

Work/Life Balance Policy



Work/Life Balance Policy

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Work/Life Balance Policy

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The Park Authority believe that our staff are our most valuable asset and we are committed to attracting and retaining the very best people we can. The UK workforce is becoming increasingly diverse and includes a high percentage of parents and individuals with other caring responsibilities, as well as those whose interests and aspirations impact on their time. We appreciate that the 'standard' working day is not always compatible with the conflicting demands for a better work-life balance where you have other caring responsibilities or commitments.
- 1.2 This policy provides a framework within which line managers can consider how best to enable their team members to achieve an effective balance between work and life outside the workplace while balancing the organisational objectives. This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and may be amended at any time following consultation.

2. Principles

- 2.1 You can apply for flexible working subject to the qualifying conditions as outlined in this policy.
- 2.2 This is a framework within which both you and the Park Authority can benefit from a greater degree of flexibility, whilst acknowledging that the options available largely depend on the nature of your work.
- 2.3 This policy deals with requests for flexible working on a permanent basis which means a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment, unless agreed otherwise. Should your circumstances change and you make a further application, there is no guarantee that you will be able to return to your former work pattern.
- 2.4 Line managers have the right to suggest a trial period to allow them to assess how the pattern fits into the team and the business.
- 2.5 Agreeing to one flexible working request does not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted any particular change to their working pattern, as each must be treated on an individual basis.
- 2.6 If you are thinking of applying for flexible working you should speak to your line manager in the first instance or seek advice from HR if you are unsure about any aspects.
- 2.7 This formal procedure should not be used for any temporary change agreed on a less formal basis.

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3. Who can make a request?

3.1 Every employee has the right to request flexible working after 26 weeks' of employment. This does not mean that your line manager is obliged to agree to the request as each application will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.2 You can request a change to:

- The hours you work;
- The times that you are required to work;
- To work from any other location that belongs to the Park Authority.
- To work from home as part of your working days;
- The pattern you work - this covers working patterns such as part-time, compressed hours, job sharing, staggered hours and term time working.

3.3 You must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- Have worked for the park Authority continuously for 26 weeks at the date the application is made (this includes permanent and fixed term employees).
- Have made no previous application to work flexibly within the 12 month period immediately preceding the date on which the application is made.

4. How to make a request

If you would like to request to work flexibly you should do so using the flexible working application form which can be found on Park Central. If you are unsure about any aspects regarding your personal situation seek advice from HR. Once complete the form should be forwarded to your line manager.

5. Process for dealing with a request

5.1 All line managers are responsible for ensuring that the opportunities for flexible working are offered consistently across the organisation and should seek advice from HR prior to agreeing any changes.

5.2 Line managers should arrange to discuss the application within a reasonable period however no later than 28 days of receipt, with the applicant to gain a full understanding of the request and how this might benefit both parties.

5.3 Line managers who receive a request to work flexibly should always approach the request from the presumption that you will grant this unless there is a business reason not to do so. Some points for consideration may be:

- The effect of the proposed arrangement on other team members;

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- The level of supervision that the post-holder requires;
- The structure of the team and staff resources;
- Organisational impact including any cost.

If a request is rejected, the line manager will provide the reason(s) for the rejection in writing, which will be one or more of the following:

- The burden of additional costs;
- An inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff;
- An inability to recruit additional staff;
- A detrimental impact on quality;
- A detrimental impact on performance;
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- Insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work;
- A planned structural change to the business

5.4 The line manager has the right to suggest a trial period, the length of which will be at the line manager's discretion, in order to assess whether the business can support the request. At the end of the trial period, if either party considers that the arrangements have not been successful they should not continue, however, if the arrangements are deemed by both parties to be successful, the changes will be confirmed as permanent.

5.5 Once a decision has been made the line manager should inform the applicant in writing within 14 days by signing the Flexible Working application form and forwarding this to HR who will issue a contract amendment confirming the changes agreed.

5.6 The arrangements must have no adverse impact on the workload, health, safety and security of the individual concerned or their colleagues. Line managers must be aware of the hazards of working outside the 'normal' day and should seek advice from the H&S Adviser if they have any queries.

5.7 When moving to a more flexible working arrangement, all parties should be aware of the need to monitor performance levels to ensure that they are effective.

6. Right to appeal

6.1 You have the right to appeal against the decision; this should be made within 14 days of being notified of the decision. Your appeal should be addressed to your Director/head of Service in writing and state the grounds for appeal.

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- 6.2 The appeal must be held within 14 days of receipt. You have the right to be accompanied by a single companion at the meeting. The companion must be either a union representative or a work colleague. The companion is permitted to address the meeting but cannot answer questions on your behalf
- 6.3 You will be notified within 14 days from the date of the meeting of the outcome.
- 6.4 A member of HR may attend appeal meetings to provide advice and guidance.

7. Appeal upheld

If the appeal is upheld and the request for flexible working is approved, the second line manager will confirm this in writing and the date from which the new working arrangements will take effect.

8. Appeal rejected

If the appeal is unsuccessful and the appeal is dismissed, written confirmation of this will be provided by the second line manager, explaining the reasons for the decision.

9. Alternative Working Patterns

- 9.1 Appendix 1 provides some examples of the most commonly used working arrangements.
- 9.2 If a flexible working pattern is agreed it is important that all team members are aware of your hours of work. You must use your calendar and signature block to show your working pattern.
- 9.3 All flexible working patterns are agreed with the understanding that in exceptional circumstances there may be a requirement for you to attend training, meetings or provide holiday cover etc outside of the agreed pattern. In these circumstances as much notice as possible must be given and time off in lieu will be provided.

10. Best Value

Following review of this policy I am content that it fulfils the best value guidance provided, this policy ensures best value, the particular area covered is use of resources.

11. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An equality and diversity impact assessment was carried out and no discriminatory effects were identified for any particular group within the workforce. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

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12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is fit for purposes and is up to date with any legislative changes.

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Appendix A

Examples of Alternative Working Patterns

Part Time:	Employees are contracted to work less than normal full time hours.
Compressed hours:	Employees work their total number of contracted weekly hours in fewer than usual number of working days each week by working longer individual days.
Home Working:	Employees work part of their contracted hours from home.
Term time working:	Employees work follows school term patterns. They work as normal during term time. During school holidays they do not go to work but are still employed.
Job Sharing:	Employees work part-time (which could be part day, part week or part year and share the duties and responsibilities of a full-time position with another worker).

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Document Control Sheet

Appendix B

Prepared By	Claire Ferguson
Date Effective From	22/11/2017
Review Frequency	Regular basis
Contact	Claire Ferguson

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Approvals: This document requires the following signed approvals.

Name/Title	Date	Version
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