

No. 200/26

13th July 2026

Dear Colleague

Royal Mail Group: Hybrid Working Policy - Decision to Impose Four Day Working in the Workplace

Further to LTB 180/26 dated 22nd June.

It is fully recognised that Royal Mail's unilateral decision to impose four-day working in the workplaces is highly unpopular amongst some of our Admin members and this has been demonstrated by the level of correspondence received from Branches and directly from members in the last couple of weeks. Without exception, the complaints centre on the domestic upheaval being created by management, which we believe to be utterly unnecessary, as there wasn't a problem with the current arrangements.

The purpose of this LTB is for Reps and Branches to share this information with members who have raised objections to the actions of Royal Mail. For the avoidance of any doubt, the Union put forward a robust argument to Royal Mail, making it abundantly clear that their actions would be very badly received by our Admin members. Unfortunately, RM were not prepared to listen to our arguments, even though they fully understood that their actions would be extremely contentious with our Admin members who have worked hybrid arrangements for many years now.

To put this matter into perspective, the Union does not have a Collective Agreement in relation to hybrid working, with the vast majority of these arrangements being introduced as a result of the pandemic in 2020/21. It is however recognised that some members worked from home prior to this, with the full support of their managers. Senior management's attitude in regard to this matter is to hide behind the contract of employment, which stipulates that members are required to attend a place of work and additionally, management argue that the hybrid working arrangements were always discretionary.

In the absence of a Collective Agreement surrounding these matters, RM is proceeding as planned, although management have confirmed there is a degree of flexibility around the introduction date as it is recognised that childcare arrangements will have already been made by our members for the school summer holidays.

Members are advised that if the changes to the hybrid arrangements are problematic for them personally, they should consider applying for Flexible Working Arrangements (RM's Working Arrangements Policy attached) via their line manager and seek support from their local CWU Representative if required. There is also an appeals process if the request is rejected by the manager. Also, I can see no good reason why members should not be able to lodge a Raising Concern if it is felt that local management are being unreasonable in their rejection of Flexible Working Arrangements.

In essence, despite the union's best endeavours, Royal Mail has made an executive decision to move from three days in the office to four, and this decision was conveyed in a wider business communication from Alistair Cochrane, CEO. It needs to be emphasised that we did challenge the rationale behind this change and it is disappointing that Royal Mail has not been prepared to listen to our legitimate concerns and is pressing ahead regardless of the frustrations felt by many of our members. In these circumstances, the advice above should be considered and actioned where appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary



Working Arrangements Procedure

To print or download a PDF of this document, click on
the three white lines on the bottom left of the screen.



ROYAL MAIL GROUP

Working Arrangements Procedure

Royal Mail recognises how important it is to support our people to achieve a healthy balance between work and their other priorities, such as caring responsibilities. We are committed to supporting alternative working arrangements (including flexible working) that are operationally, commercially and logistically viable, or sensible for the business.

This procedure provides detail on the different types of working arrangements, including flexible working, that can be agreed between you and your manager.

This procedure:

- applies to all employees of Royal Mail Group Limited (including Parcelforce Worldwide);
- does not apply to agency workers, contractors, casual workers or self-employed individuals; and
- is effective from 6 April 2024.

This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract and we may amend it at any time.

In this document, 'Royal Mail Group Limited' will be referred to as 'Royal Mail Group'.

Roles & responsibilities

- The Chief People Officer (CPO) is accountable for the People Policy and its associated procedures and guidelines
- The Head of HR Policy is responsible for developing and maintaining the Working Arrangements Procedure
- Managers are responsible for the application of the Working Arrangements Procedure within their areas of responsibility
- You are responsible for communicating and liaising with your manager and providing any relevant documentation

Version updated: 6th April 2024

Chief People Officer
April 2024

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Flexible working

Flexible working refers to permanent or temporary changes in your working arrangements, such as a reduction or variation of your working hours and/or time of work, or a change to your place of work. Term time working and job sharing are some examples of flexible working arrangements.

Please click on the tiles below to navigate to the information you need:

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**Meeting with
your manager to
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**Confirming the
outcome of your
request & next
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Eligibility & types of request

Eligibility

You will be eligible to apply for flexible working:

- from day one of your employment with Royal Mail Group; and
- where you have not made two or more formal applications for flexible working within the previous 12 months, either for permanent or temporary contractual changes.

If you are an agency worker, contractor, casual worker or self-employed individual, you are not eligible to apply for flexible working.

Please note: You will not be eligible to make more than two formal flexible working requests in a 12 month rolling period (this 12 month period starts from the date any first flexible working application is made).

You will also only be able to have one live request for flexible working with Royal Mail Group at any one time. Once a request has been made, it remains live until any of the following occur:

- a decision about the request is made by Royal Mail Group;
- you choose to withdraw your request;
- an outcome relating to your request is mutually agreed; or
- the statutory two-month decision period for your request ends.

A request continues to be live during any appeal or any extension to the statutory two-month decision period that you and Royal Mail Group may have agreed.

Types of request

Permanent contractual change

- all flexible working requests will be considered as permanent contractual changes unless you state otherwise in your request

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Types of request continued ...

Temporary contractual change to working patterns

- if you would like the change you are requesting to be a temporary contractual change, you should indicate this clearly in your flexible working request
- temporary contractual changes must have an end date agreed before they are put in place and must not be for periods of longer than one year; you must revert back to your original working arrangement after this period

Informal (non-contractual) arrangements

- if the flexible working arrangement you are requesting will not impact the terms and conditions of your employment contract, it can be agreed locally with your manager; this would normally cover short-term changes (e.g. having to amend working hours in the short term to look after a dependent or for short-term additional caring responsibilities)
- your manager should keep a written record of the arrangement and give you a copy
- any informal arrangements that are agreed should be reviewed regularly (e.g. 6-12 months) to ensure they are still working effectively for you and the business

Please note: informal arrangements are expressly non-contractual and can be varied by Royal Mail at any time.

Examples of flexible working arrangements

Here are some examples of flexible working arrangements - click on the headers for more detail:

Job sharing

**Part-time
working**

**Term time
working (TTW)**

**Changing your
hours**

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Submitting your flexible working request

When submitting a request for flexible working, you need to complete a flexible working request form, which will enable you to provide all of the relevant information required to process and consider your request.

You must ensure you complete all of the fields in the form which will include:

- the date of your flexible working request;
- a statement that you are making a statutory request for flexible working;
- the change to your working pattern you are seeking;
- the date on which you would like the change to come into effect; and
- if and when you have made any previous requests for flexible working.

This information is important as your manager will need to consider:

- how the requested change in working pattern is likely to affect Royal Mail Group's business and your colleague(s); and
- alternative working arrangements if your request cannot be fully implemented (for example, dividing some of your duties/tasks among other team members or recruiting a job share partner)

You should submit your flexible working request at least two months prior to the date that you would want to start your flexible working arrangement.

If you are submitting a request for a job share arrangement, you should include suggestions on how this would work in practice, and your proposed job share partner should also submit a flexible working request at the same time.

If your manager doesn't feel there is enough information in your request, or the form is incomplete, they may ask you to resubmit your form.

Remember: unless you state otherwise, any request that you submit will be considered a formal flexible working request and will result in a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment. If your request is for a temporary change, you must specify this on the form.

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How to submit your request

If you have access to PSP:

- select the 'Me at Work' tab on your PSP homepage;
- select 'Time and absences';
- select 'Flexible working request' to complete and submit your request
- when you submit your request, a 'flexible working case' will automatically be created within People Case Manager (PCM) and assigned to your manager;
- if you are applying for Term Time Working (TTW), you will also need to complete a TTW1 request form; you can find this on the Policy & Information site on PSP under Working at Royal Mail → Working Arrangements → Forms & Letters (there is a separate TTW form for Customer Experience colleagues); for more information on TTW, please click [here](#).

If you don't have access to PSP:

- you should ask your manager for a Flexible Working Application and Registration form; they will be able to find this form in the People Case Manager (PCM) system or on the Policy and Information site on PSP under Working at Royal Mail → Working Arrangements → Forms & Letters;
- you should give the completed form to your manager and they will enter the details into a 'flexible working case' in PCM;
- if you are applying for Term Time Working (TTW), you will also need to ask your manager for a TTW1 form (or a 'TTW Request to Work Term-Time' form if you work in Customer Experience); your manager can find this on the Policy & Information site (as per above) or on PCM. For more information on TTW, please click [here](#).

Regardless of how your request is submitted, your manager must deal with your flexible working request (including conclusion of any appeal process) within two months of receiving your request.

If the date you submit your request is less than two months before the date you wish to start your flexible working arrangement, your manager will consider your application as quickly as they can, however they may not be able to deal with it before your requested start date. Your manager can extend the two month timescale, provided you agree to this extension in writing.

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Withdrawing your request

You can withdraw your flexible working request at any time before you have signed your new contract of employment or before you have started your new flexible working arrangement.

You will need to let your manager know in writing. They will then update your 'flexible working case' in PCM accordingly and upload any paperwork relating to your case.



Please note: If you withdraw your flexible working request, this will count towards the two requests you can make in a 12 month rolling period.

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Meeting with your manager to discuss your request

You should expect your manager to invite you to a meeting to discuss your flexible working request, normally within 14 days of your request being submitted. Where this is not possible, your manager can request an extension to these timescales by sending you a 'Time Extension' letter explaining why the meeting cannot be held and when it will take place instead.

The purpose of the meeting with your manager is to:

- discuss your current working pattern and the changes you have requested;
- discuss the reasons behind your flexible working request;
- ensure you understand that any changes to your working pattern could result in a permanent change to your employment contract;
- understand the impact that the flexible working request may have on the wider team should the request be approved; and
- discuss alternative solutions if the working pattern you have requested cannot be accommodated due to business and/or operational reasons which could include:
 - cost;
 - the detrimental effect on our ability to meet customer demand;
 - an inability to re-organise work amongst existing colleagues;
 - an inability to recruit additional team members;
 - the detrimental impact on quality or performance;
 - a lack of work during the periods that you have asked to work; or
 - planned structural changes.

You have the right to be accompanied during the meeting by a union representative or colleague, normally from the same work location.

Following the meeting, your manager will seriously and objectively consider your flexible working request. The request will only be refused if they are unable to accommodate it due to one or more of the business and/or operational reasons listed above and, if this is the case, they will explain the reason for their decision when they communicate the outcome, as well as explore other appropriate options.

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Confirming the outcome of your request and next steps

Your manager should confirm the outcome of your flexible working request to you in writing, normally within 10 days of your meeting.

Next steps based on the outcome of your request

If your request is approved:

You and your manager should discuss and agree the specific arrangements that will be put into place, including a start date for your flexible working.

Your manager may suggest a trial period to determine whether the new arrangement can work effectively for both you and the business before they provide final approval and your contract is permanently changed. We encourage you to agree to a trial as it will enable you and your manager to understand the impact of the new flexible working arrangement. We would normally recommend a trial of three to six months and if you agree to a trial period, you should agree an end date for the review which should be recorded in writing along with any conditions of the arrangement. If you don't wish to agree to a trial, it may impact on your manager's ability to deal with your request.

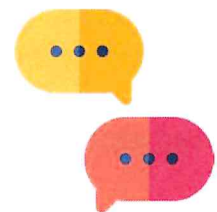
If you agree to a trial but in Royal Mail's view it is not successful, you will return to your original working pattern and your manager will confirm that your request has not been successful.

If your request is ultimately approved, your manager will confirm this with you. Where there is a change to your employee record on PSP (e.g. work location or working hours) which requires your manager to complete an employee change request (ECR) on PSP, HR Services will issue a contract variation by post.

If your request is not approved:

In your decision letter, your manager should:

- explain why your flexible working request was unsuccessful; and
- share alternative flexible working options that could be accommodated and may suit your circumstances.



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If your manager suggests an alternative flexible working arrangement that you wish to consider, you should discuss and agree the specific details with your manager that will be put into place, including a start date. Your manager may suggest a trial period for this (as above) to determine whether this new alternative arrangement can work effectively for both you and the business.

Multiple requests

If your manager receives multiple requests for flexible working at the same time as they receive your request, they will need to consider each request and make an assessment of the potential impact on the business. Therefore, it may not be possible to agree to your request and if this is the case, your manager should discuss this with you to see if you can reach a compromise together.



Your right to appeal

If your flexible working request was unsuccessful and your manager either did not share any alternative options or, the options they did share were not appropriate, you have the right to appeal their decision.

Your appeal must be made within three days of receiving the written outcome from your manager. You can submit your appeal in writing and either hand it in or email it to your manager.

Your manager will then update your 'flexible working case' in People Case Manager (PCM) and assign an appropriate independent manager (outside of the direct line) to review your appeal. They will upload any notes and supporting evidence related to your flexible working request to your case in PCM.

The manager assigned to your appeal will review your case in the PCM system and then invite you to an appeal hearing where they will re-consider your request for flexible working. They will then review your appeal and make a decision based on the evidence provided. They will notify you of their decision in writing; this is normally within ten days of the appeal hearing and must be within two months of you submitting your original flexible working request.

Please note that the appeal manager's decision is final.

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Other working arrangements

Royal Mail Group believes that for the most part, it is beneficial both for your wellbeing and for the business that you have a permanent office work location (agreed as part of your contract) where you can work collaboratively with colleagues.

However, alternative working arrangements can be supported, provided you have discussed and agreed these with your manager, and they are operationally, commercially and logistically viable, or sensible for the business.

Section overview

This section of the procedure covers our other types of working arrangements - hybrid working, home-based working, field-based working and dual site working - in more detail. However, before doing so, it may be helpful to understand what we mean by a 'permanent work location'.

Most Royal Mail employees will have a permanent work location which is based on their role and role requirements. A permanent work location is one that you:

- regularly and/or frequently attend to perform your duties; or
- normally work at for 40% or more of the working week and is not a temporary work location

Normally, you will be responsible for meeting any travelling costs to your permanent work location.

To find out more information about other types of working arrangements, please click on the relevant tile below:

**Hybrid
working**

**Field based
working**

**Home based
working**

**Dual site
working**

You can also click here to find out additional information about alternative working arrangements (e.g. travel and expenses).

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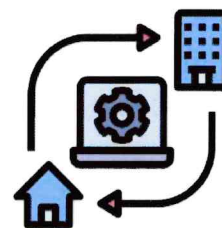
Hybrid working

What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a working arrangement that you can agree with your manager that enables you to work both at home and in the office.

Hybrid working reinforces Royal Mail Group's commitment to support a positive work-life balance. It reduces the amount of time and money we spend travelling to the office on a daily basis and encourages us to instead travel to the office for more high-value interactions and collaborative working with our teams.

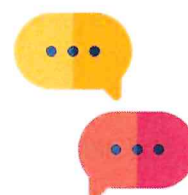
Any hybrid working arrangement that you agree with your manager should be reasonable, practical and enable you to carry out your role effectively. The amount of time you agree to work in the office will vary depending on your role/team/function however, we would normally expect this to be a minimum of three days. It is important to note that in some circumstances, hybrid working may not be possible or appropriate.



How do I agree a hybrid working arrangement?

All our teams and functions have different needs. Therefore, there isn't a 'one size fits all' approach to hybrid working.

If you would like to consider hybrid working, you should discuss this with your manager to explore what a hybrid working arrangement could look like for you. If you find a hybrid working arrangement that works for you and is operationally, commercially and logistically viable, you can agree this arrangement with your manager.



Here are some things for you and your manager to consider when agreeing a hybrid working arrangement (this list is not exhaustive):

- > Does it matter where you complete certain tasks? (e.g. do you need any office equipment that you don't have at home?)
- > Do some of your day to day tasks require input from other colleagues? How often do you need to work with colleagues on a task? (i.e. collaborative working)
- > How often does your team meet as a group?
- > Do you have a suitable workspace at home?

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- Can you ensure the security of Royal Mail Group's confidential information when working from home?
- How will you and your manager ensure any training or supervision needs are met?
- How hybrid working could impact on your mental and physical wellbeing and the support available?
- Has your manager discussed and highlighted any concerns they have about your productivity or quality of work which could be further impacted by hybrid working?



Please note: all hybrid working arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis and adapted as required to ensure continued productivity and suitability.

Some important points to remember about hybrid working:

- Your permanent work location will not change as a result of agreeing a hybrid working arrangement (e.g. to a location closer to your home address). The exception to this would be where an office closes, in which instance, another suitable office will become your permanent work location and updated on PSP. If you want to permanently change your contractual working arrangements, you must submit a flexible working request (see flexible working section)
- The home location in your hybrid working arrangement should, without exception, be within the same country as your payroll for tax and NI purposes. The basis of your contract, pay and benefits are on the assumption that you are working within the UK at all times. Hybrid working is not applicable for working outside of the UK
- You should complete a DSE risk assessment (if you haven't already) and review this on an annual basis (click here for more detail)
- Where the request is reasonable or the meeting requires a face to face interaction, you will still be expected to attend certain meetings in person, such as team meetings, 121s or meetings with key stakeholders
- Even with a hybrid working arrangement in place, you can still be expected to attend the office on any working day, provided reasonable notice has been given
- All hybrid based working arrangements are subject to review and may be withdrawn by either party at any time, by providing at least one month's notice in writing

Hybrid working continues on the next page...

Hybrid working in practice



- Working in a hybrid way means you could attend meetings in person or virtually (i.e. by phone or Microsoft teams); you should discuss and agree an approach with your manager - this means that meetings or collaborative sessions may be a combination of you and your colleagues attending in person and virtually



- Apply good judgement – if you have been asked to travel to the office for a single meeting, consider whether you could book in other meetings or collaborative sessions on the same day to reduce the need for unnecessary repeat travel, or speak with your manager if you feel it might be a better use of time to join the meeting virtually



- On days where you are travelling into an office, check whether there is space available for you to 'hot desk'. If the office has the Condeco desk booking tool (app), you should book a desk space in advance, even if you only plan to 'hot desk'

Your health and wellbeing when working from home

Your physical and/or mental health and wellbeing can be affected through extended home working. You should focus on your wellbeing through physical activity and nutrition and try to be aware of any impact you feel that working from home is having on your mental health.

We have a variety of support and resources available for you to help take care of your health and wellbeing whilst working from home, including:

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – a free, confidential and independent service for colleagues, available 24/7 which includes:
 - Mental health support - telephone, face to face or instant online support
 - Physical health - advice on improving your lifestyle, physical health and fitness
 - Financial wellbeing - information on debt and government benefits; and
 - Practical help - caring responsibilities, long term health condition and disability, domestic abuse and legal signposting

You can access EAP on 0345 266 5050 or by downloading the Help@hand app and access support through the 'Life, money and wellbeing support' section. Download the app from the App store or Google Play store and register using pin 164003.

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Our digital services include various media content, toolkits, health and wellbeing assessments and personal care programmes. If you are deaf, you can use the online chat function and a British Sign Language interpreter can be made available.

- Your Wellbeing – Through *Your Wellbeing* - the new name of our wellbeing programme, whether it's aches and pains, financial worries or personal stress, you have access to services, tools and advice to help. It's free, confidential and independent to Royal Mail and its available 24/7. You'll find everything you need to support *Your Wellbeing* on our Wellbeing Hub. Please visit the Wellbeing Hub on My Royal Mail or the People App under Your Wellbeing.



Health and safety

If you require furniture or basic IT equipment to enable you to work safely at home or in the office, you should complete a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) risk assessment [here](#) in order to determine the appropriate 'tools for the job'. You and your manager should discuss the outputs of the DSE risk assessment and agree appropriate actions. You should review your DSE risk assessment every year and also:

- if there is a significant change to your role, work environment or equipment/furniture; or
- if you develop health problems or concerns that you think may be related to DSE use.



Please note: For hybrid working, if you do not have a suitable workspace at home, it may be more appropriate for you to continue working in the office.

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Field-based working

What is field-based working?

Field-based working usually occurs where:

- you need to attend a range of sites, within a distinct geographical area, during your working week as part of your role; and
- it is commercially viable for you to work remotely (i.e. not from a fixed Royal Mail location) for the majority of the week.

How do I agree a field-based working arrangement?

It will normally be clear whether your role is field-based or not. If you believe that you should be field-based, you should discuss this with your manager.

If you are field-based, you should ensure that you:

- have a permanent work location assigned on PSP which is a Royal Mail site in your geographical area – this is the location which you should use to claim any travel expenses, in line with the Business Travel & Expenses policy;
- attend different locations/sites within the geographical area as required; and
- hold duties which are defined by reference to that particular area.

Field-based working arrangements are subject to review and may be withdrawn by either party at any time, by providing at least one month's notice in writing.

Home-based working

What is home-based working?

Home-based working is where your permanent work location has been agreed, as part of your employment contract, to be your home address.

This type of arrangement is very rare and is usually only considered in cases where a request is made, and the business has a legal obligation to consider the arrangement and/or where the request supports a genuine business need.

How do I agree a home-based working arrangement?

Home-based working requires authorisation by the relevant HR Director. If you believe that

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your role should be a home-based role, you should discuss this with your manager.

All home-based working arrangements are subject to review and may be withdrawn by either party at any time, by providing at least one month's notice in writing.

Dual-site working

What is dual-site working?

If you travel on a regular basis to two work locations (e.g. travel to see a team in Chesterfield and London each week), this is dual-site working. Dual-site working occurs in the case where you travel on a regular basis to manage or support two geographically distant teams.

If you regularly travel to two locations, you could have two permanent work locations (for example, this could be London and Chesterfield). In this case, you would be responsible for covering your travel costs to the location that is recorded as your permanent work location in PSP (People System Portal) and Royal Mail would be responsible for covering the cost of your travel to your second permanent work location.

How do I agree a dual-site working arrangement?

Dual-site working must be supported by a business case and requires authorisation from the relevant HR Director. This is because any travel costs to the second permanent work location that are reimbursed are a taxable benefit and this can potentially expose the business to additional taxes.

Therefore, in addition to the business case, if you hold a dual-site role, Group Taxation must be informed to ensure that the business meets its tax obligation.

All dual-site working is subject to review and may be withdrawn by either party at any time, by providing at least one month's notice in writing.

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Additional information about alternative working arrangements

Expenses and travel time

Expenses will be calculated based on your permanent work location, as recorded in PSP. The cost of travelling to this permanent work location and any other location where you regularly work is a private cost for which you are responsible. You must deduct the total mileage between your home and permanent work location before you submit any mileage claims.

Utilities

The business will not reimburse the costs of gas, water, electricity, internet or telephone charges incurred when working from home.

Audit of working arrangements

The directors in your function are responsible for an annual audit of their team(s) to ensure all colleagues are complying with the terms outlined in this document.

Non-compliance

Please be advised that failure to comply with the terms outlined in this procedure may result in investigation and disciplinary action under the conduct procedure, up to and including dismissal for gross misconduct.

You have a responsibility to report any breaches of this procedure to your manager.

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Additional information

Right to be accompanied

In this procedure you have the right to be accompanied in meetings regarding your application for flexible working. Your manager will let you know when this applies, although it will be your decision whether or not you want to be accompanied.

You can be accompanied by a trade union representative or a fellow work colleague (usually from the same work location). You should let your manager know who your chosen representative is in advance of the relevant meeting.

Who you choose to be accompanied by will depend on the circumstances of your case. It is up to your chosen representative whether or not they decide to accompany you. Where you have chosen a fellow work colleague to act as your representative, they will not be treated detrimentally as a result.

There are only a few situations when your manager may refuse your choice of representative. If this happens it will be because your chosen representative is someone:

- who is not a fellow work colleague, an official employee of a trade union or a trade union representative; or
- whose presence would prejudice the meeting; or
- who may have a conflict of interest; or
- whose geographic location is too remote and there is someone more suitably qualified available locally.

Your manager will let you know why your chosen representative cannot attend and give you time to find an alternative.

Your chosen representative will not receive copies of the correspondence between you and your manager unless you agree this with your manager.

In the meeting, hearing or appeal, your chosen representative can:

- talk with you;
- summarise and present your case;
- respond to views expressed during the meeting;
- take notes; and
- sum up your case at the end.

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They should not, however:

- answer questions on your behalf;
- address the meeting if you do not wish them to do so; or
- prevent your manager from explaining the position.

Where your representative does respond to questions on your behalf during an investigatory meeting or hearing, they may be asked to leave the meeting.

If your nominated representative cannot attend a proposed date for a meeting, hearing or appeal, you will have the right to request for the meeting to be rescheduled. You should suggest an alternative date that is no more than five days after the original date. Your manager will confirm any changes in date, time or location.

Keeping records

Throughout this procedure, the managers involved will keep accurate and up-to-date records. This will include information from meetings, meeting notes, information you have supplied and any notes made regarding your case. Managers should keep records in your local personal file and on our secure IT systems (e.g. the People Case Manager system or PSP).

It is important that all records are accurate.

You will have the opportunity to review any notes that are taken during meetings you attend and provide your feedback. Both the original version of the meeting notes and the copy with your amendments should be retained in PCM by the manager.

You should be aware that we do not allow meetings to be recorded. If you make a request to record a meeting, it will be refused. It is the written record of meetings that will form the basis of the decision.

All records should be kept in accordance with UK data protection laws and our Data Protection and Privacy Policy. We respect your privacy and the confidentiality of any personal data we hold about you. When handling your personal data, the Privacy Principles should be followed.

We will not retain your personal data for longer than necessary to achieve the business purpose or to meet minimum legal requirements. Our Corporate Retention Schedule provides further information for the different types of record; if you wish to know more

information about this or the privacy principles, please ask your manager who will be able to find further detail on the Think Secure site.

Where to go for further support

If you have any questions about the Working Arrangements Procedure, please ask your manager. Your manager can seek further advice and support from the People Case Advice team in HR Services if they cannot answer your question.

Appendix

The appendix documents referenced throughout this procedure are located on the following pages.

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Appendix A: Term time working (TTW)

What is term time working?

Term time working (TTW) is a part time contract that is designed to give you flexibility to have more time off during school holidays by opting not to work between 4-13 weeks each year (2-13 weeks if you work in Customer Experience).

Your pay and contractual benefits/entitlements will be reduced in proportion to the number of weeks you have chosen to work as part of your TTW arrangement and then averaged out across the year.

Eligibility

You will be able to apply for TTW:

- from day one of your employment as a Royal Mail Group employee (not including agency workers, casuals, contractors or self-employed workers);
- where you have not previously made two formal applications for flexible working within the previous 12 months, either for permanent or temporary changes;
- you are the parent or legal guardian responsible for a child/children under the age of 18 attending school in the UK.

How to apply for TTW

As TTW is considered a flexible working arrangement, to submit a request for this you should follow the process outlined in the Flexible Working Arrangements section of the main document.

In addition to the flexible working application form, you will also need to complete a TTW1 request form (or a TTW Request to Work Term Time form if you work in Customer Experience).

- If you have access to PSP, you can find the form on PSP → Policy and Information → Working at Royal Mail → Working Arrangements → Forms and letters
- If you don't have access to PSP, your manager will be able to get you a copy of the form either from PSP or the People Case Manager (PCM) system

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You should allow two months for your manager to consider your request and if agreed, arrange your new pay and contract terms.

If your request is approved, you need to allow 13 weeks to pass before you take your first TTW absence; this is to ensure you have worked enough hours before taking any holiday. This 13-week period only applies to the first year you take term time holiday unless you increase the amount of time you are taking off in subsequent years.

As school holiday dates change every year, you must complete a new TTW1 form (or TTW Request to Work Term Time form if you work in Customer Experience) each year by submitting a new request two months before the current TTW year ends.

Your request for additional time away from work must be for between 4 and 13 full weeks (from two weeks if you work in Customer Experience), starting from a Monday in accordance with school holiday periods.

The weeks you request to not work during school holidays as part of your TTW arrangement have to be full weeks, starting from a Monday.

Year One Term Time Working Arrangements

Royal Mail Group TTW arrangements operate annually based around the academic year (September to August) this is because you would need to know the specific school holiday dates you wished to apply for term time leave. Where however the initial TTW application is not in line with the September start of the academic year, the first TTW application will operate on an interim basis covering the remaining period up until the following September. Thereafter the TTW arrangement will fall in line with the academic year.

Reviewing your request and confirming the outcome

Your manager should confirm the outcome of your request for TTW as part of a flexible working arrangement within two months of the date you submitted your request (this statutory two month decision period also includes any appeal you may have raised). These timescales could be longer if your manager agrees an extension with you.

Your manager will seriously and objectively consider your application, taking into account whether or not your work can be completed on a term-time basis without any detriment to the business.

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Your request will only be refused if it has a negative impact on one or more of the business reasons set out below:

- > cost
- > the detrimental effect on our ability to meet customer demand
- > an inability to re-organise work amongst existing colleagues
- > an inability to recruit additional team members
- > the detrimental impact on quality and performance
- > a lack of work during the periods that you have asked to work
- > alignment with planned structural changes

You should be aware in most areas of Royal Mail Group, the default will be that TTW school holiday absence during the Christmas period will not be agreed due to the specific operational challenges of that period.

If you are not happy with your manager's decision to refuse your request, you can appeal. Your appeal must be made within five working days of the decision refusing your request for flexible working. The appeal will be heard by an independent manager who will review your request and you can choose to be represented by a work colleague or trade union representative at the appeal meeting. The appeal manager's decision is final.

Your pay under TTW

Your pay rates for the year will be calculated by taking into account the number of weeks you have requested not to work as part of your TTW arrangement. The formula below demonstrates how this is done in practice. Your pay rate is then converted into hours per week so that you receive the same amount of pay throughout the year irrespective of when you take time off for TTW:

(1) First, we work out your TTW factor:

- Requested number of weeks divided by 52.179 (weeks in the year) = **TTW factor**

(2) Then, we multiply this by your original contractual hours to get your hours reduction:

- TTW factor multiplied by original contracted hours = **your reduction in hours**

(3) Finally, we subtract your reduction in hours from your original contracted hours:

- Original contracted hours minus reduction in hours = **average TTW hours per week**

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An example – full academic year

If you currently work 20 hours per week (your original contracted hours) and want to take 13 weeks off as part of a TTW arrangement, and the application is effective from the start of the academic year (September to August):

- (1) Requested number of weeks divided by 52.179 (weeks in the year) = **TTW factor**
 - 13 divided by 52.179 = **0.25**
- (2) TTW factor multiplied by original contracted hours = **your reduction in hours**
 - 0.25 x 20 = **5 hours reduction**
- (3) Original contracted hours minus reduction in hours = **average TTW hours per week:**
 - 20 – 5 = **15 hours** is your new average per week for TTW

This means that you will be paid based on an average of 15 hours per week as part of your TTW arrangement so that you receive a regular amount of pay throughout the year, regardless of when you take the time off for TTW.

Please note that by agreeing to a TTW arrangement, you are committing to the same percentage deduction of pay across all pay periods in the 12 month Term Time Working contract period, irrespective of any subsequent change to pay, grade or contractual hours and irrespective of when in the year you actually take your additional term time leave.

An example – year one interim (part of academic year)

If you currently work 20 hours per week (your original contracted hours) and requested TTW to start in February. This start date is part way through the academic year. Your application is agreed and effective from February, for 8 weeks' term time leave. The TTW will operate on a year one interim arrangement until the start of the next academic year. In this example if for a period of 30 weeks. Your pay adjustment will be calculated as follows:

- (1) Requested number of weeks divided by remaining weeks in the year one interim year (the end of the summer holidays) = **TTW factor**
 - 8 divided by 30 = **0.267**
- (2) TTW factor multiplied by original contracted hours = **your reduction in hours**
 - 0.267 x 20 = **5.34 hours reduction**
- (3) Original contracted hours minus reduction in hours = **average TTW hours per week:**
 - 20 – 5.34 = **14.66 hours** is your new average per week for TTW

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This means that you will be paid based on an average of 14.66 hours per week as part of your TTW arrangement so that you receive a regular amount of pay throughout the year, regardless of when you take the time off for TTW.

Please note that by agreeing to a TTW arrangement, you are committing to the same percentage deduction of pay across all remaining pay periods of the interim year one arrangement, irrespective of any subsequent change to pay, grade or contractual hours and irrespective of when in the year you actually take your additional term time leave. From the start of the following academic year your TTW pay adjustment will be based across the full 12 month period as above. In addition, you should note that as the pay adjustment will be effective over a shorter period of time than the usual 12 month period, claims will be rejected were they to place you at risk of a National Minimum Wage breach.

Your benefits

If you have a TTW arrangement, you are classed as a part time employee which means that any relevant contractual benefits or entitlements will be pro-rated based on the number of weeks you are due to work. This includes things like annual leave, public holidays and bonus payments.

Annual leave

National and local annual leave agreements will apply as usual for allocation of annual leave. However, you cannot take any annual leave during the weeks that you have requested not to work as part of your TTW arrangement.

As the TTW year is different to the annual leave year (April – March), your annual leave entitlement will be pro-rated based on the period spent on the TTW contract and your previous contractual arrangement. You are still able to purchase additional annual leave and apply to work term-time only.

Bank and public holidays

Bank holiday entitlements will be calculated locally once you have signed your new terms and conditions.

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Bank and public holidays continued ...

To calculate your entitlement, take the number of days you worked in the calendar year and divide this by the number of weeks you worked in the calendar year; this gives you the actual number of days worked per week. Bank holidays will then be calculated according to the Part Time Harmonisation Agreement.

If your working days are equivalent to four per week, you will be entitled to the same bank holiday entitlement as a full-time employee. If you are working three or less days per week, your bank holiday entitlement should be reduced accordingly. For example, if you worked 180 days in the year, this would be the equivalent of 3.4 attendances per week. As this is lower than four, your bank holiday entitlement would be pro-rata; in this case, five days.

Pensions

Pension benefits are subject to the rules of the Royal Mail Defined Contribution Plan or the Royal Mail Pension Plan (whichever applies to you).

Details of how pension benefits are affected by working part-time can be found in your member guide or by contacting the pension administrator of your plan. If you are a member of one of the Royal Mail pension plans, your contributions will be deducted from pay as normal - i.e. as a percentage of contributory or pensionable pay.

Overtime under TTW

You cannot work overtime and carry out scheduled attendance during the weeks that you have requested not to work as part of your TTW arrangement.

If you work less than full time hours whilst at work, and perform overtime/scheduled attendance, as a part time employee (with a TTW adjustment) you will be paid single-rate overtime until you have worked the full time equivalent contractual hours for your role in that week, and then the beyond full-time hours rates for any further additional hours worked. If you work full time hours whilst at work, as a full time employee (with a TTW adjustment) any overtime or scheduled attendance you perform will be paid at beyond full-time hours rates.

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Sickness absence

If you are unable to attend work due to sickness or injury while you are working or on annual leave, you should follow the usual process of notifying your manager, as soon as possible.

When you are not working during school holidays, you do not need to notify your manager about sickness. However, if, during school holiday weeks, you have an accident or illness that may affect you in the workplace, you should let your manager know so they can support your return to work after the school holiday.

Changing your TTW arrangement

Once you have signed and returned your new contract, this is a permanent change unless you work in Customer Experience; in which case you sign and return a contract variation confirming that you agree to a temporary change.

Please note in all cases, if you wish to cease your TTW arrangements, you do not have a right to return to your previous hours or to your previous role/shift/work area unless this has been previously agreed.

If you want to change the number of weeks that you have requested not to work, you must put this request in writing to your manager. However, there is no guarantee that any changes requesting to increase, decrease or cease term-time working arrangements will be agreed.

Your manager will need to consider your request by checking resource requirements because resourcing decisions will have been made based on your TTW arrangement.

Please note: you can only submit a maximum of two requests to work flexibly in any 12-month rolling period (this 12 month period starts from the date any first application is requested) and this includes any changes to existing arrangements.

***Return to 'submitting your
flexible working request' section***



Appendix B: Job sharing

What is job sharing?

Job sharing is where you and another colleague perform the same duties as one full-time colleague rather than performing two different part-time roles. You receive a share of the pay that a full-time colleague earns based on the proportion of the full-time role.

There are several potential job share patterns:

- working separate hours/times compared to your job share partner;
- overlapping your working hours with your job share partner's hours; and
- dividing your duties based on the skills and knowledge of you and your job share partner, rather than by tasks/activities.

How do I apply for a job share arrangement?

To apply for a job share, you should follow the process outlined in the Flexible Working section of the main document. Along with your request, you will need to provide proposals on how the role could be divided as well as indicating a potential job share partner(s). Your potential job share partner should also submit a flexible working request in the same manner.

The criteria for considering whether a job share is reasonable is the same as for all other types of flexible working requests.

If the request for flexible working is supported by business needs and you have not been able to identify a potential job share partner, your manager should make reasonable effort to find you a suitable partner. However, if no suitable job-share partner can be found, your flexible working request will not be approved.

How to ensure an effective job share arrangement

When applying for a job share, it is important that you consider how the arrangement will work in practice. Your manager will discuss with you their expectations if one of the job share partners resigns or is on holiday. You may be required to increase your hours to cover your partner's hours during these times.

It is essential that you have a good relationship with your job share partner. Communication will be key if you need to share responsibilities and ensure work is not duplicated or tasks missed.

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