

Flexible Working Arrangements

Certain employees who have worked for the same employer for at least 12 months can request flexible working arrangements. Employers are only permitted to refuse these requests on reasonable business grounds.

What are Flexible Working Arrangements?

Examples include:

- Changes to hours of work – e.g. flexible start and finish times or compressed hours.
- Changes to work patterns – e.g. part-time work, job-sharing or flexible rostering.
- Changes to work location – e.g. working from home or another location.

Who can request flexible working arrangements?

Flexible working arrangements can be requested by employees (other than a casual employee) who have worked with the same employer for at least 12 months and:

- Are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is school aged or younger;
- Are a carer under the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*;
- Have a disability;
- Are 55 or older;
- Are experiencing family or domestic violence; or
- Provide care or support to a member of their household or immediate family who requires care and support because of family or domestic violence.

Casual employees can make a request if:

- They have worked on a regular and systematic basis for the same employer for at least 12 months; and
- There is a reasonable expectation of continuing work with the employer on a regular and systematic basis.

How do employees request flexible working arrangements?

All requests should be submitted in writing to your Manager. The written request should detail what changes are being asked for and provide an explanation for the requested changes.

What do employers do with a request?

When receiving a request, the Manager should arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the proposed changes and try to reach an agreement, considering:

- The needs of the employee;
- The consequences for the employee if the changes are not made; and
- The impact on the business including any reasonable grounds for refusing the request.

Managers who receive a request must give a written response within 21 days advising whether the request is granted or refused. A request can only be refused on reasonable business grounds. If a request is refused the written response must include the reasons for the refusal.

What are reasonable business grounds?

Reasonable business grounds can include:

- The requested arrangements are too costly;
- Other employees' working arrangements cannot be changed to accommodate the request;

- It is impractical to change other employees' working arrangements or hire new employees to accommodate the request; and
- The request would result in a significant loss of productivity or have a significant negative impact on customer service.

Employers should also refer to the relevant Award(s) if applicable, as some contain further information on what needs to be included in the written response if a request is refused, or if a different change in working arrangements is agreed upon.



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