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Flexible Working Practices

What are flexible working practices? Is a flexible way of working that enables employees to tailor their working hours to meet their specific demands and consider other obligations outside of the office. This method of working was crucial because the disruption caused by the epidemic severely reduced the number of employees. Many firms were able to maximise the availability of their personnel and carry-on business throughout the pandemic by allowing flexibility.

Flexible working practices include:

- Compressed hours
- Staggered hours
- Location
- Job sharing- sharing the job with someone else
- Reducing your hours to work part-time
- Annualized hours
- Shift swapping
- Flexitime- having flexibility with your start and finish time

This method of working was crucial because the disruption caused by the epidemic severely reduced the number of employees. Many firms were able to maximise the availability of their personnel and carry-on business throughout the pandemic by allowing flexibility. Businesses are implementing flexible work arrangements including remote working at a previously unheard-of rate because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to safeguarding the personnel and ensuring company continuity, they also support more extensive, formal steps to stop the outbreak. However, it can also lead to overwork and a sense of isolation, so an emphasis on health and wellbeing is crucial.

As employee expectations change regarding their jobs, careers, and work-life balance, and as demographic changes affect employees' needs to balance their job with other responsibilities like caring - see our guide on creating carer-friendly workplaces - flexible working options could also be attractive to employees and new employs.

Every worker who has worked for the same employer for 26 weeks or more is able to request flexible scheduling. You are not required to be a caregiver or parent.

An employee can only make one request under the statutory regime in any 12-month period.

There is no form, but to qualify as a statutory request, it must:

- Be in writing.
- Be dated.
- Explain the change they would like to their working pattern.
- Explain when they would like the change to come into force.
- Explain what effect the change would have on the business.
- Explain how such effects might be dealt with.
- State that it is a statutory request.
- State if the employee has made a request previously and if so when.
- Additionally, they have the right to reject your request if you are ineligible to make it, have not had a job for 26 weeks, or have already submitted a request within the previous 12 months. For instance, an employer should make plans to speak with the employee about the request as soon as possible, Allow the employee to discuss a refusal where there is added information or if the employee thinks the request was not handled, where challenges are allowed, handle them as soon as possible.

Flexible working can also help employees handle disability and long-term health conditions, as well as their mental health and stress levels

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