



Flexible Work Arrangement – Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is eligible to request a Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA)?

A: All full-time unclassified employees and full-time, non-represented classified employees on all Kent State University campuses may submit a request for a flexible work arrangement. FWA requests for represented employees require further discussion between relevant administrators and union leadership. While not every position will be able to take advantage, units are encouraged to have open dialogues regarding flexible work and integrate it as a standard business practice, where applicable.

Q: Are there any additional eligibility requirements, such as length of employment or performance?

A: A newly hired employee must complete their probationary period, if applicable, before they are eligible to request a flexible work arrangement. They must complete the probationary period successfully and be performing satisfactorily in order to meet eligibility requirements.

Q: What types of flexible work arrangements does Kent State offer?

A: Types of flexible work arrangements offered at Kent State include alternative extended lunch duration, arrival/departure time, and compressed schedule.

Q: How do I request a flexible work arrangement?

A: All employees who would like to request a flexible work arrangement and all supervisors who will review FWA requests must first complete an FWA training session. Once an employee completes the FWA training, they may initiate a request using the Flexible Work Arrangement Request Form, located at <https://www.kent.edu/hr/benefits/flexible-work-arrangement>.

Q: An employee I supervise sent me a request, but our unit has stipulated that all requests must go to our department head. Can I forward the request to the appropriate person?

A: Yes, but you cannot simply forward the email containing the request. You must open the document in DocuSign. Once you have the document open, click on “OTHER ACTIONS” in the top right corner of the platform and then select “Assign to Someone Else”. DocuSign will prompt you to input the name and email of the new signer (e.g. your department head).

Q: If I am eligible and make a request, does that guarantee I will be able to take advantage of an FWA?

A: Submitting a request in no way guarantees the establishment of a flexible work arrangement. All flexible work arrangements are at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Once the supervisor reaches a decision, it is not grievable by the employee. An employee whose request is denied should ask questions to understand the reason for the decision and learn what adjustments may be needed in terms of work or performance, if applicable. The supervisor may set goals for the employee to reach and/or a timeframe to wait before submitting another request. Keep in mind that a flexible work arrangement is not feasible for all positions.

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum duration for FWAs?

A: Flexible work arrangements are not designed for one-time use and should be two weeks or longer in duration. AN FWA may be continuing and remain in place unless the arrangement is determined no longer feasible by the employee/supervisor or replaced by an alternative FWA.

Q: Is there a limit on the number of requests for an FWA an employee may submit?

A: There is no limit to the number of requests an individual may submit, but supervisors are not required to approve each request. Depending on the situation, a supervisor might indicate that frequent requests are disruptive to the business and coverage of the department. While management should strive to accommodate, consideration of getting work done and serving our customers must remain a top priority. Departments may set specific parameters for requests.

Q: If a classified/hourly employee begins an FWA, will the timekeeping system need to be updated?

A: If a classified employee is changing their arrival/departure time or moving to a compressed schedule, their supervisor will need to update the timekeeping system to reflect this change.

Q: Are there instructions available for updating the timekeeping system?

A: Yes, Payroll has a web page with helpful information on Kent State's timekeeping system, including a webinar and supervisor manual at <https://www.kent.edu/payroll/timekeeping>.

Q: Will an FWA result in overtime for classified/hourly staff?

A: Flexible work arrangements must not materially change the duties of any position and must be structured to maintain the equivalence of a full-time work schedule. Use of flex time should not result in overtime for classified staff.

Q: Can I request an FWA to avoid using sick or vacation time?

A: No. Flexible work arrangements are not intended to be used as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, leave as provided for in Chapter 6 of Section 3342 of the Administrative Code. In addition, if an employee is participating in an FWA, any sick or vacation time taken during such arrangement will be deducted based on the FWA in place at the time used.

Q: I am on a compressed schedule in which I work four 10-hour days per week. If I am sick or take a vacation on one of my scheduled days, how many sick or vacation hours will I use?

A: Your sick or vacation time will be deducted based on your work schedule. For example, if you typically work 10 hours on Mondays and take vacation on a Monday, your vacation hours should be deducted by 10 hours for that day.

Q: I am on a compressed schedule in which I work four 10-hour days per week. How does holiday pay work if a holiday lands on one of my scheduled days vs. one of my off days?

A: If the university is closed for an observed holiday, salaried employees will receive pay for the hours they are typically scheduled to work that day. For hourly paid employees, please visit <https://www.kent.edu/hr/benefits/vacation-and-holidays> for an explanation of holiday pay.

Q: How would a university closure affect my schedule or pay if I am on a compressed schedule?

A: For information regarding university delays, closures, and time reporting, please visit <https://www.kent.edu/hr/delays-closings-and-time-reporting-faq>. For information regarding the winter holiday closure, please visit <https://www.kent.edu/hr/holiday-schedule-faqs>.

Q: I am on a compressed schedule in which I work four 10-hour days per week. What if there is a special event/meeting I do not want to miss and it is on my scheduled day off? Can I switch to another day off just for that week without going through the DocuSign process?

A: This is what we would refer to as a “one-off” situation. You would not go through the FWA approval process for this sort of short term/one-off situation. Flexible work arrangements are for schedule changes anticipated to be longer term, two weeks or more in duration. You should be working out short-term requests at the department level, coordinating with your supervisor.

Q: I am on an FWA, but I want to go back to my regular schedule. What should I do?

A: If an employee or his/her supervisor makes a determination that the employee should return to the customary schedule for his/her position, an FWA Termination form must be completed in DocuSign to establish a record of this change. The supervisor will need to update the timekeeping system to reflect the return to the customary schedule if classified, hourly staff.

Q: I am on an FWA, but I want to request a different arrangement. What should I do?

A: If an employee wants to switch to a flexible work schedule differing from their current arrangement, they must request a new FWA and indicate on the form that the new arrangement will replace all prior FWAs.

Q: Does KSU’s Flexible Work Arrangement policy include a telecommuting/work from home option?

A: No, telecommuting is not included as part of this policy. Kent State University does not have a telecommuting policy and supervisors do not have the authority to allow an employee to work from home on an ongoing or regular basis (e.g. a pre-defined number of days per week).

Q: I supervise an hourly employee who wants to switch from a 60-minute lunch to a 30-minute lunch. I am updating the timekeeping system but do not see a way to change their lunch break to 30 min. What should I do?

A: Supervisors can make changes to daily arrival and departure times for hourly employees they supervise (i.e. 7:30 am to 4:30 pm). To shorten a lunch break, Payroll will have to make this change in the timekeeping system. After you have made all the changes you can, please contact payroll@kent.edu or 330-672-8640 to request that they change the duration of the lunch break.

Q: How can a large department keep track of various flexible schedules within the unit?

A: There are numerous ways you can keep track of employee's schedules, including, but not limited to: asking everyone to set their correct workdays and times within Outlook; creating a departmental shared Outlook calendar; posting something physical with everyone's schedule (i.e. a white board); and/or asking individuals to include their schedule in their email signature.

Q: Can I forward an FWA Request Form to a different approver?

A: Yes, but you must do this from within the DocuSign platform. You cannot simply forward the email. While you have a request form open within the DocuSign platform, click on "Other Actions". Then select "Assign to Someone Else". You will then be prompted to enter in the new approver's name and email address, as well as the reasoning for changing signing responsibility.

Q: Can I save my progress on an FWA form in DocuSign and finish filling it out later?

A: Yes, but you must click on "Finish Later" under "Other Actions" within the DocuSign platform while you have the form open in order for it to save your progress. See question and answer below if you need instructions for returning to your document.

Q: Is there a way to view FWA forms other than accessing them via email?

A: Yes, you can login to the DocuSign platform to view and track FWA requests and terminations. To do so, follow these instructions:

- Navigate to the DocuSign webpage at <https://www.docusign.com> and select "Log In"
- Enter your full email address (including @kent.edu). This will redirect you to KSU's login page
- Enter your Kent State username (you do not need to include @kent.edu)
- On the left, under "Overview", you can access all active and completed documents for which you are a requestor or approver. Click on a category to find and view your documents

Q: This policy allows employees to extend their lunch duration. Can employees shorten their lunch duration or forgo a lunch break?

A: Employees may request to shorten their lunch break, but all FWAs must include at least a 30-minute lunch break for a workday of 6 or more hours. Skipping a lunch break is not permitted as part of a regular schedule.