



City of Seattle

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Alternative Work Arrangements Pilot Program Guidelines

**A Reference Guide for
Managers
and
Employees**

Table of Contents

- I. Overview**
- II. Internal Communication for Pilot Program Guidelines**
- III. Pilot Program – Phase 1**
- IV. Definitions**
- V. Authority to Approve Alternative Work Arrangements**
- VI. Procedure for Requesting Alternative Work Arrangement**
- VII. Types of Alternative Work Arrangements**
- VIII. Benefits of Alternative Work Arrangements**
- IX. Considerations**

OVERVIEW

Pilot Alternative Work Arrangement Guidelines

Beginning in January 2019, the City of Seattle will be piloting a new Alternative Work Arrangement Program to mitigate traffic congestion during the Seattle Squeeze, or Period of Maximum Constraint (POMC), associated with the closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. This is an experiment to test and inform future Employee Telework and Alternative Work Arrangement Policies and Personnel Rule changes.

The primary purpose of this pilot will be to decrease employee commutes to the downtown business core during peak travel times, 6:00-9:00 a.m., and 4:00-7:00 p.m. through telework, flextime, or compressed work weeks.

Communication Expectations

Department Heads are expected to coordinate with their executive teams and Human Resource Leaders to communicate the parameters and guidelines of this pilot program to the employees in their departments. Communication to employees is expected to be in alignment with Citywide messaging from the Mayor's Office. All employees will have access to the [Seattle Squeeze/POMC SharePoint](#), which will provide resources and tools starting December 2018. This information will prepare departments and employees for the Seattle Squeeze and continue through the course of the pilot program.

Pilot Program – Phase I

This pilot program will officially be launched by the City of Seattle starting January 2, 2019 to allow departments and employees to adjust schedules ahead of the official Alaskan Way Viaduct closure on January 11, 2019. On or about February 28, 2019 the viaduct project is scheduled to be substantially complete. The Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) will assess data and information gathered during the pilot program. This information will be used to make decisions that inform a permanent Alternative Work Arrangement Program. It is critical to examine the lessons learned about what works, what is needed, what is missing, and what needs to be adjusted to meet the business needs of the City and balance the experience of employees. The assessment period will include collaboration with affected labor unions to adjust or design an effective Alternative Work Arrangement Program for our future.

Definitions

Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA)

Alternative work arrangements refer to any work arrangement that differs from an organization's standard business work schedule and location. Alternative work arrangements are not for all positions or employees. In general, some job classifications within the City have been determined eligible for consideration based on typical work descriptions.

Appointing Authority

A Department Head, Chief, CEO/GM, other legally authorized Department Director, or their designee.

Compressed Work Week

Any schedule which allows a full-time employee to work a 40-hour workweek in less than five days. This includes a 4/10 or 9/80 work schedule.

Core Work Hours

The generally accepted core work hours at the City of Seattle are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Eligibility

An *eligible position* is defined as a position that can be performed remotely, on a compressed work week or a flexible work schedule without impacting customers, other employees, service quality, or organizational operations. The eligibility of a position may change depending on circumstances.

Employee – A person who is regularly appointed on a full-time, or part-time basis and temporary employees, excluding interns, Summer Youth employees, and participants in other workforce development programs. Contractors and consultants are not covered by these guidelines.

Flexible Work Schedule – Employee's work hours vary from City core work hours as defined in this guideline.

Hourly Employee – An employee who is compensated on an hourly basis for each hour of work performed, including time worked beyond 40 hours in a work week.

Salaried Employee – An employee who is not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) who regularly receives a predetermined salary amount each pay period.

Telework – Allows employees to work at home or at a satellite location for all or part of their regular work week.

Authority for Approval

Appointing Authorities or their designated management representative may approve or deny employee's requests.

Alternative Work Arrangements, including telework or remote work are not an employee right. This is an option that allows for greater flexibility of work schedules and locations, recognizes the changing nature of our workforce and meets the business needs of the City.

Management representatives may consider several factors in determining whether to approve or discontinue an Alternative Work Arrangement, including the following:

American with Disabilities Act

AWA as an accommodation under the ADA generally have priority over discretionary AWA. See HR for details.

Process for requesting Alternative Work Arrangements:

1. Employees requesting an AWA shall complete and submit to their supervisor/manager the AWA Agreement (Appendix A to this policy). The request form shall address how workload and customer service goals are to be met.
2. Supervisors/managers shall review requests and indicate their support or denial of the request on the form before forwarding the signed form to the Department Director or designee.
3. Signatures of both the supervisor and department head (or designee) are required.
4. Human Resources will review and initiate tracking of the requests as well as ensure all record-keeping responsibilities, including completed AWA Agreements.
5. Human Resources will ensure that the employee's record in HRIS is updated to reflect that they are on an AWA and forward a copy of the fully signed AWA Agreement to Payroll for verifying time-sheet reporting.
6. The requests submitted during the pilot program will be evaluated at the at the end of the pilot program.

Types of Alternative Work Arrangements

For purposes of this pilot program in the City of Seattle, we are defining Alternative Work Arrangements to include three different approaches. These include:

- 1. Flexible Work Schedules or Flexible Work Arrangements**
- 2. Compressed Work Week(s)**
- 3. Telework**

Flexible Work Schedule

A work schedule in which an employee's work hours vary from standard City work hours as defined in this guideline. An employee and a department's management may agree to flexible scheduling, including:

Fixed schedule flextime: The employee works the same set hours each day that varies from the regular core business hours, e.g., 6:00 a.m. to 2:30pm (half hour unpaid lunch) in an office that is normally open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Daily Flex-schedule: a flexible schedule where the employee is free to set their own work hours within limits established by management, which may vary from day to day.

Managers and employees shall agree to flexible schedules that minimize payment of overtime to hourly employees.

Note: Some collective bargaining agreements require overtime payment for work beyond a regular work day.

Compressed Work Week

A compressed work week shall mean any schedule which allows a full-time employee to work a 40-hour workweek in less than five days.

There are generally two types:

The 9/80 work schedule - Is a compressed workweek comprised of a work schedule which allows employees to work 80 straight time hours per pay period over a nine-day period.

The 4/10 work schedule – Is a compressed workweek comprised of a work schedule which allows employees to work 40 straight time hours per workweek in four ten-hour days.

Paid Time Off for employees working compressed work weeks:

- A. An hourly employee on a full-time compressed workweek schedule will receive eight hours of holiday pay per holiday and may charge the difference against an appropriate paid leave balance or with supervisory approval, be unpaid or flex the time during the workweek in which the holiday occurs. Alternatively, the appointing authority may approve a regular 8-hour-per-day, 5-days per week schedule during the pay periods that include a holiday.
- B. Hourly employees working a 9/80 or 4/10 work schedule who claim a personal holiday or City-observed holiday hours on a nine or ten-hour work day may only report eight hours of holiday pay and use other paid leave or unpaid leave time, with their supervisor's approval, to cover the remaining hours of their regular work schedule, unless an adjusted work week is authorized in advance. Adjustments to the schedule shall be made in such a way as to avoid creating overtime.
- C. Time not worked must be charged to paid leave, if available, and approved by an employee's supervisor, unless it is a bona fide adjusted work week.
- D. If paid leave hours are not available or not approved, time not worked during the Alternative Work Arrangement period will be charged to leave without pay.
- E. Employees must use the Alternative Work Arrangement Request and Agreement Form that was developed for the pilot program.

Telework

Teleworking is when an employee performs the scope of duties and responsibilities of such employee's position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the primary or "normative" location from which the employee would otherwise work.

In practice, "telework or remote work" is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform work, during any part of regular, paid hours, at an approved alternative worksite (e.g., home, alternate work site, telework center). This definition includes what is generally referred to as remote work but does not include any part of work done while on official travel.

Telework shall meet the following requirements:

1. A voluntary work schedule arrangement subject to the approval of the Appointing Authority or designee.
2. Management has the right to determine which positions are suitable for telework arrangements based on business needs.
3. An employee or supervisor may suggest a telework arrangement.

4. The employee and manager will agree on the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency of communication while telecommuting.
5. The employee agrees to be accessible by phone, email, video conferencing and/or such other means as may be necessary within a reasonable time period during the agreed upon work schedule.
6. Any telecommuting arrangement may be discontinued at any time at the request of either the employee or the Appointing Authority.
7. The City will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needed (to include hardware, software, modems, phone, and data lines) for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. Equipment supplied by the Department will be maintained by Seattle IT. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the City, will be maintained by the employee. Employees shall not be required to purchase their own equipment.
8. The City accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The City reserves the right to determine appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the department is to be used for business purposes only. The employee shall sign an inventory of all office property and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon separation of employment all City property will be returned to the department, unless other arrangements have been made.
9. Consistent with Seattle IT policy expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary, sensitive, and confidential information accessible from their home office. This includes use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other actions appropriate for the job and the environment.
10. Employees using their own equipment to conduct City business will be expected to comply with City recordkeeping requirements and provide responsive records to public disclosure requests.
11. Employees will establish an appropriate work environment for work purposes. The City will not be responsible for costs associated with initial setup of the employee's alternative work site such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space. Employees will be offered appropriate assistance in setting up a work station designed for safe work.
12. A designated representative of the appointing authority may visit the employee's alternative worksite to inspect for possible work hazards and suggest modifications. Repeat inspections may occur as prescribed by the Appointing Authority. Injuries sustained by the employee while at the alternative work location and in the course and

scope of their employment may be eligible for coverage under the City’s workers’ compensation benefit program pursuant to RCW Title 51.

13. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries in accordance with the City’s workers’ compensation procedures. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to their alternate worksite.
14. Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to record all hours worked on their timesheets. Hours worked in excess of those specified per day and per workweek, in accordance with state and federal requirements, will require the advance approval of the employee’s supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate discontinuation of the telecommuting agreement, and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Benefits of Alternative Work Arrangements

Alternative Work Arrangements provide benefits to the City, Employee, and Community. Over the course of time, numerous benefits can be realized from alternative work arrangements when they are integrated into an organization’s culture, operating philosophy and processes. Some key benefits include:

City	Employee	Community
Increased Productivity	Improved Work Environment with Fewer Distractions	Decreased Air Pollution
Competitive Recruitment Advantage	Increased Job Satisfaction	Decreased Gas Consumption
Employee Retention	Decreased Stress	Decreased Rush Hour Traffic
Improved Employee Morale	Increased Flexibility	
Decreased Staff Turnover	Decreased Costs Associated with Work and Travel	
Motivate employees and potentially enhance productivity by increasing work/life balance	Reduces time spent commuting or commuting during peak hours	

While the City of Seattle is going through our pilot program, we will learn valuable lessons about the opportunities and barriers we need to address in order to make alternative work arrangements more normative to our culture.

Racial Equity

Alternative Work Accommodations (AWAs) benefit employees as well as the City of Seattle and the communities we serve. Racial [and gender] equity should be major factors in the decision-making processes when approval or disapproval for AWAs are considered. Below are strategies supervisors and managers can use to make AWA approvals more equitable, as well as the metrics the City will use to promote equitable AWA access.

Equity strategies for supervisors and managers:

1. Employees with AWAs should be representative of the department's workforce by race and gender. Work to get to "yes."
2. Think creatively about how employees may be able to use AWAs. This can help to reduce disproportionate impacts on employees of color. For example, employees in administrative support roles are 40 percent women of color at the City. Find ways for this group to work from home or commute at non-peak hours, whenever possible.
3. Employees who have not used AWAs in the past may face technology barriers, such as lack of training in SharePoint or VPN technology. Encourage employees to participate in training around technology. ITD has developed training opportunities which will be rolled out.
4. Encourage employees to share technological resources, such as laptops, when possible.

Equitable Access Metrics:

1. We anticipate analyzing employee participation in AWAs by race, gender, occupational category, and department at the end of the pilot.
2. It is our goal to analyze acceptances and denials of AWAs for racial equity impacts at the completion of the pilot.

Considerations

Management representatives may consider several factors in determining whether to approve or discontinue an AWA.

The following represents some, but not all, factors that management and employees should consider when determining eligibility and type of AWA.

- Management's ability to adequately supervise or oversee the employee, considering the

role of the employee, the employee's reliability and job performance.

- Whether the employee has demonstrated an ability to understand and comply with City policies and procedures.
- Whether job duties require use of certain equipment, access to information or technology or tools that cannot be replicated at a remote site.
- Security concerns.
- The need or desire for face-to-face interaction and in-person coordination of work with other employees.
- Whether in-person interaction with outside colleagues, clients, or customers will promote more effective or efficient job performance.
- Whether the position in question requires the employee to have immediate access to documents or other information located only in the primary workplace.
- Whether the employee's physical presence is required or preferable at normally scheduled meetings or other group meetings.

Presuming the job itself makes sense to be performed through an alternative work arrangement, the following are some general questions to consider:

What types of job tasks may be appropriate, specifically, for remote work or teleworking?

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|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| ✓ Analysis | ✓ Auditing | ✓ Reports |
| ✓ Data Entry | ✓ Drafting | ✓ Research |
| ✓ Project Management | ✓ Email | ✓ Reading & Reviewing |
| ✓ Creating graphics | ✓ Maintaining
databases | ✓ Spreadsheet analysis |
| ✓ Design work | | |
| ✓ Writing | | |

What are some employee characteristics that make teleworking successful?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ Requires minimal supervision | ▪ Ability to adhere to timelines |
| ▪ Requires minimal social interaction | ▪ Knows job goals and objectives |
| ▪ Responsiveness and good communication skills | ▪ Software-based work (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.) |

- Demonstrates a high level of productivity
- Establishes priorities and manages time
- Has a reliable work history
- Likes to work independently
- Well organized
- Schedules and plans ahead

What are some management characteristics that make teleworking successful?

- Has clearly defined work expectations and have communicated them to staff
- Empowers employees
- Encourages open communication
- Manages by results and output

What are the characteristics of location for teleworking that make it most successful?

- Free of distractions and background noise during work time
- Ergonomically appropriate and a environment conducive to safe working
- If needed, private area to have confidential conversations
- City equipment and documents are safe and secure
- Manages by results and output