



## **FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST POLICY**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The foundation recognises that, as a responsible employer, it has obligations to ensure that employees can maintain an effective balance of their obligations in relation to work and home commitments.

The foundation also recognises that a positive approach to flexible working can enhance staff morale, retention rates and assist in the reduction in recruitment costs. This policy sets out our approach to flexible working requests under the statutory procedure.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

### **2.0 Scope**

This policy only applies to individuals who are employed by the Foundation. It does not apply to casual workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals who may undertake work for the organisation.

### **3.0 Eligible employees**

All employees have the statutory right to request flexible working. Under the statutory procedure, you can make two requests in every 12-month period. If you have submitted one flexible working request within a 12 month period, you must wait until that one has been considered and any appeal has been dealt with, before submitting another.

### **4.0 Types of flexible working**

We will consider requests for any type of flexible working with an open mind. Examples of flexible working include:

- hybrid working and working remotely;
- part-time working;
- flexible hours; and compressed hours

## **5.0 Making a request for flexible working**

All requests must be made in writing by email or letter by filling in our request for flexible working form (Appendix A), which is available from the HR Department. This should be submitted to your line manager and the HR department.

Any request made under this policy must include:

- the date of the request;
- the changes that you are seeking to your terms and conditions of employment;
- the date on which you would like the change to come into effect;
- a statement that this is a statutory request;
- if and when you have made a previous application for flexible working; and
- if you have made a previous request, when you made that application.

If your request does not contain all the required information, you will be asked to resubmit it with the necessary additional information. Any request that is incomplete or contains errors will not be automatically rejected.

Employees who need assistance in completing documentation or general advice on flexible working should contact the HR department.

## **6.0 Timescales**

Once you submit your flexible working request, it will be dealt with as soon as possible. However, all requests will be dealt with within two months, from receipt of the request to notification of any appeal decision.

The timescales within this policy may be extended where this is mutually agreed.

## **7.0 Consultation meeting**

Your line manager and a colleague from the HR department will arrange a consultation meeting to discuss your flexible working request. The consultation meeting will normally be held within 14 days of receiving your request. However, if this is not possible, you will be informed of the reason for any delay.

The consultation meeting is an opportunity for you to explain how the proposed working arrangements would benefit you and for us to consider and discuss any alternative flexible working options that may be available and suitable for you and the organisation.

At the consultation meeting, we urge you to be as open as possible about your needs so that we are able to engage in a constructive discussion about what is feasible.

## **8.0 Considering your request**

After the meeting, your line manager will consider your proposed flexible working arrangements carefully, weighing up:

- the potential benefits to both you and the organisation; and
- any adverse impact of implementing the proposed changes.

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis - agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working patterns.

## **9.0 Notifying you of the decision**

The HR department will inform you in writing, usually within 7 days after the consultation meeting, of the decision and the rationale.

## **10.0 Where your request is granted**

Your request may be granted in full or in part. For example:

- we may propose a modified version of your request;
- your request may be granted on a temporary basis; or
- you may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

Where your request is granted in full or in part, a member of the HR department will write to you to discuss how and when the changes might be implemented.

Employees should remember that unless otherwise agreed, any change will be permanent unless a trial period or temporary basis has been agreed.

Employees should also remember that any flexible working request that is agreed and involves a reduction in hours or alteration in duties and responsibilities, will mean a permanent variation in pay and benefits.

## **11.0 Reasons for rejecting a request**

While we are committed to encouraging flexible working patterns, in some cases, it may not be possible for us to accommodate a request because of:

- the burden of additional costs;
- an inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- an inability to recruit additional staff;
- a detrimental impact on the quality of our services.
- a detrimental impact on performance;
- a detrimental effect on our ability to meet demand for our services;
- insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work; and
- a planned structural change to the business.

We will not reject your request for any other reason.

## **12.0 Your right to appeal**

You have the right to appeal if your request for flexible working is rejected or only agreed in part.

Your appeal should be sent in writing to the HR Manager within seven days of receiving our decision. Your letter should set out the grounds on which you are appealing. An appeal meeting, where possible with an individual who did not make the original decision, will normally be held within seven days of you lodging your appeal.

You may, if you wish, ask a fellow worker or a trade union official to attend the appeal meeting with you.

Following the appeal meeting, the relevant manager will inform you in writing, usually within seven calendar days, of the outcome. The outcome of the appeal is final.

### **13.0 Treating your application as withdrawn**

If you fail to attend, without good reason, both the first and second meeting to discuss your application, or both the first and second meeting to discuss your appeal, we will treat your application as withdrawn.

The Foundation will undertake regular reviews of this policy to ensure that it remains legally compliant and conforms to best practice, as well as meeting the best interests of the Foundation and its employees.

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