken public confidence in the Authority's reputation;

If the employee is in doubt, he/she should consult the relevant Head of Service.

5.3 Full and proper consideration will be given to all requests for compressed hours working. A form for this purpose is attached as Appendix Aii. Advice will be sought by the Head of Service from the line manager and the Directorate Personnel Officer, before completing the form. As stated in paragraph 4.1 above, such requests will not be granted where it is considered that the efficiency of the service will be adversely affected.

6. **Annual Leave**

6.1 Annual leave will be expressed in terms of hours rather than days per annum.

7. **Hours of Work**

7.1 In compressed hour contracts, full time hours are worked over fewer days. Examples are four, or four and a half day weeks and nine day fortnight. It will be necessary to agree in writing when the compressed hours are to be worked. A lunch break of not less than 30 minutes will be allowed for. These matters will be covered, in detail, in the employee's revised Statement of Particulars (see paragraph 12) below.

8. **Flexible Hours**

8.1 The Authority's Flexible Working Hours Scheme will, where applicable to the equivalent five day week post, also apply to compressed hours workers. This matter will be included in the employee's revised Statement of Particulars (see paragraph 12 below).

9. **Hospital and Medical Appointments**

9.1 Hospital and medical appointments should normally be arranged outside working hours. However, it is recognised that some clinics and surgeries

take place on set days and that, in some cases, cancellation of an appointment can lead to a long delay in treatment. In these, unavoidable, circumstances, paid absence under paragraph 18 of the Authority's Flexible Working Hours Scheme will apply.

10. Bank Holidays

- 10.1 It will be necessary to carry out an adjustment to ensure that an employee working compressed hours does not receive either more or less time off for Bank Holidays and designated extra statutory days than any other full time employee.
- 10.2 As an interim arrangement, during the trial period, Bank Holidays and designated extra statutory days will be credited having regard to the normal working hours for the day/s in question.

11. Pay for Working Additional and/or Unsocial Hours/Days

- 11.1 Opportunities to work on the employee's designated weekly/fortnightly day/half day off will be subject to the prior approval of the relevant Head of Service.
- 11.2 The provisions of the Authority's Premium Rate Payments scheme dated August 1999 will apply to all additional and unsocial hours working.

12. Statement of Particulars of Employment

- 12.1 The employee will, in accordance with employment legislation, receive a revised written Statement of Particulars of Employment. This will set out his/her revised terms and conditions of employment and will be similar to that currently issued to other full time post holders. It will be clearly marked as "Compressed Hours" work.

13. Leavers

- 13.1 Where a compressed hours worker leaves the service of the Authority, the Head of Service will review the needs of the post and determine whether to advertise the vacancy on a compressed hours or standard hours basis.

14. **Monitoring**

- 14.1 To ensure fair treatment and effective implementation, it is important to monitor compressed hours working applications and their progress. Copies of all Application Forms (Appendix Ai) and Response to Application Forms (Appendix Aii) will be forwarded to the Strategic Personnel Unit, without delay, for monitoring purposes.

15. **Basis of the Scheme**

- 15.1 In any case where there may be an area of doubt regarding the interpretation of the content of this compressed hours working scheme, the decision of the Head of Strategic Personnel will be final

16. **Implementation of the Scheme in relation to Individual Employees**

- 16.1 Any grievance arising about the implementation of the scheme in relation to individual employees will be dealt with in accordance with the Authority's Grievance Procedure.

17. **Review**

- 17.1 The Authority reserves the right to review the conditions of service of compressed hours employees in response to the results of pilots of the scheme (see paragraph 4.3) and/or legislative change. Additionally, the provisions of this compressed hours working scheme will be subject to review from time to time

APPLICATION FOR COMPRESSED HOURS WORKING

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Directorate or Section: _____

Please specify your proposed working pattern:

Compressed Hours Working must be agreed by your Head of Service and would normally be effective 3 months after the date of this application.

When would you like to start Compressed Hours Working? _____

Any other comments? _____

I have read and understood the Authority's Compressed Hours Working Scheme

I apply for Compressed Hours Working on the basis outlined above

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Send a copy of this form to:

Your Head of Service
Your Directorate Personnel Officer

RESPONSE OF HEAD OF SERVICE TO APPLICATION FOR COMPRESSED HOURS WORKING

To be completed and returned to the applicant following consultation with the Directorate Personnel Officer and the relevant line manager.

Name of Applicant: _____

Job Title: _____

Post No: _____

Name of Head of Service: _____

Job Title: _____

I have examined the proposal for Compressed Hours working (copy attached) and:-
*(*delete as appropriate)*

- (a) I agree to its implementation, as set out *
- (b) I agree to its implementation, subject to the amendments detailed below, which I have discussed with the employee concerned. *
- (c) I do not agree to its implementation for service efficiency reasons, as set out below*

(NB grounds for refusal must be objective and job-based. A general objection, in principle, to Compressed Hours working or to the inconvenience that a deviation from previous working practices would cause, will not be supported.)

(attach a separate sheet, if necessary)

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

Note: Please send a copy of this form, together with the application form to the Strategic Personnel Unit, for monitoring purposes