

### COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULE

- a. PURPOSE: This Circular provides established procedures for compressed work schedules (CWS) for the Atlanta VA Regional. It also prescribes policy, delegated authority, assigns responsibilities, and describes authorized schedules.
- b. BACKGROUND: The concept of Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) has been part of the Federal Government's personnel practices since 1978. Public Law 95-390, the Federal Employee Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978, authorized alternative work schedule experiments in the Federal government. In 1982, Congress again passed legislation, the Federal Employee Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1982, Public Law 97-221, which authorized agencies to continue testing the concept. On December 23, 1985, Congress passed Public Law 99-196 which made the 1982 legislation permanent. This allowed federal agencies to continue and/or institute AWS.
- c. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY: Division Chiefs and Section Chiefs are delegated authority to approve specific work schedules for each participating employee. The 5/4/9 and the 4/10 plans are the only form of compressed work schedules approved for implementation.
- d. DEFINITIONS:
  - a. Compressed Work Schedule (CWS): A schedule which enables full-time employees to work less than 10 workdays in a biweekly pay period while completing their 80 hour basic work requirements.
  - b. 5/4/9 plan: A compressed work schedule whereby employees are allowed to select their work hours, subject to supervisory approval, on a scheduled basis within specified starting and ending periods. Employees have a 9-hour daily basic work requirement for 8 days of the biweekly pay period and an 8 hour day for the ninth day to complete the basic work requirement of 80 hours per biweekly pay period. The 8 hour day and the employee's day off can be any days of the pay period, subject to supervisory approval.
  - c. 4/10 plan: A compressed work schedule whereby employees are allowed to select their work hours, subject to supervisor approval, on a scheduled basis within specified starting (NLT 7:30 am) and ending (NLT 6:00 pm) periods. Employees have a 10-hour daily basic work requirement for 8

days of the biweekly pay period (4 days each week) to complete the basic work requirement of 80 hours per biweekly pay period. The employee's day off each week can be any days of the pay period, subject to supervisory approval (same day each week).

- d. **Regular Day Off:** The calendar day during the compressed work schedule that the employee is not scheduled to work.
  
- e. **POLICY:** The Atlanta VARO will participate in the CWS program for its full-time employees. The CWS program is designed to enhance operational efficiency, promote program goals, and enrich the quality of work life.

VA Regional Office employees will have the right to choose, subject to supervisory approval, whether they want to work 4/10's, 5/4/9 or a standard 5 day, 8 hour per day work schedule. These requests will be acted upon as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days after the request is made. The employee will receive a written notice if the request is denied.

Management, in consultation with employees, will approve the arrival and departure times and days off best suited for their office mission, conditions, and organizational responsibilities. We expect supervisors to be flexible in approving arrival and departure times as well as days off for employees. Approved schedules shall, to the maximum extent possible, support the requirement for office coverage during normal business hours (7:30 AM to 4:00 PM) and days of operation (Monday through Friday).

- f. **EXCLUSIONS:** Excluded from CWS are: Part time employees, employees on temporary appointments, employees in training (1<sup>st</sup> year in position), Public Contact employees (any employee meeting the public on a full time basis), Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) employees, Integrated Disability Examination System (IDES) employees and mailroom employees. Employees providing services in certain programs may be added to or removed from to the exclusions list at the discretion of the Division Chief.
  
- g. **OBJECTIVES:** The use of CWS is intended to provide benefits to the organization, the general public, and employees. Specific objectives are to:
  - a. Create a work environment that will support competitive recruitment and retention of a highly qualified, diverse work force.

- b. Give employees a degree of self-determination by allowing them to select work schedules that respond to their professional and personal responsibilities.
- c. Provide improved service to the public by increasing opportunities for contact with organizations in other time zones.
- d. Reduce the need for extended absences for medical appointments or personal business.
- h. GENERAL PROCEDURES: The following procedures apply to employees working a compressed working schedule:
  - a. Employees who want to start, change, or discontinue an authorized compressed work schedule shall submit a written request to their supervisor.
  - b. Employees on compressed work schedules work established hours, with set arrival and departure times (on the hour and half-hour); therefore, flexible tours cannot be authorized for these employees.
  - c. The earliest an employee may begin duty on any schedule is 6:00 a.m. In addition, the latest regularly work scheduled departure time for employees on all schedules is 6:00 p.m.
  - d. Every effort shall be made to approve an employee's selection of a work schedule option. However, management retains the right to respond to changing work requirements. Supervisors may disapprove or require a change in any work schedule to avoid adverse impact on daily operations and to ensure appropriate coverage of their offices (this includes public contact and telephone coverage).
  - e. Supervisors shall give employees at least one pay period of advanced, written notice when operational priorities require a change in the employee's schedule, except in unusual circumstances; e.g. unforeseen work requirements, special projects, fire, natural disaster, etc.
  - f. Supervisors shall ensure their employee's work schedules are properly documented on their time and attendance records.
  - g. Supervisors shall ensure that employees do not work in excess of their basic work requirement unless overtime or compensatory time has been authorized.

- h. Each employee shall be scheduled for a lunch period of at least 30 minutes per day, beginning NLT 11:00 am and ending NLT 1:30 pm, in addition to his/her basic work requirement. The lunch period may not be taken at the beginning or end of the employees' workday for the purpose of shortening the day.
- i. Supervisors and employees should contact Human Resources to clarify any CWS policy or procedure.

i. SPECIAL SITUATIONS:

a. Travel

- i. Employees on compressed work schedules who are required to travel on temporary duty may continue to work a compressed work schedule if the scheduled travel assignment coincides with the employee's compressed work schedule (i.e., travel is scheduled for an employee on a 5/4/9 CWS for 5 days, Monday through Friday, and the 5 days of travel coincides with the employee's 5 day work week under his/her compressed schedule.)
  - ii. Employees on a compressed work schedule may be required to travel on a temporary duty when the travel assignment does not coincide with the employee's compressed work schedule i.e. an employee on the 5/4/9 CWS travel is scheduled for 5 days (Monday through Friday) and the 5 days of travel falls in the week when the employee is scheduled to work only 4 days. In this case, management has two options (1) move the employee's day off to the other week of the pay period and ensure that the employee's work hours for the pay period total 80 or (2) place the employee on the standard 8 hour per day 5 day tour for that entire pay period (option 2 would be used for individuals on 4/10s). If neither of these options are feasible and the employee is required to work on a regularly scheduled day off, the employee is entitled to either overtime pay or compensatory time off.
- b. Training: If employees on compressed work schedules are scheduled to attend long-term training, their tour of duty for the biweekly pay period should be changed to a standard 8 hour, 5 days week. For short-term training assignments that are scheduled on an employee's regular day off, managers have the option of moving the day off to another day in the pay period or changing the employee's work schedule for that pay period to the standard 8 hour, 5 day week schedule.

- c. **Tours of Duty:** Tours must be changed for the pay period, not just the one week, in order to ensure that employees are scheduled to work 80 hours per pay period. On the 5/4/9 compressed tour, employees work unequal workweeks. Changing the employee's tour for the pay period permits the scheduling of 80 hours over the 10 day pay period. Supervisors should ensure that employees' scheduled tours correspond to the work demands for that pay period.
- d. **Holiday:** An employee who is scheduled to work on a day designated as a holiday is entitled to pay with respect to that day for 9 hours (or 8 hours if it falls on their 8-hour day). When a holiday falls on a regular day off, full-time employees shall be granted the following regularly scheduled work day off. In other words, the regularly scheduled day off does not change; it is the holiday that moves to a different calendar day. For example, if the holiday falls on a Monday, Tuesday will be the day off for the holiday. However, when a holiday falls on a Saturday and the employee is scheduled for Friday off, then the preceding Thursday will be that employee's holiday.
- e. **Leave:** Time off during an employee's basic work requirement must be charged to the appropriate leave category unless the employee is authorized compensatory time off. For example: Full-time employees on the 5/4/9 plan who take 1 day of annual leave will be charged leave for 9 hours if it falls on their 9-hour day (10 hours will be charged for those on 4/10s).
- f. **Administrative leave:** Administrative leave, if approved by the Director, for employees on a compressed work schedule will follow the employee's regularly scheduled tour of duty. For example, if inclement weather results in early dismissal, employees (upon Director's approval) will be granted administrative leave for the remaining hours of their regularly scheduled work day. In the same way, employees serving on a jury will be granted administrative leave for the number of regularly scheduled duty hours for that day. Administrative leave for training will be considered based on the number of approved training hours. Employees may not change their non-workday in order to qualify for administrative leave.
- g. **Changes to Regular Day Off:** There may be an occasional need for an employee to conduct personal business on a day other than his/her regular day off. In this case a supervisor may approve a variation to the employee's schedule to permit a switch of the regular day off. Changes to the regular day off may also occur

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because of travel or training assignments. One-time RDO change requests should be submitted to the Supervisor before the end of the previous Pay Period, preferably before timecards are submitted. Approvals for one-time RDO change requests that come after that time will be considered on a case-by-case basis (should be an emergency situation).

Supervisors must assure that the employee works an 80 hour week, regardless of the changes in the day off.

REFERENCE: VA Handbook 5011

/s/

A.BOCCHICCHIO  
Director

Distribution: All employees  
AFGE Local 517  
NFFE Local 122

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