

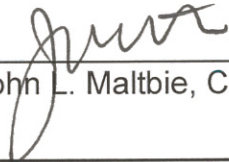


ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

NUMBER: E-9

SUBJECT: Alternate Work Schedule Policies

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

APPROVED:  **DATE:** June 17, 2013
John L. Maltbie, County Manager

Introduction

This Administrative Memorandum replaces an earlier version dated September 3, 1985 establishing policies and procedures for alternate work schedule policies.

Countywide Policy

San Mateo County Departments may develop and implement alternative work schedule policies for their staff. The terms of the policies may vary by Department, but all policies must consider the Countywide performance criteria. Details and resource recommendations on schedule options, the Countywide performance criteria and policy issues are detailed below.

Alternative Work Schedule Options

San Mateo County Departments may develop alternative work schedule policies for any or all of the following schedule options:

- **Flexible Hours**

Staff on flexible schedules work an eight hour day, five days a week, but may start earlier than 8:00 am or work later than 5:00 pm. Flexible schedules can include start and end times that vary daily, but once a schedule is set, the daily schedule cannot change without the permission of the supervisor.

- **Alternate Work Weeks**

Employees on alternate work weeks work 40 hour weeks in four days or 80 hours in nine days. These schedules are called 4/10 and 9/80 schedules and are described below.

- **9/80 Schedule** – On a 9/80 schedule, an employee works 80 hours in nine, rather than ten, working days per pay period. The employee works eight 9 hour days, and one 8 hour day each pay period and has one day

off every two weeks. The eight-hour day and the off day must fall on the same day of the week (e.g. off first Wednesday and 8 hour day second Wednesday). The Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA) requires that employees working a 9/80 schedule must sign a declaration defining the work schedule. The schedule may not be modified without incurring overtime expenses. Off days cannot be changed to accommodate coverage or other needs and all 9/80 schedules must be entered into the Automated Time Keeping System (ATKS).

- **4/10 Schedule** – Employees on 4/10 schedules work eight 10 hour days per two week pay period with two days off. To prevent the payment of overtime due, no more than forty hours can be worked in any one week. Prior to discussing 4/10 schedules with staff, contact Employee Relations. As a note, the overtime after 8-hours law does not apply to the public sector.

- **Voluntary Time Off**

Voluntary Time Off (VTO) is a countywide program that allows employees to reduce their work hours by 1%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 5%, 10% 15%, or 20%. Requests are submitted to Supervisors and Department Heads for approval. The hourly salary rate for employees with approved VTO requests is reduced by the percentage of VTO approved. For example, an employee with 5% VTO would have their salary reduced by 5% from the date of approval through the end of the fiscal year. Prior approval is required before staff can take off VTO hours. With Department approval, VTO time may be used in hourly, day or block increments.

- **Telework**

Telework allows employees to work at a site other than a County office or other County location. That site could be their home or another approved location of the employee's choosing. Telework may be done occasionally or on a routine schedule, depending on the type of work done by the employee and the needs of the department.

Countywide Alternate Work Schedule Criteria

All Department alternate work schedule policies should meet the following countywide criteria:

- Improve or maintain Department service delivery
- Improve or at a minimum maintain client service and staff availability to the public
- Be cost neutral – i.e. no backfilling of positions required, no increase in overtime or holiday pay
- Have no negative impact on other County departments, functions or staff
- Improve or maintain employee productivity

- Contribute to hiring and retention of productive and engaged staff

Departments should use the criteria above to establish baseline and ongoing performance measures against which they can track the success of their alternative work schedule policies.

Issues to Consider in Developing a Telework Policy

Departments developing alternative work schedule policies or considering revising existing policies should work the Human Resources Department if they have questions or concerns. Human Resources must always be provided a copy of the Departments policies. In the development or review of these policies, Departments are strongly encouraged to address the following issues.

- **Eligibility**
Not all positions are good candidates for alternate schedules, nor are all employees automatically eligible. Departments need to consider the types of jobs that are eligible along with specific individual requirements including performance and attendance history. Employees that have less than competent reviews, have not passed their probationary period, are in training and/or need close supervision will usually not be eligible for alternate schedules
- **Designation of Core Days and Business Hours**
To minimize the impact on office scheduling, departments that implement flexible schedules are encouraged to establish "core" day(s) of the week, when all staff are expected to work on-site. Core days may not be an "off-site day" under an alternative work program. Departments are also encouraged to establish "core" hours of the day, when staff working that day are expected to be in the office. Core hours may not be "out-time" under a flexible schedule.
- **Supervisor Training**
Departments that implement an alternative work policy should encourage supervisors and managers to participate in Human Resources' trainings on managing staff on alternative schedules (CURRENTLY BEING DEVELOPED). Training topics include assessing employee eligibility, managing a mobile workforce, tools for supporting employees working an alternative work schedule, defining performance targets and measuring the impact of alternate schedules on individual and team performance.
- **Evaluation of Alternative Schedules**
Alternate work policies should include both individual and department-wide evaluations to ensure that the Countywide criteria are and continue to be met. The length of the review period is up to the Department, but for pilot programs, six months is suggested and annual reviews are recommended for on-going programs. For individuals, if at any point during the contract period, any aspect of performance is compromised by the alternative schedule, the supervisor should meet with the individual to discuss the problem. If the problem cannot be resolved, the schedule should be changed.

Resources

Many San Mateo County Departments have developed and implemented successful alternative schedule policies that can be used as templates by other departments. Human Resources is compiling a reference file of these policies and also has policies and best practices developed by other public agencies and the private sector. Training is being developed to help supervisors and managers be successful in implementing alternative work schedules. Departments interested in developing a policy are encouraged to start by reviewing the files of existing policies and speaking with Human Resources and other Departments that have successfully implemented programs.