

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

Document Title: Flexible Working Arrangements

Document Type: Instruction

Character: Compliance with this instruction is **mandatory**

Control No.: IN/257

Document Owner: HRM

Status: Active

Date of Entry into Force: 13 December 2017

Replaces – *for Archive Replaced by:*

IN/146 – IOM Policy on Home Based Work

IN/147 – A Policy in Support of Work/Family Responsibilities

Summary: This instruction sets out conditions and procedures relating to flexible working arrangements.

Keywords: work-life balance, flexible working hours, staggered working hours, variable schedule, telecommuting, compressed working schedule, scheduled break for external learning activities, flexible working arrangements

Location: <https://intranetportal/Pages/ControlNo.aspx?controlNo=IN/00257>

Initiated: HRM

Coordinated: LEG, SAC

Authorized: ODG

Distribution: All Missions Worldwide, All Departments at HQ

INSTRUCTION



IOM • OIM

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

INSTRUCTION NO. 257

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This instruction sets out the conditions and procedures for flexible working arrangements at IOM, as described in paragraph 4.2 below. The aim of these arrangements is to support IOM staff members in managing their different responsibilities in and outside the Organization, and to facilitate a strengthened positive and inclusive working environment, where all staff can work to the best of their abilities. IOM is committed to providing working conditions that enable staff members to achieve work-life balance, while fulfilling the needs of the Organization, which may include putting in place alternative working modalities following an emergency situation.
- 1.2 Flexible working arrangements are not a right or entitlement. All flexible working arrangements must take into account operational and service requirements, and the needs of IOM's partners and beneficiaries. Not all positions and situations lend themselves to all flexible arrangement modalities.
- 1.3 Managers and staff members are encouraged to consider how work can be undertaken in different ways to produce the highest standard of results. In reviewing requests for flexible working arrangements, consideration shall be given to the staff member's personal circumstances.
- 1.4 This instruction applies to staff members holding a regular, fixed term or special short-term contract. It does not apply to staff members on a daily contract, non-staff employees such as interns and consultants, or third-party personnel such as employees of a personnel service provider, except as otherwise provided in this instruction.
- 1.5 This instruction only covers flexible working arrangements, and does not include in its scope part-time employment, which may also be requested by staff members in accordance with IN/258: Part-time Employment, in conjunction with, or independently of, flexible working arrangements.

2. Instructions Superseded

- 2.1 This instruction cancels and supersedes instructions IN/146 and IN/147.

3. Effective Date

- 3.1 This instruction is effective 13 December 2017.

4. General Provisions

- 4.1 All staff members of the Organization, except those on a daily contract, are eligible to request flexible working arrangements, including those working part-time.
- 4.2 The following are the possible flexible working arrangements that IOM staff members may request:

- (a) Flexible working hours
 - (b) Telecommuting
 - (c) Compressed work schedule
 - (d) Scheduled break for external learning activities.
- 4.3 Multiple flexible working arrangements may be implemented concurrently.
- 4.4 Flexible working arrangements shall be for a fixed period of time, with a maximum duration of one year or until the end of the staff member's contract, whichever is sooner. They may be extended through mutual agreement between the staff member and his/her supervisor with the same maximum duration of one year per extension.
- 4.5 All new staff members will be made aware of available flexible working arrangements as part of the induction process.
- 4.6 Productivity and quality of outputs must be maintained at the same level, or enhanced, following the introduction of flexible working arrangements. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that staff members on a flexible working arrangement meet exigencies of service and professional standards.
- 4.7 Supervisors retain the discretion not to approve, to suspend or to cancel these arrangements in accordance with the procedures set out in section 9 of this instruction, for example due to a change in demands and requirements during certain periods, or any demonstrated negative impact of the arrangement on productivity or quality of work. There may be certain periods in an office work cycle during which some flexible working arrangements are more suitable than others. Supervisors shall use their discretion in reviewing requests to optimize the interests of both the staff member and IOM.
- 4.8 IOM shall incur no extra costs as a result of the approval and/or cancellation of a flexible working arrangement, except as otherwise provided in this instruction.
- 4.9 A flexible working arrangement does not affect the definition of a working day in the context of leave administration. In order to take one day off work, a staff member must apply for one day of leave regardless of the working hours assigned for the day, except for the designated half-day off in a compressed working schedule as defined in section 7 below.

5. Flexible Working Hours (“Staggered Working Hours” and “Variable Schedule”)

- 5.1 Flexible working hour arrangements as set out in this section are only applicable at a duty station with a fixed standard working schedule (i.e. with fixed starting and ending times for each working day for all staff members) in accordance with IN/256: Office Attendance.¹
- 5.2 Two types of flexible working hours are possible:
- (a) **Staggered working hours.** A staff member may deviate from the fixed standard working schedule of the duty station, but must adhere to the starting and ending times for each day, agreed to with his/her supervisor. The number of working hours per day may vary (e.g. 7am to 5pm on Monday; 8am to 6pm on Tuesday, etc.), as long as the weekly total is 40 hours (for a full-time worker). The agreed starting and ending times are fixed until the end date of the agreement.

¹ Staff members at a duty station with a flexible standard working schedule do not need individual authorization to work flexible hours.

- (b) **Variable schedule.** A staff member may complete his/her required weekly working hours at any time during the working week, without fixed starting or ending times. The staff member may not accrue and carry over credits or debits of hours into another week. The supervisor may require the staff member to be on duty during certain hours of the day (for example from 9:30 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 16:00), and may define certain hours of the day during which the staff member is allowed to work (for example anytime from 7:00 to 20:00).
- 5.3 A staff member on a flexible working hours schedule must take a meal break of a minimum of 30 minutes on any day in which s/he works six hours or more. Meal breaks during a working day do not count towards the number of working hours.
- 5.4 A staff member on a variable schedule must record hours worked on the Monthly Attendance Sheet (Annex I) and submit it each month to the supervisor, who must verify and retain all the records. At a duty station with its own mechanism for managing office attendance, the Sheet may be replaced by the attendance records from such mechanism.

6. Telecommuting

- 6.1 Telecommuting allows a staff member to perform part or all of his/her regular work schedule in an alternative work site away from the office (e.g. at home, in another IOM office or in another country). A telecommuting arrangement may be for up to two days per week subject to agreement between the staff member and his/her supervisor and dependent on exigencies of service. Any temporary arrangement which involves telecommuting for more than two days a week for exceptional reasons may only be approved for one month at a time.
- 6.2 Telecommuting shall be authorized only when all of the following conditions are met:
- (a) The nature of the work allows for it to be undertaken away from the office;
 - (b) An individual work plan is established with specific measurable outputs to be achieved by the staff member within fixed time-frames; and
 - (c) The work of the staff member can easily be integrated with the work of colleagues at the office.
- 6.3 Telecommuting is not intended to serve as a substitute for child or adult care. A staff member may not be engaged in the primary care of any children or adults during the agreed working hours while telecommuting.

General conditions

- 6.4 A telecommuting arrangement does not change the benefits and entitlements of the staff member, except as otherwise provided in this section.
- 6.5 While telecommuting, the staff member must be reachable by telephone and email or video conferencing software, and is expected to work the full number of working hours for the day. If a telecommuting arrangement involves any day on which the staff member spends some of the working hours at the office, and others away from office, commuting time from/to the office shall not count as working time.
- 6.6 Telecommuting requires the staff member to have his/her own equipment, including computer hardware, software, internet connection and communication tools to complete his/her work assignments. IOM will provide access to the IOM email network, Outlook, intranet and PRISM as necessary. The staff member is responsible for all telecommunication costs related to the maintenance of a telecommuting arrangement, and for protecting his/her own computers

against viruses. IOM is not responsible for the cost of equipment, repair or service of computers not owned by IOM.

- 6.7 Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, subject to needs and availability of equipment already owned by IOM, the supervisor may provide the staff member on a telecommuting arrangement with a laptop computer, in lieu of a desktop computer, to facilitate telecommuting. In the event that a laptop computer is provided, it must be password protected and returned by the staff member at the end of the arrangement. For any repair or service of a computer assigned for telecommuting, it must be brought back to the office at the expense of the staff member.
- 6.8 A staff member on a telecommuting arrangement on a full-time basis may not be assigned a desk or office space during the period of such arrangement.
- 6.9 Entitlement to, and administration of, annual and sick leave shall not be affected by a telecommuting arrangement.
- 6.10 The staff member must abide by IN/138: IOM Data Protection Principles, as well as the same security provisions concerning IOM data/information that apply to staff members who work in the office.
- 6.11 While on a telecommuting arrangement, the staff member will continue to be covered by the Organization's insurance for occupational accidents and illnesses in accordance with IN/215: Incapacity and Partial Disability Insurance (IPDI) or IN/95: Compensation Plan (CP), as applicable. Any claim for an occupational accident/illness while telecommuting must be supported by evidence that the accident/illness is occupational.

Travel

- 6.12 Any travel costs incurred by a telecommuting arrangement shall be borne by the staff member, except as provided in the following paragraph.
- 6.13 The supervisor of the staff member on a telecommuting arrangement may request the staff member to report to the office due to specific work exigencies on specific days. In such cases, the supervisor should give reasonable advance notice to the staff member, and the travel cost to and from the duty station shall be covered by the Organization unless the staff member is telecommuting at a location within commuting distance of the duty station or as otherwise agreed as a condition of the arrangement. No DSA will be provided for the staff member's travel to the duty station.
- 6.14 The cost of all official travel shall be calculated on the basis of travel from the telecommuting site, unless as otherwise agreed as a condition of the arrangement.

Entitlements for staff members in the Professional category

- 6.15 Regardless of the location of the work site, the post adjustment will be based on the applicable rate of the staff member's official duty station.
- 6.16 A staff member shall cease to accrue service time toward rest and recuperation travel (R&R) on the first day of his/her telecommuting arrangement, unless as otherwise agreed as a condition of the arrangement.
- 6.17 A staff member who is entitled to receive danger pay shall only be paid danger pay for the days of work performed at the duty station, in accordance with Annex 5: Danger Pay to the Unified Staff Rules.

- 6.18 Rental subsidy shall only be paid for accommodation at the duty station and shall not be affected by a telecommuting arrangement.
- 6.19 Repatriation grant remains applicable even if a staff member is separated during a remote telecommuting arrangement at his/her designated home station. The staff member will also accrue service time towards repatriation grant, except during the periods when s/he works at his/her designated home station on a full-time basis.
- 6.20 A staff member who is entitled to non-family service allowance shall continue to receive it except during the periods when s/he resides with his/her family members outside the duty station.

Entitlements for staff members in the GS category including National Officers

- 6.21 Entitlements for staff members in the GS category including National Officers shall not be affected by a telecommuting arrangement, except for danger pay which shall be prorated in accordance with paragraph 6.17.
- 6.22 A staff member in the GS category should not be asked to work overtime while s/he is performing work away from office on a telecommuting arrangement, except in cases of unforeseen events or emergencies.

Rotation and time-in-post requirement

- 6.23 The length of service during a telecommuting arrangement shall count fully for the purposes of rotation as well as time-in-post requirements as per IN/233: Recruitment for Graded Positions (VN and SVN).

7. Compressed Working Schedule

- 7.1 A compressed working schedule permits a staff member to increase the number of hours worked per day in order to avail of a day or half a day off on a regular basis.
- 7.2 Under a compressed working schedule, the number of hours that would normally have been worked during a period of ten working days is compressed into nine days (to avail of a full day off), or into nine and a half days (to avail of a half day off). This requires a staff member to extend his/her working hours during the nine or nine and a half days to cover the hours that would have been worked on the tenth day. The redistribution of normal working hours provides the staff member with the opportunity to take one day or half a day off as applicable at the end of the period of nine consecutive working days. The staff member and the supervisor should come to an agreement on the day or half day that will be taken off in advance.

General conditions

- 7.3 A staff member on a compressed working schedule arrangement must complete the required working hours during office hours (at a duty station with a flexible standard working schedule) or during the hours agreed with his/her supervisor in advance (at a duty station with a fixed standard working schedule).
- 7.4 The designated day or half-day off under this option cannot normally be carried forward or accumulated. However, if due to unforeseen events or emergencies the staff member is required to come to work on the designated day or half-day off, the number of hours worked on the designated day or half-day off will be compensated for on other days agreed upon between the staff member and the supervisor, normally within the following two weeks.

- 7.5 If the designated day or half-day off falls on an official holiday observed by the Organization, the staff member may take the designated day or half-day off on another day agreed upon between the staff member and the supervisor, normally within the following two weeks.
- 7.6 If a staff member is sick on the designated day or half-day off, that day or half-day may be charged to sick leave in accordance with IN/151: Sick Leave Administration. In this case, the staff member may take the designated day or half-day off on a different day in consultation with the supervisor, normally within the following two weeks.

8. Scheduled Break for External Learning Activities

- 8.1 A staff member who wishes to attend courses relevant to his/her professional development at a university or another learning institution outside IOM may request to be away from work, including during core hours, up to six hours per week. This arrangement can be requested independently or in conjunction with any study leave entitlements.
- 8.2 All breaks for external learning activities must follow a fixed schedule for a specified period. The hours spent away from work during a particular week must be made up at a time agreed to between the supervisor and staff member, normally within the following two weeks.
- 8.3 A staff member interested in undertaking a course of study should discuss his/her request with his/her supervisor before making any commitment.

9. Procedures

- 9.1 To request a flexible working arrangement, a staff member should, as the first step, discuss the proposal with his/her supervisor to ensure that the arrangement is compatible with the Organization's operational needs, will not result in decreased productivity or quality of outputs, and will not put additional burden on other colleagues. The supervisor is encouraged to explore and evaluate feasible flexible working arrangements jointly with the staff member.
- 9.2 If a flexible working arrangement is approved by the supervisor, the staff member and the supervisor must jointly complete the Flexible Working Arrangement Request Form (Annex II, hereafter the "Request Form") with the required details for each type of arrangement. The staff member shall submit the Request Form to the Chief of Mission/Head of Office in Country Offices, Regional Director in Regional Offices, Director/Head in Administrative Centres, or the Director at Headquarters Department for his/her final approval. The staff member must communicate the approved arrangement to MHRO (if in the Professional Category or if in the General Service category in Switzerland) or to the local HR focal point (if in the General Service category including National Officers in all other locations) for action.
- 9.3 If the requested flexible working arrangement is not approved by the supervisor, he/she must explain the reasons in person to the staff member. The staff member may request his/her second supervisor or a supervisor's supervisor as applicable to review the denial. S/he shall discuss and explore the possible arrangements with the supervisor and the staff member as necessary, and may advise the supervisor on a suitable arrangement.
- 9.4 The supervisor and the staff member should jointly review the effectiveness of the arrangement at least once every three months, in addition to the regular performance evaluation. The supervisor and the staff member should discuss any issues, and modify the modalities of the arrangement as necessary to maintain the flexible working arrangement.
- 9.5 An incoming supervisor has the right to re-examine the existing arrangements. Any decision to alter an existing arrangement should be made upon consultation with the staff member. If a staff member moves, through appointment, transfer or any other means, to a new duty station or

a new position within the same duty station, s/he will have to initiate a new request for a flexible working arrangement compatible with his/her new tasks.

- 9.6 A minimum of one month notice shall normally be given for terminating a flexible working arrangement, whether initiated by the staff member or the Organization. A shorter notice period of a minimum of three days may be permitted when the discontinuation is due to negative impact on the productivity or quality of work or unforeseen personal emergencies, and the shorter notice period is approved by the Chief of Mission/Head of Office in Country Offices, Regional Director in Regional Offices, Director/Head in Administrative Centres, or the Director at Headquarters Department.

10. Annexes

- i) Monthly Attendance Sheet
- ii) Flexible Working Arrangement Request Form