



PROTOCOL

PROTOCOL - FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

WORKING HOURS

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROTOCOL IS TO RAISE ISSUES IN RESPECT OF FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AND TO PROVIDE EMPLOYERS AND OPERATORS WITH SOME KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN CONSIDERING FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

KEY ELEMENTS

- Employer support and good management
- Balancing the needs of clients with the needs of the operator
- Realistic expectations of all parties
- Provides a choice about how and when an operator works
- not expected to complete the same amount of work in less hours
- Scheduling of meetings so that the operator is able to contribute and attend
- Educate managers of operators who are undertaking flexible working hours
- Develop an organisational culture supportive of diversity in work/life issues

1. PEOPLE

- Provide flexibility to those operators with family or other interests or life pursuits outside of work
- Supported across an organisation so that flexible working hours are accepted as part of the culture of the workplace
- Ability to meet the expectations of the employer, clients and colleagues

2. ORGANISATIONAL/EMPLOYER SUPPORT

- Support to establish flexible working hours that are suitable to both the employer and the operator
- Discuss expectations and strategies
- Transparency with clients and colleagues
- Management of workload so that the operator is

3. HOW TO

Flexible working hours can be arranged in many different ways such as:

- Increasing the span of working hours each day, starting earlier and finishing later so as to work a four day week
- Consideration outside of the typical models of flexibility and thinking about flexibility across an operators lifetime such as early retirement programs and grandparent's leave
- Accrual of working hours to be taken at another time for personal or family matters – an “ hours bank”
- 48/52 is a common flexible working hours agreement that provides the option for an operator to take an additional four weeks' unpaid leave a

year by adjusting their salary to 48 weeks paid over the full 52 weeks

Some practical tips for employers wishing to consider flexible working hours include:

- Review current positions to determine whether flexible working hours can be accommodated
- Understand the objections to flexible working hours
- Negotiate the operator's working hours based on both the needs of the client and the operator
- If necessary the employer can set some core times to be at work and allow the operator to choose their starting and finishing times to suit lifestyle and family commitments
- Operators who are undertaking flexible working hours should be included in training and professional development opportunities and should have the same opportunities for promotion as other operators
- Develop clear policies relating to flexible working hours that include the organisation's position on flexible working hours and the decision making criteria to be applied to requests

4. ADVANTAGES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

- Retention of operators across the generations
- Increased staff loyalty
- Major attraction strategy for recruitment – employers are facing greater competition for skilled staff
- Encourages a positive culture of work/life balance
- Ability of operators to meet obligations and follow interests outside of work
- Improved productivity and morale

5. CHALLENGES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

- Being required to undertake the same workload in less hours – managers should make a conscious effort to provide realistic workloads
- Clients/colleagues may prefer dealing with an operator who works standard hours – this can be addressed with proper management of client expectations and education of staff
- Lack of willingness of partners/managers to encourage flexible working hours – this can be overcome with education and proper management of operators who undertake flexible working hours