

## Alternate Work Schedule (AWS) Implementation Guidelines

For joint review by employee and supervisor prior to completion of Alternate Work Schedule Agreement.

**Alternate Work Schedules** are defined as those that differ from the standard Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm workweek. Options include, but are not limited to:

- Individualized start and end times that remain constant each work day
- Individualized start and end times that vary daily, however, the same number of hours are worked every day
- Adjusted meal break balanced by increased/decreased hours at the beginning/end of the day.
- Compressed work week (a full work week is condensed into fewer than five days)

If altered schedule is within one hour of standard work hours (e.g. 7 am to 4 pm.), completion of an AWS Agreement is not required.

AWS are always determined on a **case by case basis**; final decisions rest with supervisor and can be rescinded by supervisor or employee at any time.

All such arrangements are voluntary on the part of the employee (unless written into the position description) and require supervisor approval.

Any AWS must support or enhance office or department mission (see Business Rationale below). Highest quality office function and customer service must not be compromised.

VT Human Resources recommends a trial period (e.g. one semester or 3 months) for any AWS. Following that period, supervisor and employee should review agreement, update if needed, then re-submit to HR. If alternate work schedule is not meeting needs of the department or employee, agreement should be terminated.

University alternate work schedule policy applies to eligible classified/university staff and AP faculty. It is an accepted practice for teaching and research faculty to carry out their work with varied schedules, therefore a formal AWS agreement will not be required for T/R faculty.

### A. Determining Eligibility for an Alternate Work Schedule

**Business Rationale** – How will this AWS benefit the work team, office or the University? Justification may include, but is not limited to - increased productivity, decreased distraction, improved customer service, expanded hours, enhanced employee morale, more efficient use of space or equipment, improved worklife balance, and/or lower operating costs.

**Managerial Oversight** – Supervisors sometimes believe they have to be available whenever staff are at work. Alternate schedules call for a focus on results and productivity rather than face time, and require trust and effective communication between supervisor and employee. If it is essential that employees be supervised at all times, managerial responsibilities can be delegated to someone who can be present when supervisor cannot.

**Position** - Manager and employee should thoroughly analyze position descriptions, responsibilities, and how the work is performed. Appropriate positions may be those that:

- Can be accomplished by more than one employee
- Require limited customer or co-worker interaction
- Do not include supervision of others
- Do not require access to equipment or files unavailable during non-business hours
- Can be accomplished through independent work
- Can be evaluated by specific measurable outputs

**Employee** - Manager and employee should also consider employee work style. Employee characteristics indicative of success often include:

- The ability to work productively on one's own
- Thorough knowledge of position responsibilities
- Above average performance record
- Good organizational and time management skills
- Effective communication skills
- Honesty and dependability
- Self motivation and flexibility

## B. Conditions of Employment

- The original **Alternate Work Schedule Agreement** will be retained in the department files. Additional signed copies will be provided the employee and forwarded to VT Human Resources.
- **Performance expectations** and evaluations will not change as a result of AWS. Conditions of employment will remain the same, and expectations should be clear and measurable. Supervisor will evaluate employee's job performance in accordance with applicable performance planning and evaluation, and probationary policies.
- **Salary and benefits** will not be affected by AWS.
- **An Alternate Work Schedule does not automatically** go with an employee who moves to a new position, or apply when a position previously done via AWS is assumed by a new employee.

## C. Hours of Work

- **The required number of work hours** will not change, and employees are responsible for reporting time worked, leave used, and for adhering to university and state attendance policies.
- **Overtime Worked:** Alternate work schedules will be treated no differently than regular work hours. Any overtime must be approved by supervisor. Failure to do so may result in termination of the flexible work arrangement and/or disciplinary action. See [Virginia Tech Policy 4320](#) regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act for more information.
- **Sick/annual leave** is recorded based on alternate work schedule (e.g. if employee is scheduled to work a 10 hour day and calls in sick, s/he must record 10 hours of sick leave). Employee must obtain supervisory approval in accordance with established procedures for requesting and obtaining leave.
- Employees receive 8 hours of pay on **paid holidays**. An employee whose usual work day is longer than 8 hours must either use leave to cover the additional hours or work another two

hours during the remainder of the work week to make up the time. E.g., if an employee usually works four 10 hour days and Monday is a holiday, s/he receives 8 hours of holiday leave for Monday. S/he may use 2 hours of annual, compensatory or overtime leave to cover the additional two hours OR s/he may work an extra 40 minutes each of her/his remaining 3 work days of the week to make up the two hours.

- In the case of an **authorized closing**, such as for inclement weather, the employee will receive authorized closing hours equal to the number scheduled. E.g. If employee is scheduled to work 7 am to 6 pm and university closes at 1 pm, s/he receives 5 hours
- A **meal break of at least 20 minutes** must be provided to employees working more than 6 consecutive hours. It is NOT included in hours worked. Supervisor may require employee to take up a meal break of up to 60 minutes.
- **Days out of the office** must be approved by supervisor, and must allow for necessary office coverage (i.e. not exclusively Mondays and Fridays).
- For **non-exempt employees**, alternate hours worked must be recorded in the same way as standard work hours.
- **Non-exempt employees** are not permitted to work more than 40 hours/ week without receiving overtime pay. Therefore they are eligible for a workweek consisting of four ten hour days (total 40 hours), but not a schedule which involves working more than 40 hours one week and less the next (e.g. 80 hours over 9 days)

#### D. Security

For employees working alone and/or during non-standard hours, security is essential. See Security Tips at [www.police.vt.edu/VTPDnew/personal.htm](http://www.police.vt.edu/VTPDnew/personal.htm). Always keep doors locked and contact the VTPD with any concerns or to be escorted to your vehicle - 231-6411.

#### E. Step by step checklists for employees and managers interested in AWS

##### **Employee Checklist**

	Read the alternate work scheduling policy and procedures. Consider whether AWS will allow you to meet your performance goals, and the mission of the department and university.
	Think through the details of completing your work, interacting with colleagues and customers, and maintaining high quality service when not in the office during core work hours.
	Consider your personal work style, and how that may influence your success working an extended day and/or when few others are in the office.
	Initiate a conversation with your supervisor regarding AWS, including a joint review of this document.
	If you both agree to a plan, complete the Alternate Work Schedule Agreement and review with your supervisor for approval and signature.
	HR recommends a trial period (e.g. one semester or three months) for a new alternate work schedule. Upon completion of trial period, sit down with your supervisor and discuss the success of the agreement from each of your perspectives.
	Revisit the agreement at least annually. If the plan is working effectively, work together to renew it, then supervisor will send an updated copy with signature and date to HR.

## Supervisor Checklist

	Be familiar with the Alternate Work Schedule policy, procedures, and forms.
	Be open to any conversation from a member of your staff regarding an AWS. If approached, help her/him think through implications to determine if this option might be suitable for the department, as well as the employee.
	Be proactive in considering whether an AWS position might help your department better achieve its goals, and/or improve the employee's productivity, work/life balance, or financial situation.
	Provide a business rationale for the final decision (to approve OR deny a request).
	If an agreement is reached, have the employee complete the AWS Agreement. Review the completed document with the employee and sign.
	Maintain original, signed agreement in department file and provide signed copies to employee and to Human Resources.
	HR recommends a trial period (e.g. three months or one semester) for a new alternate work schedule. Upon completion of trial period, sit down with your supervisor and discuss the success of the agreement from each of your perspectives.
	Revisit the agreement at least annually. If the plan is working effectively, work together to renew it, then send an updated copy with signatures and dates to HR.