



**FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**AUGUST 2023**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Company recognises that the balance between work and family life is important and research has shown that individuals perform best when able to balance work with other aspects of their lives. Our positive approach to flexible working is designed to be an aid to supporting people in their chosen careers and helping them work in a way that suits their individual needs.
- 1.2 Furthermore, we are committed to reflecting the diversity of our customers in our workforce. We are striving to be inclusive in everything we do, across our workforce and with our supply chain partners to bring positive change in this area.
- 1.3 There are many positive examples of successful flexible working requests (FWRs) that are working across the business, which may be helpful for readers to review before making a request. The examples can be found by clicking this [link](#).

## 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Company's Flexible Working Policy and Procedure is designed to provide a clear framework for managing flexible working requests, which ensures that the Company:
  - manages such requests fairly, consistently and in a reasonable manner;
  - complies with relevant employment legislation;
  - continues to deliver on its service commitments to customers, communities and internal stakeholders;
  - follows best practice; and
  - provides support to employees during the application process.

### 2.2 Principles

- 2.2.1 In order to fulfil the purpose the following guiding principles apply:
  - all requests to change working patterns/hours should be submitted as a FWR in Workday;
  - managers must discuss each FWR application with their Employee Relations Manager/Advisor **before** agreeing any change to working patterns/hours, in order to ensure consistency and fair application of the policy;
  - where historic flexible working arrangements exist, the Company reserves the right, where a business need arises, to consult with individuals about potential changes to these arrangements; and
  - part time work means part time salary and benefits, e.g. part time annual leave allowance and part time bonus for eligible employees.

## 3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This is a group level policy that applies to all employees of Anglian Water Group Limited and its subsidiary companies, with the exception of Anglian Water (Ireland) Limited and Wave Limited (and their respective subsidiaries, which include Celtic Anglian Water and Anglian Water Business (National)).

#### 4. STATUS

- 4.1 This policy and procedure is subject to regular review by the Company and is updated as appropriate.

#### 5. POLICY OWNER

- 5.1 Head of Employee Relations.

#### 6. POLICY

##### 6.1 Eligibility

All employees, regardless of length of service, may submit a Flexible Working Request (FWR) .

Your request can be for a **temporary** (maximum of 12 months) or for a **permanent** change to working hours or conditions.

##### **Remember:**

- Once a permanent FWR has been accepted, you will have no right to return to your working hours and conditions in place before the agreed changes.
- A temporary FWR can last for a **maximum** of 12 months.
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##### 6.2 Types of Flexible Working

6.2.1 Depending on your circumstances, there are different changes that you can request, e.g. you may request a change to:

- the number of hours that you work, e.g. part time working or job sharing with another identified colleague;
- the times at which you work your hours, e.g. start and finish times or shift patterns; and/or
- the place at which you work, e.g. homeworking some of the time rather than at normal work base.

6.2.2 You can ask for the change to be for:

- all working days;
- specific days or shifts only;
- specific weeks only, for example during school term time; and/or
- a temporary time period, for example for 6 months only.

##### **Remember:**

If you request part time working your salary and benefits will be prorated accordingly.

##### 6.3 Parents and Carers

6.3.1 If you are returning from maternity, adoption or shared parental leave you will need to complete a FWR if you wish to return part-time on a temporary or permanent basis.

6.3.2 If you are a parent or carer there are other ways that you can take time off – please see our Parental Leave, Time off for Dependants policies on [Lighthouse](#).

## 6.4 Timescales

6.4.1 In line with relevant legislation and best practice, we aim to complete the FWR process, including any appeal, within 2 months as detailed below:

Process	Timescales (calendar days)
Employee submits a FWR on Workday	
Discussion with employee to take place / Formal meeting may be required	Within 14 days of receiving FWR
Decision to be made and communicated	Decision to be made within 14 days of receiving FWR (and confirmed in writing within 7 days of discussion /meeting)
Employee appeal to be submitted	Within 14 days of being told decision to decline request
Appeal to be heard	Within 28 days of receiving appeal
Final decision to be made and communicated	Written confirmation of decision to be sent within 7 days of appeal hearing

6.4.2 The above time limits may be extended if there is sickness, leave or exceptional circumstances, provided **both** you and your Line Manager agree to the extension.

## 6.5 Manager Responsibilities

6.5.1 All flexible working requests will be considered seriously. In accordance with the law, a FWR may be refused only for one or more of the following specified business reasons, which must be substantiated with supporting evidence:

- the burden of additional costs;
- a detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand;
- a detrimental impact on quality;
- a detrimental impact on performance;
- an inability to reorganise work among existing employees;
- an inability to recruit additional employees to cover the work;
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; and/or
- planned structural changes.

6.5.2 In addition, managers must avoid unlawful discrimination<sup>1</sup>, e.g. the Line Manager must take into account if the FWR is one for 'reasonable adjustments' to be made in relation to a disability (see [Supporting Attendance Policy](#)).

## 6.6 Trial Period

6.6.1 There is no legal requirement to provide a trial period. However, it may be agreed as an opportunity for both you and your Line Manager to test if the changes would work in practice. We recommend that a trial is only used if absolutely necessary and is limited to a period of up to 1 month. Where a trial is agreed, the start date, end date and review date will be agreed with you before the trial starts. A final decision will be

<sup>1</sup> The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination because of protected characteristics. They are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

made and confirmed to you by your Line Manager within 14 days of the end of the trial.

## 7. MAKING A FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST

7.1 You can make two FWRs in any 12-month period and this must be made as a 'Request' through Workday (see [Workday Guide](#)).

### 7.2 Flexible Working Request (FWR)

7.2.1 You must complete and submit a FWR in Workday (see [Workday Guide](#)), which will go to the Employee Relations Team and then to your Line Manager for review.

### 7.3 Request Review

7.3.1 Your Line Manager will review and evaluate your request, with the advice of the relevant Employee Relations Manager/Advisor. Where your request can be accepted without further discussion, your Line Manager will approve it on Workday and make any required changes to your hours of work. Once your Line Manager has completed their actions your request will be sent automatically to the People Support team to action, including altering your pay as required.

### 7.4 Formal FWR Meeting

7.4.1 If further discussion about your FWR is required, you will be invited to a meeting with your Line Manager and an Employee Relations Manager (ERM)/Advisor (ERA), who will offer advice and guidance on procedure. Normally, this meeting will be arranged within 14 days of receiving your request and you may be asked to provide further information before the meeting if needed.

7.4.2 The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss your requested changes, e.g. how they would work in practice. Where your Line Manager is not able to accommodate your request, they should discuss and explore alternative solutions with you. You may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or union representative (see [Section 8](#)).

Please note - the Company makes a record of all formal face to face meetings. This may include the use of Company electronic recording equipment. Your use of personal electronic recording equipment of any description is not permitted.

7.4.3 Within 7 days of the meeting your Line Manager will confirm their decision to you, in writing:

- **acceptance:** a start date will be agreed with you; your Line Manager and Employee Relations Manager/Advisor will then approve your request on Workday. The People Support team will make the necessary system changes and you will be notified of any changes to pay/working hours, in writing within Workday and the relevant scheduling team will be notified as appropriate; **OR**
- **partial acceptance/alternative arrangement agreed:** as a result of the meeting you may agree alternative arrangements with your manager or accept that only parts of your FWR can be agreed. In this case you may be asked to alter your FWR in Workday in line with arrangements agreed so that it can be approved in Workday. The People Support team will make the necessary system changes

and you will be notified of any changes to pay/working hours, in writing within Workday and the relevant scheduling team will be notified as appropriate; **OR**

- **refusal:** your Line Manager will explain, in writing, the business reason(s) for refusing the request, (which must be for one or more of the business reasons detailed in [section 6.5](#)) and confirm your right to appeal the decision.

## 7.5 Appeal

7.5.1 If you wish to exercise your right of appeal, you must:

- submit your appeal in writing, within 14 calendar days from the date the outcome decision was communicated to you;
- address your appeal to the appropriate Employee Relations Manager/Advisor and send it to the [employeerelations@anglianwater.co.uk](mailto:employeerelations@anglianwater.co.uk) mail box;
- clearly state why you believe that you have grounds of appeal, which must be about:
  - a failure in the process;
  - a misinterpretation of evidence or events;
  - the availability of new evidence; and / or
  - a belief that the outcome/sanction was unreasonable, inconsistent or erroneous in the circumstances;
- not use the appeal procedure to raise new, unrelated, issues that have not been mentioned previously; and
- indicate whether you wish your appeal to be heard face to face or through correspondence.

7.5.2 The Appeal Procedure will be followed. The decision to refuse the request remains in place unless and until it is changed by the Appeal Manager.

7.5.3 The decision by the Appeal Manager will constitute the Company's final response.

## 7.6 Withdrawing a FWR

7.6.1 You can withdraw your request at any stage by confirming it in writing to your Line Manager and the appropriate Employee Relations Manager/Advisor.

7.6.2 If you fail to attend the meeting or appeal hearing without reasonable cause on more than one occasion, or fail to provide any additional information requested, then your request will be declined by your Line Manager in Workday – you will receive a notification when this is done. This will be taken into account if you make another request within 6 months.

## 8. **RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED**

8.1 Whilst employees do not have a statutory right to be accompanied at meetings within this procedure, the Company allows employees to be accompanied by a recognised Trade Union representative or workplace colleague.

8.2 The chosen companion may address the meeting, put forward and sum up on behalf of the employee, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the employee during the meeting. The chosen companion is not permitted to answer questions on behalf of the employee, address the meeting without the employee's express permission, or prevent them from offering explanations.

- 8.4 It is the responsibility of the employee to arrange their own companion and provide their companion with any relevant information.
- 8.5 If the employee wishes to be accompanied, they must notify the Company who they have chosen to accompany them without unreasonable delay and as far as possible in advance of the meeting.
- 8.6 If the chosen companion is unable to attend a meeting, another date for the meeting can be suggested, as long as it is reasonable and not more than 7 calendar days after the date originally proposed by the Company. The Company will make reasonable efforts to agree an alternative time and date.

## **9. RECORDS**

- 9.1 It is the Company's standard practice that all written correspondence will be sent by email. Where this is not possible (i.e. the employee does not have a Company email account), it will be sent by standard mail.
- 9.2 All information will be held on the employee's record in accordance with the Company's Data Retention [Policy](#).

## **10. FURTHER ASSISTANCE**

Please contact your Employee Relations Manager/Advisor for further assistance.

### **LAST REVIEWED**

August 2023