

For: FSA National Office Nonbargaining Unit Employees and All RMA Nonbargaining Unit Employees

Work Schedule Alternatives for FSA National Office Nonbargaining Unit Employees and All RMA Nonbargaining Unit Employees

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

There are 4 work schedule choices for FSA National Office nonbargaining unit employees and RMA nonbargaining unit employees nationwide. These work schedule choices are:

- standard
- variable day
- compressed (CWS) 5/4/9 and 4/10
- maxiflex.

Note: Bargaining unit employees are covered by their Union Agreement.

B Purpose

This notice:

- informs employees about work schedule choices
- requires employees who want to establish or change work schedules to complete FFAS-956 (Exhibit 1)
- informs timekeepers about mandatory alternative work schedule (AWS) coding that must be correctly input on each employee's Time and Attendance (T&A) header screen in the STAR WEB T&A system.

<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>May 1, 2007</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>All FSA National Office nonbargaining unit employees and All RMA nonbargaining unit employees</p>
--	---

Notice PM-2542

2 Work Schedule Alternatives

A Work Schedule Choices

Work schedule choices are as follows:

- standard, which is a fixed work schedule
- CWS 5/4/9 and 4/10, which are fixed work schedules
- variable day, which is a flexible work schedule
- maxiflex, which is a flexible work schedule.

B Policy for Work Schedule Changes

Employee’s working a flexible work schedule (maxiflex or variable), that want to change to a fixed work schedule (CWS or standard), or vice versa, may do so **only** 1 time per calendar year, except under special circumstances as approved by the supervisor.

Changes to established arrival and departure times, may be made as necessary, as long as the request is submitted to the immediate supervisor by the deadline in subparagraph 5 A.

3 Workday Hours

A Employees Working a Flexible Work Schedule

For employees working a flexible maxiflex or variable day work schedule, their workday hours are from 6:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Each workday is made up of core time and flexible time bands. Full-time (FT) employees must be at work or on leave during core hours.

Morning Flexible Time Band	Core Time	Afternoon Flexible Time Band
6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.	9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

B Employees Working a Fixed Work Schedule

For employees working a fixed CWS or standard tour, their workday hours are from 6:30 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Each workday is made up of core time and arrival and departure time bands. FT employees must be at work or on leave during core hours. Employees must select an arrival and departure time that will be the same for every day of the week.

Morning Arrival Time Band (Same time for every day.)	Core Time	Afternoon Departure Time Band (Same time for every day.)
6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.	9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

3 Workday Hours (Continued)

C Official Work Hours

Official office hours for employees are from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday.

D Lunch Breaks

Lunch breaks shall be taken between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Supervisors may not require employees to work more than 6 hours without a lunch break. All daily work schedules, in excess of 6 hours, **must** include a minimum 30-minute unpaid lunch break in addition to the daily work hours.

Note: Employees working a flexible work schedule may take advantage of “flexilunch”.
See subparagraph E

E Flexilunch

Employees working maxiflex or a variable day work schedule may, with advance supervisory approval, extend their lunch break within the lunch band on any given workday, but they must adjust their arrival and/or departure an equivalent amount of time that day.

Notice PM-2542

4 Work Schedule Descriptions

A Approved Work Schedule Choices

The following table describes each work schedule choice.

Work Schedule	Explanation
Standard (fixed)	FT employees work an 8-hour workday, 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hours will be fixed from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. • Nonworkday: Ineligible. • Glide Time: Ineligible. • Credit Hours: Ineligible. • Flexilunch: Ineligible. • Holiday Pay: Maximum is 8 hours.
Compressed (fixed)	
CWS 5/4/9	FT employees work eight 9-hour workdays and one 8-hour workday. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival and departure times each workday are fixed, not flexible. • Leave must be taken for a late arrival or early departure from work. • Nonworkday: 1 nonworkday each pay period. • Glide Time: Ineligible. • Credit Hours: Ineligible. • Flexilunch: Ineligible. • Holiday Pay: Equals scheduled work hours on holiday or in-lieu-of holiday (8 or 9 hours).
CWS 4/10	FT employees work four 10-hour workdays. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival and departure times each workday are fixed, not flexible. • Leave must be taken for a late arrival or early departure from work. • Nonworkday: 1 nonworkday each workweek. • Glide Time: Ineligible. • Credit Hours: Ineligible. • Flexilunch: Ineligible. • Holiday Pay: Equals scheduled work hours on holiday or in-lieu-of holiday (10 hours).

Notice PM-2542

4 Work Schedule Descriptions (Continued)

A Approved Work Schedule Choices (Continued)

Work Schedule	Explanation
<p>Variable Day (flexible)</p>	<p>FT employees must work 10 workdays per pay period, Monday through Friday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT employees shall work no less than 6 hours or more than 10 hours on a given workday, excluding credit hours. • FT employees must be at work or take leave during core hours. • Nonworkday: Ineligible. • Glide Time: Can vary daily up to 2 1/2 hours between 6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. • Credit Hours: May be earned in 1/4 increments. • Flexilunch: Is allowed. • Holiday Pay: Maximum is 8 hours.
<p>Maxiflex (flexible)</p>	<p>FT employees must work an 80-hour pay period on 10 or fewer workdays per pay period, Monday through Friday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT shall work no less than 6 hours or more than 10 hours on a given workday, excluding credit hours. • FT employees must be at work or take leave during core hours on scheduled workdays, except for the last day of the schedule once the 80-hour requirement is met. • Employee must establish daily arrival and departure times. Employee must establish number of hours to be worked for each workday. • Nonworkdays: Are allowed. • Glide Time: Arrival time may glide up to 30 minutes earlier or later than employee's established arrival time, as long as arrival occurs no earlier than 6:30 a.m. and no later than 9 a.m., and provided departure time is adjusted an equivalent amount of time that same workday on a daily basis. • Credit Hours: May be earned in 1/4 hour increments. • Flexilunch: Is allowed. • Holiday Pay: Maximum is 8 hours. <p>Note: Schedules emulating a 5/4/9 or 4/10 work schedule may be worked under maxiflex, but holiday pay is limited to 8 hours. See paragraph 7 for more details on holiday regulations.</p>

5 Action Required to Change Work Schedules

A Requesting a Work Schedule Change

Employees who want to make a temporary or permanent change to their current work schedule must:

- complete FFAS-956
- submit the request to their immediate supervisor by COB on the Tuesday before the beginning of the requested effective pay period.

FT employees must account for an 80-hour pay period. All requests for a work schedule change must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor before the employee may begin a new work schedule.

Important: Employee's wanting to change from a flexible work schedule (maxiflex or variable) to a fixed work schedule (CWS or standard), or vice versa, may do so **only** 1 time per calendar year, except under special circumstances as approved by the supervisor.

B Approval of Work Schedule Changes

Supervisors, or their designee, shall approve or deny an employee's work schedule change request by COB on the Wednesday before the beginning of the requested effective pay period. If the request is denied, then the supervisor shall record the reason for denial on FFAS-956, item 15.

Note: In the absence of an approved FFAS-956, new employees will be put on the standard work schedule.

C Supervisory Considerations

Supervisory personnel may deny, revoke, or temporarily suspend an employee's AWS when the mission of the Agency is in jeopardy or for a work-related reason, like:

- critical time sensitive work requirement
- inadequate office coverage during official work hours
- work unit's or Agency's mission would be unduly delayed, interrupted, or could not be accomplished
- the employee is abusing his or her approved work schedule.

Notice PM-2542

5 Action Required to Change Work Schedules (Continued)

D Work Schedule Conflicts

When scheduling conflicts arise, employees shall be allowed to resolve the conflict among themselves. If no agreement can be made between the parties involved by noon on the Thursday before the beginning of the requested pay period, the supervisor shall make a determination by COB on Thursday and seniority shall prevail based on service computation date for leave.

6 Credit Hours, Overtime, and Compensatory Time

A Earning and Using Credit Hours

Credit hours:

- may be earned by employees who work a variable day or maxiflex work schedule
- are hours of work performed in excess of an employee's basic work requirement or established workday

Note: The condition for working credit hours is based on the availability of appropriate work. Supervisors reserve the right to determine that appropriate work is available.

- are to be worked at the discretion of the employee and cannot be ordered or directed by a management official, but do require prior supervisory approval
- may only be earned between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- are limited to earning no more than 1 hour per workday and no more than 10 hours per pay period
- cannot be earned on nonworkdays, Saturday, Sunday, or holidays
- are earned and used in 1/4 hour increments
- may be earned and used in the same pay period, but must be earned before use
- must be approved in advance of being used on OPM Form 71

Note: To use credit hours, on OPM Form 71, check "Other Paid Absence", and write "credit hours used" in the "Remarks" section.

6 Credit Hours, Overtime, and Compensatory Time (Continued)

A Earning and Using Credit Hours (Continued)

- are limited to a carryover total at the end of the pay period of 24 hours

Note: Any credit hours in excess of the 24-hour limit, at the end of the pay period, will be forfeited.

- unused at the time of separation or retirement will be paid to the employee at the applicable hourly pay rate in effect at the time of separation or retirement
- may not be earned by Senior Executive Service (SES) employees.

B Overtime and Compensatory Time

The following hours are eligible for overtime or compensatory time, but **must** be requested and/or approved by the employee's immediate supervisor, when an employee:

- is ordered or directed by a management official to work hours in excess of their established workday
- requests to work hours in excess of their established workday
- works on their nonworkday, Saturday, or Sunday
- do not exceed the statutory limit (cannot pay or grant if over GS-15/10 pay).

C Compensatory Time for Travel

Employees (excluding SES, Senior Foreign Service (SFS), and WG employees) are eligible to receive compensatory time while in travel status. Travel must be for work purposes and must be approved by an authorized agency official or authorized under agency policies. Travel status is the time an employee actually spends traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station or between two temporary duty stations, and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel. Time spent at a temporary duty station between arrival and departure is not time in a travel status. "Usual waiting time" is included in travel status. Usual waiting time is the time airline travelers are required to arrive at the airport (that is 1 or 2 hours) before the scheduled departure time.

Timekeepers must track and manage compensatory time off for travel separately from other forms of compensatory time off.

6 Credit Hours, Overtime, and Compensatory Time (Continued)

C Compensatory Time for Travel (Continued)

Accrued compensatory time off for travel must be used within 26 pay periods after the pay period during which it was credited. If an employee fails to use the compensatory time off for travel within 26 pay periods after it was credited, then they will forfeit the compensatory time off.

Employees may not receive payment under any circumstances for any unused compensatory time off for travel they earn.

Note: See 32-PM for guidance on overtime and compensatory time entitlements.

7 Holiday Entitlements

A Holiday Entitlements for Flexible Work Schedules

5 U.S.C. 6124 states that employees who work a flexible work schedule (maxiflex or variable) are only entitled to 8 hours of holiday pay for Federal holidays, in-lieu-of holidays, or a day excused by Executive Order, unless otherwise defined in the Executive Order.

B Holiday Options for Flexible Work Schedules

When a Federal holiday or in-lieu-of holiday falls on an established workday of more than 8 hours, an employee working a flexible variable day or maxiflex work schedule may choose 1 of the following holiday options:

- request a temporary change to their work schedule so that 8 hours are scheduled on the holiday or in-lieu-of holiday and make-up the extra hours on another day within the same pay period in order to meet their weekly or biweekly work requirement
- use annual leave, compensatory time, credit hours, time-off award, or LWOP for the 1 or 2 extra hours.

Note: Employees who work on a Federal holiday or in-lieu-of holiday are entitled to holiday pay. They cannot earn compensatory time.

C Holiday Entitlements for Fixed Work Schedules

Employees who work a fixed work schedule (CWS or standard) are entitled to holiday pay for the number of hours they are scheduled to work on a day designated as a Federal holiday, in-lieu-of holiday, or day excused by Executive Order, unless otherwise defined in the Executive Order.

Note: Supervisors and timekeepers may refer to the employee's approved FFAS-956 for scheduled work hours of 8, 9, or 10 that fall on a holiday.

8 Other Work Schedule Information

A Reminder of Employee Responsibilities for FSA-958

Employees are reminded to record their daily attendance and leave information on FSA-958 in a correct and timely manner. Each employee shall:

- on a daily basis record their:
 - arrival and departure times
 - overtime and compensatory time
 - credit hours
- calculate and enter their work and leave hours in the top portion of FSA-958
- calculate week 1 and week 2 total hours
- sign and date
- submit to timekeeper no later than noon on the final Friday of the pay period, unless earlier request is made (with any required documentation, such as leave slips, medical certifications, jury duty summons's, etc.).

B Nonworkdays

Employees should use the term “nonworkday” to describe an established or scheduled day off.

C Training, Witness Service, or Jury Duty

When jury duty, witness service, or training is canceled or an employee is excused by the courts before the end of their established workday and a substantial portion of their workday remains, the employee is expected to return to work or request leave for the balance of their workday.

Substantial portion of the workday means 2 or more hours. When the training is given at the employee's official worksite, the employee will report back to work immediately.

Notice PM-2542

9 Timekeeper Action (Continued)

A Employee Header Screen Record (Continued)

Timekeepers must code AWS in each person's STAR WEB T&A header screen correctly for the type of work schedule being worked by the employee. AWS code is critical to the proper recording of leave and T&A information at NFC.

AWS codes are listed in the following table.

IF the employee's work schedule is...	THEN in the AWS code box...
standard	leave blank.
CWS 4/10	ENTER "3".
CWS 5/4/9	ENTER "5".
variable day	ENTER "7".
maxiflex	ENTER "8".

Notes: Timekeepers shall check AWS codes for all employees in your T&A group or groups, as soon as possible.

The AWS code must be changed when an employee changes their work schedule.

B Timekeeper Responsibilities for FSA-958

Timekeepers shall verify the employee's calculations on FSA-958 at the end of the pay period, initial, and forward with OPM Form 71's to the immediate supervisor for approval before transmitting data to NFC.

10 Non-FT Employees

A Part-Time and Intermittent Employees

All part-time and intermittent employees who work a minimum of 16 hours per pay period are:

- covered by this subparagraph
- all considered to be on a maxiflex work schedule.

Part-time and intermittent employees:

- are eligible to earn credit hours only after working 80 regular hours in a pay period
- are eligible to earn overtime and compensatory time only after working 80 regular hours in a pay period
- have no pay entitlement when a holiday falls on their scheduled nonworkdays and there are no in-lieu-of holiday entitlements
- are **not** eligible for holiday pay when not scheduled to work on the day before or after a holiday, even if normally scheduled to work on the day of the week of the holiday

Example: Employee works on Monday that is a holiday. The employee **must** be scheduled to work on both the previous Friday and the subsequent Tuesday to be eligible for holiday pay. Otherwise, employee is **not** eligible for holiday pay.

- will complete an FFAS-956 anytime a change in work schedule is necessary
- must schedule their duty day between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Note: Core hour rules do not apply to part-time or intermittent employees.

11 Forms

A Form Web Sites

FFAS-956 is available on the FFAS Intranet at <http://165.221.16.90/dam/ffasforms/forms.html>.

FFAS-956, FSA and RMA Work Schedule Request (All Offices)

The following is an example of FFAS-956.

This form is available electronically.

FFAS-956 (05-24-06)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency	
FSA AND RMA WORK SCHEDULE REQUEST (All Offices)		PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT Collection of your Social Security Number is authorized by Executive Order 9397 and will be used solely for the purpose of positive identification. Furnishing this information is voluntary.	
PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION			
1. Employee's Name		2. Social Security Number	3. Division, Branch, and Section/Field Office
4. Type of request? Permanent (more than 2 PP's) <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/>		5. If temporary, enter Pay Period to return to current work schedule.	
6. Effective Pay Period of Requested Change			
7. Employment Status: FT <input type="checkbox"/> PT <input type="checkbox"/>			
PART B - CURRENT WORK SCHEDULE			
8. WORK SCHEDULE TYPE			
<input type="checkbox"/> Maxiflex - 80 hour pay period of 10 or fewer workdays. <input type="checkbox"/> CWS 5/4/9 - 80 hour pay period of eight 9-hour workdays plus one 8-hour workday. <input type="checkbox"/> CWS 4/10 - 80 hour pay period of four 10-hour workdays per week. <input type="checkbox"/> Variable Day - 40 hours per week and 10 workdays per pay period. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard - 40 hours per week and 10 workdays per pay period.			
9. WORK SCHEDULE DAYS (Enter "OFF" for Maxiflex or CWS nonworkday(s))			
		WEEK ONE WEEK TWO	
		MON TUE WED THU FRI MON TUE WED THU FRI	
Arrival Time			
Depart. Time			
Hours			
		TOTAL PP HOURS	
PART C - REQUESTED WORK SCHEDULE			
10. WORK SCHEDULE TYPE			
<input type="checkbox"/> Maxiflex - 80 hour pay period of 10 or fewer workdays. <input type="checkbox"/> CWS 5/4/9 - 80 hour pay period of eight 9-hour workdays plus one 8-hour workday. <input type="checkbox"/> CWS 4/10 - 80 hour pay period of four 10-hour workdays per week. <input type="checkbox"/> Variable Day - 40 hours per week and 10 workdays per pay period. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard - 40 hours per week and 10 workdays per pay period.			
11. WORK SCHEDULE DAYS (Enter "OFF" for Maxiflex or CWS nonworkday(s))			
		WEEK ONE WEEK TWO	
		MON TUE WED THU FRI MON TUE WED THU FRI	
Arrival Time			
Depart. Time			
Hours			
		TOTAL PP HOURS	
Length of Workday			
6 6 ¼ 6 ½ 6 ¾ 7 7 ¼ 7 ½ 7 ¾ 8 8 ¼ 8 ½ 8 ¾ 9 9 ¼ 9 ½ 9 ¾ 10			
Arrival Time (AM) Departure Time (PM)			
6:30 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15			
6:45 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15			
7:00 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30			
7:15 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45			
7:30 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00			
7:45 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15			
8:00 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15 6:30			
8:15 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15 6:30			
8:30 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15 6:30			
8:45 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15 6:30			
9:00 3:30 3:45 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45 6:00 6:15 6:30			
12. Employee's Signature		Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	13. Received by Timekeeper (Initials) Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
PART D - APPROVALS/DISAPPROVALS			
14. This request is:		15. Reason(s) for Revising or Disapproving Request	
APPROVED AS REQUESTED <input type="checkbox"/> DISAPPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED AS REVISED <input type="checkbox"/>			
16. Supervisor's Signature		Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.			
<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL - Timekeeper		<input type="checkbox"/> COPY - Employee	