



Flexi Time (Policy & Procedure)

OFFICIAL

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Policy

Statement

Merseyside Police operates flexi time working arrangements to support the Force's commitment to providing a healthy home and work life balance. Flexi time working enables the Force to ensure it has appropriate levels of staff in the workplace to deliver an excellent service to the communities we serve, whilst at the same time providing staff with the opportunity to accommodate personal responsibilities.

Aims

Through consistent application, the aim of the policy is to ensure staff who are employed on flexi time, and managers who are responsible for its implementation, work together to ensure the needs of the business are met, with due regard given to the needs of individual staff.

Objectives

- a) Ensure compliance and consistency of approach for all staff employed on flexi time;
- b) To enhance the understanding of managers and staff regarding their respective responsibilities;
- c) Ensure the business needs of the organisation are met whilst recognising the needs of the individual;
- d) Uphold the Force's commitment to be an employer of choice, with the ability to attract and retain high calibre staff; and
- e) Uphold the Force's commitment to providing a working environment that supports equality of opportunity and respects diversity.

Application and Scope

All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to Merseyside Police must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant policy and associated procedures.

The policy will apply to all police staff that have a contractual entitlement to flexi time with the following exceptions:

- a) The Director of HR
- b) Some senior police staff posts which, for operational reasons, may be exempted from the policy. These will be determined on a case by case basis;
- c) Police staff who work a fixed shift pattern;
- d) Police staff who travel, or work away from their administrative centres for considerable periods of time.

Outcome Evaluation

Strand Leads are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. They must ensure local arrangements are put in place so that the hours worked by staff are audited regularly, any breaches of the policy must be brought to the attention of relevant staff and the Strand Lead.

On a quarterly basis, Corporate Support & Development Department will dip sample a number of Strand records of flexi time, in order to monitor consistent application of the policy.

The Finance and Procurement Department will collate a record of flexi-time hours for the purposes of year end accounting requirements. This information will be forwarded to the Head of HR to identify any breaches of policy.

Procedure

Version History

07/11/2014	V 1.1 – “GP” inserted in first sentence of paragraph 6.1.
13/01/2016	V1.2 – amended to reflect structural changes
23/03/2018	V1.3 – amended to reflect structural changes

Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Flexi time is a means of enabling the organisation and its staff to plan working arrangements within the prescribed hours of the scheme. Its purpose is to offer a degree of flexibility to balance work and other commitments whilst not compromising service delivery. In short, it supports the Force's commitment to providing a healthy home and work life balance.
- 1.2 Flexi time provides staff with flexibility, within defined parameters, as to when they start and finish their working day and when they take a lunch break. Managers and staff must work together to ensure flexibility is exercised whilst maintaining sufficient resources to meet the needs of the organisation and in turn, our local communities. In the event of any ambiguity, organisational need will take precedence.
- 1.3 Flexi Time is not an absolute right for employees and should not be considered as part of an individual's annual leave entitlement. Any abuse of the Flexi Scheme by individual employees may result in the facility being withdrawn. It may also result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual.
- 1.4 Whilst flexi time provides staff with considerable flexibility with regard to arrival, lunch and departure times, the needs of the business should always take precedence. Staff must only accrue additional time in the workplace when there is work to be done, and not purely as a means of securing excess flexi (credit).

2. Flexi Time Parameters

Standard Working Hours:	36.50 decimal hrs per week; 146 hrs per 4 week settlement period.
Standard Working Day:	7:30 decimal hrs excluding unpaid meal break.
Standard Half Working Day:	3:65 decimal hrs
Bandwidth:	07:00 – 19:00 hrs.
Core Time:	10:00 – 15:00 hrs.
Lunch:	11:30 – 14:30 hrs (½hr min - 1½ hrs max).
Credit:	12 hrs maximum at the end of the 4 week settlement period.
Debit:	4 hrs maximum at the end of the 4 week settlement period.
Working Day:	Maximum of 10 hrs; Minimum of 5 hrs.
Flexi Leave:	Maximum of 1 day, or 2 half days, per 4 week settlement period.

3. Application of the Policy

3.1 4 Week Settlement Period

3.1.1 All staff working flexi time will do so in accordance with a 4 week settlement period. At the conclusion of the 4 week settlement period, hours worked in excess of 146 hours (4 x 36.50 hours) will be credited and carried over to the next settlement period, subject to a maximum of 12 hours credit. If the full 146 hours have not been worked, this will be treated as debit and carried over to the next settlement period, subject to a maximum of 4 hours debit.

3.2 Bandwidth

3.2.1 The bandwidth of 07:00 – 19:00 hours reflects the official working day of the Force and defines the generic earliest and latest times a member of staff working flexi time can start or finish their working day.

3.2.2 Each Strand Lead is responsible for determining the need for sufficient cover within this bandwidth to their area of business. Whilst it is clearly justified in some functions for managers and staff to provide sufficient cover between the full bandwidth of 07:00 – 19:00, this may not be appropriate in all circumstances.

3.2.3 It is the responsibility of managers and staff to fully cooperate in ensuring that the service provided by their Strand Lead within the identified bandwidth is not impaired by application of this policy. This may involve the operation of early and late rotas, and staggered lunch times to ensure appropriate cover is provided throughout the bandwidth. It is the responsibility of managers, in consultation with staff, to ensure the necessary arrangements are in place.

3.3 Core Time

3.3.1 All staff who work flexi time (with the exception of staff referred to in Application and Scope) must be in attendance during core time hours of 10:00 – 15:00 hours. This ensures Strand Leads are fully staffed throughout the main period of the working day.

3.3.2 Staff employed in functions which are required to provide cover until 19:00 hours may, on the occasions they are required to stay on duty until 19:00 hours, commence work no later than 11:00 hours.

3.4 Lunch

3.4.1 All staff who work flexi time and work 6 hours or more on a working day must take and record a lunch break of at least 30 minutes (0.5 decimal) up to a maximum of 1½ hours (1.50 decimal).

3.5 Credit

3.5.1 The maximum amount of credit that can be carried over from one 4 week settlement period to the next is 12 hours. In normal circumstances all credit in excess of 12 hours will be automatically lost from the individual's flexi balance unless there are **exceptional** operational circumstances that justify it, and the **Chief Officer** responsible for the member of staff **approves** the excess carry over.

3.5.2 An employee leaving the Force must make every effort to achieve a zero balance. The Force will not make financial payment to reconcile any outstanding credit.

3.6 **Debit**

- 3.6.1 The maximum amount of debit that can be carried over from one 4 week settlement period to the next is 4hours.
- 3.6.2 Line managers must ensure that any employees with an excess debit of 4 hours by week 4 will have an action plan to reduce this deficit and maintain an appropriate level of attendance at work.

3.7 **Flexi Leave**

- 3.7.1 A member of staff may take a maximum of 1 day or 2 half days flexi leave per 4 week settlement period subject to the approval of a line manager. Periods of Flexi time leave can only be booked once sufficient credit has been accrued. Flexi leave cannot be block booked in advance of the time being properly accrued.
- 3.7.2 Flexi leave will only be approved by line managers subject to appropriate staffing levels being available on that day.
- 3.7.3 In exceptional circumstances, where credit in excess of 12 hours has been accrued due to operational reasons, and with the support of a relevant Chief Officer, a member of staff may take more than 1 day or 2 half days flexi leave in a 4 week settlement period. This will provide an opportunity for managers and staff to ensure flexi time credit remains within limits defined by the policy. Such circumstances will be the **exception** and must receive the prior approval of the relevant Chief Officer.

4. **Flexi Time for Part Time Workers (or employees working on an agreed PER 50)**

- 4.1 Flexi time will only apply to those staff with a contractual right to the Flexi time scheme as contained within their Statement of Particulars. In these circumstances staff will be able to work within the time bandings detailed within the Flexi Time Policy.
- 4.2 It is expected that part time workers or those employed with a Flexible Working arrangement (PER 50) in place will not normally accrue flexi time. This is on the basis that the individual has requested a working pattern that meets their specific needs in relation to their working hours.
- 4.3 It is accepted that the Force requires flexibility from its staff and therefore in cases of peak demand there may be a legitimate business need for additional hours to be worked and for Flexi time to be accrued as a consequence. This must be managed appropriately between the individual employee and their Line Manager. Any Flexi Time that is accrued must be on a Pro Rata basis depending on the weekly contractual hours worked (as per employment law and ACAS guidance). For example if an employee works 18.25 hours (half the equivalent fulltime contractual hours) then they will only be able to accrue half of the maximum credit carry over permitted at week 4 (6 hours as opposed to 12 hours for a fulltime employee). In the case of debit balances the same principle will also apply.
- 4.4 In circumstances where an employee has asked for a specific working arrangement on fixed hours, e.g. to work 0700 – 1500pm they will not have the facility to work

additional hours to accrue flexi time. This arrangement would be classed as a Fixed Shift and would not fall within the parameters of the Flexi Time Policy. In the event that an employee who works on a fixed shift basis works additional hours at the request of their manager, they will be entitled to payment for the additional hours at the appropriate rate in accordance with the PSC Handbook, or they may wish to elect to take time off in lieu for the additional hours worked.

- 4.5 If appropriate, existing Flexible Working arrangements (PER 50's) will be reviewed if it is identified that the individual's requirements for Part Time hours or Flexible Working arrangements have changed.

5. Recording of Flexi Time Hours

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The overall management of working hours is the responsibility of every individual member of staff under the direction of their respective Line Manager and Strand Lead.
- 5.1.2 All staff who work within the flexi time scheme have a personal responsibility to ensure that they accurately record their working hours via appropriate systems such as clock cards, attendance registers, excel spreadsheets etc. Time worked will be recorded in decimal hours and minutes. Attached to this policy at Appendix A is a conversion table to decimal time.
- 5.1.3 Issues regarding breaches of relevant legislation or failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the individual concerned.

5.2 Managers

- 5.2.1 Strand Leads are responsible for determining the most appropriate means for time recording. Whatever system is used to record working time, it must be auditable and management must ensure that hours worked do not breach Working Time Regulations and the requirements set out in this policy.
- 5.2.2 Line managers have the responsibility to conduct audits at the end of week 4 of the settlement period to ensure that all staff act in compliance with this policy and Working Time Regulations. All line managers are personally responsible for implementing whatever checks are necessary to manage the working time of staff. Any breaches of this policy will be brought to the attention of the member of staff concerned and the Command Team.
- 5.2.3 As part of the audit process, line managers are responsible for authorising credit claimed and the reasons for which credit has been claimed. At the end of each 4 week settlement period, any excess credit or debit will be reported to the Strand Lead.
- 5.2.4 Further advice and guidance for Managers is available from the HR Employee Relations Consultancy Advisors.

5.3 Staff

5.3.1 In normal circumstances all staff working flexi time should record:

- The time of arrival at work;
- The time of departure for a lunch break;
- The time of return from a lunch break; and
- The time of departure from work.

5.3.2 If a member of staff is required to leave their normal place of work on officially authorised business (such as to attend a meeting at a different location), it is not usually necessary to 'clock out' unless the member of staff does not expect to return before the end of the working day. If a member of staff does not expect to return to their normal place of work before finishing for the day then they should 'clock out' when they leave the office and claim credit for the duration of the period that they are away from their workplace. All credit claimed should be accounted for with a short explanation as to why the credit is being claimed, and be authorised by a line manager.

5.3.3 If a member of staff is absent from the workplace for reasons of leave, sickness, training, meetings etc. that may last the full working day or half day, as soon as possible after the event, the line manager must make an appropriate adjustment to the clock card or other alternative time recording system to account for the absence. Further advice and guidance can be sought from the HR Employee Relations Consultancy Advisors.

6. Personal Appointments

6.1 In the event of a part day's absence – for reasons such as a routine GP, hospital or dental appointment – every effort should be made to ensure the appointment is arranged outside of the core time (before 10:00 and after 15:00). It is the responsibility of staff to record the time accurately as to when they started work (after the appointment) or when they left work (for the appointment).

6.2 There may be occasions when it is not possible to arrange an appointment outside of the core time. In such circumstances, and subject to the approval of the line manager, flexi time should be used.

6.3 Time off for medical screening is catered for in Terms and Conditions of Service for Police staff. Guidance is available from the HR Employee Relations Consultancy Advisors where required.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 CSD will conduct quarterly audits in Strands to ensure compliance with the Flexi Time Policy

7.2 Any breaches in the Flexi Time Policy (e.g. excess credit/debit balances) will be reported to the Director of HR for appropriate action to be taken.

- 7.3 The Head of HR will be responsible for highlighting any breaches of this policy with regard to excess credit and debit with the relevant Strand Lead to ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- 7.4 The Finance Department will collate a record of flexi-time hours for the purposes of year end accounting requirements. Although this is primarily for accounting purposes, this information will also be forwarded to the Head of HR for monitoring purposes.

APPENDIX A

CONVERSION TABLE TO DECIMAL TIME

MINUTES	DECIMAL		MINUTES	DECIMAL
0	00		31	52
1	02		32	54
2	03		33	55
3	05		34	57
4	07		35	58
5	08		36	60
6	10		37	62
7	12		38	63
8	13		39	65
9	15		40	67
10	17		41	68
11	18		42	70
12	20		43	72
13	22		44	73
14	23		45	75
15	25		46	77
16	27		47	78
17	28		48	80
18	30		49	82
19	32		50	83
20	33		51	85
21	35		52	87
22	37		53	88
23	38		54	90
24	40		55	92
25	42		56	93
26	43		57	95
27	45		58	97
28	47		59	98
29	48		60	00
30	50			