



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
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**OIEP Human Resources Bulletin 03-04**

To: Office of Indian Education Program Employees  
From: Human Resources Officer *Joann A. Deere*  
Subject: **Flextime/Compress Work Schedules, Core Hours and Ensuring Adequate Office Coverage**

**References:**

5 U.S.C. 6133(a), 5 C.F.R. Part 610, Subpart D

**Flexible Work Schedules:**

The flexible work schedule was implemented for all Central Office employees on July 3, 2000. It allows employees to report for work no earlier than 7:00 a.m., and to leave work no later than 6:00 p.m., as long as the core hours, between 9:00 a.m., and 3:30 p.m., are included in each of the employee's regular work days.

**Compressed Work Schedules (CWS):**

The CWS was implemented on April 9, 2001. The CWS is commonly referred to as the 5-4/9 schedule. It is a set schedule that allows employees to work eight (8) nine (9) hour days and one (1) eight (8) hour day, plus a 30-minute lunch period per day during each pay period with one (1) CWS-day off.

**Daily Work Schedules in CWS:**

Employees who work a CWS cannot begin work before 7:00 a.m., or end work after 6:00 p.m., of each work day.

**Impact of Travel/Training on CWS:**

Employees who work a compressed work schedule must revert to a fixed eight (8) hour daily schedule during each pay period in which they are in a travel status for three (3) days or more in either week of the pay period.

**Core Hours:**

The core hours for all types of work schedules are between 9:00 a.m., and 3:30 p.m., each work day. All employees who are not otherwise absent from duty on approved leave, CWS day-off, or other approved status, are required to be present for duty during core hours.

**Impact on Contract Education Positions:**

Public Law 95-561 created specific exemptions from Title 5 for positions in the Contract Education Personnel System. Flextime/CWS is not one of these exemptions. Therefore, employees in Contract Education positions can work Flextime/CWS if there is no adverse impact on the OIEP mission. The implementation of these schedules must also be negotiated in the collective bargaining agreement or with the Union at specific locations for employees in a bargaining unit covered by the Union.

**Purpose of Flextime and CWS:**

The purpose of flextime and CWS is to improve work force efficiency, increase productivity and service to the public, reduce costs, and to provide maximum flexibility for meeting employee needs.

**Adequate Office Coverage During Flextime and CWS:**

Every employee plays a significant part in the successful accomplishment of the OIEP mission. Therefore, it is imperative that there be adequate office coverage during all business hours. Office coverage includes, but is not limited to, answering telephones, expeditious handling of inquiries from customers and the public, maintaining clerical, technical and professional support of office functions, providing representation at essential meetings, handling occasional or recurring peak work load requirements, meeting deadlines and meeting other program needs.

**Telephone Coverage:**

Adequate office coverage includes responsiveness to telephone calls. There should always be someone designated to take telephone calls for employees who are away from duty on Flextime and CWS.

**Responsibility for Ensuring Adequate Office Coverage:**

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all offices are adequately covered during official business hours, including the responsibility to maintain adequate coverage for those employees who are absent as a result of Flextime or CWS.

**Employee Responsibilities:**

Employees are responsible for following local procedures; accounting for time and attendance and ensuring that participation in a flextime/CWS does not have an adverse impact on the accomplishment of the OIEP mission. Employees are also responsible for changing telephone voice mail messages to ensure that adequate information is recorded that identifies to callers the individual designated to answer telephone calls for the employee during his or her absence(s).

**Denial and Cancellation of Flextime/CWS:**

An employee's participation in an AWS is subject to management approval. Therefore, a supervisor may deny or cancel an employee's request to work an AWS schedule if the schedule interferes with the employee's responsibility to carry out his or her assigned duties or to complete assigned work on schedule. A supervisor may also change or cancel a flextime/CWS schedule if he or she believes that the schedule is having an adverse impact on the office; including reduced productivity, diminished levels of service to customers or the public, or unreasonable increases in operating costs. A supervisor may also change or cancel an employee's flextime/CWS schedule if he or she has good cause to believe that the employee is abusing the program.

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions concerning the above matter, please contact the Employee and Labor Relations Section at (505) 248-6359.