

FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

A FU⁺UREPLUS GUIDE

WHAT IS A FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY?

Flexible working can increase staff motivation, promote a healthy work-life balance, enrich employee wellbeing, and improve performance and productivity.

Flexible working may include moving to hybrid working, reducing the number of hours your employees work, changing your start and finish times, or working flexitime.

A Flexible Working Policy should formalise company policies and related processes around flexible working, addressing issues such as **eligibility**, how **requests** should be made, **statutory procedures**, and **data protection**.

YOUR POLICY



What should the policy cover?

Under UK Law, all employees have the legal right to request flexible working – not just parents and carers.

This is known as ‘making a statutory application’. Employees must have worked for the same employer for at least 26 weeks to be eligible.

Employers must also deal with requests in a reasonable manner. This includes:

- Assessing the advantages and disadvantages of the application.
- Holding a meeting to discuss the request with the employee.
- Offering an appeal process.

Research conducted by the Trade Union Congress has found that 82% of workers in Britain want to work flexibly in the future, a figure which rises to 87% amongst female workers.

To meet this demand, it’s essential that companies provide clear guidance and fair procedures when it comes to flexible working requests.

YOUR POLICY



Flexible Working Request Forms

Make sure your Flexible Working Request Form includes the following:

- A section where the employee can describe their **reasons** for making the request.
- A section where they can outline any **effects** they think their request will have on the business.
- A section where they can explain how such an impact may be **dealt with**.
- A question which asks what **date** they would like the new arrangements to start on.
- A statement stating that this is a **statutory request**.

Data protection

It's important to offer **anonymity** for anyone requesting flexible working.

Make sure to include a statement in your policy that any data collected regarding employee flexible working requests will only be shared with relevant personnel for the purposes of managing their request.

WHAT SHOULD THE POLICY COVER?



ELIGIBILITY

Outline which employees are eligible to make flexible working requests. You may want to include an informal procedure for those employees who are not eligible under statutory requirements.



TYPES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING

List out some examples of flexible working arrangements.

REQUESTS



The procedure for employees to make a request may include submitting a flexible working request form to a line manager/ senior member of personnel. Such a form should be included in the policy.



REQUEST CONSIDERATIONS

You should include details on how requests will be considered. For example, **timescales** (maximum time in which the request must be dealt with), details on how **meetings** to discuss the request will be arranged, and the **criteria** under which requests will be considered.



REASONS FOR REJECTION

This may include an inability to organise work among existing staff, a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand, and an inability to recruit additional staff, among other reasons.



RIGHT TO APPEAL

All employees have the right to appeal flexible working requests that have been rejected or only granted in part.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1

Your policy should make it clear that your business **recognises** the importance of providing flexible working for all employees.

2

Make sure that you are reviewing your policy **annually**, and amending it in line with any legislative changes.

3

It is important to ensure that all requests are **properly** and **fairly** dealt with. Otherwise, employees have the right to take employers to an employment tribunal.

NEED MORE HELP?

We can supply a structured template for a flexible working policy and we also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support.

Please let us know if you would like more information – we would be happy to provide a quote for either service:

team@future-plus.co.uk

