

January 13, 2009

Alternative Work Schedule Assignments

How Will This Work

In an attempt to provide managers with a series of tools to help them during these tough financial times, we are pleased to offer these work schedule alternatives effective January 1, 2009. By offering the option of working either a ten month assignment or a reduced schedule of at least 32 hours per week we give managers another tool by which to help manage their departmental budgets. In addition to providing some stretch within the budget, these options will increase flexibility in scheduling for both the managers and employees.

New hires, current Full Time Regular (01) employees, or other employees in another employment status transferring into the 01 category will be eligible for either of these work schedules. Management must be careful in implementing ten month or reduced weekly schedule assignments to ensure that appropriate departmental approval has been obtained and that business operations and services are not negatively impacted.

Ten month assignments

- Definition:
 - A work year that should consist of 10 consecutive months worked in a twelve month period.
- Basics of this option:
 - Would most likely coincide with the academic year, but could be based on a fiscal or calendar year.
 - Could exist for either bi-weekly or monthly classifications.
 - Salaries/pay rates would not be adjusted for a ten month assignment, but rather the employee will be placed on a personal Leave Without Pay.
 - Would be based on a .833 FTE but considered full-time.
 - Eligible for all benefits as other full-time employees, including a full TRS year credit.
 - Paid over ten months.
 - Benefit accruals will be calculated at the full-time rate for the 10 months worked. No benefit time will accrue during the 2 months on leave without pay.
 - Employees may volunteer to transition to a ten month assignment, or they may be required to based on the business needs of the work unit. Any volunteer transitions would require the approval of the manager. In some departments, ten month assignments will need to be re-certified or confirmed every year. If an employee volunteers for a 10 month assignment, he or she must

work the entire year on that schedule before making a change back to a regular full time assignment.

- Employees must work 10 out of 12 months during the Teachers Retirement System year of July 1st through June 30th to insure that a full year's credit is received for TRS. It should be noted that 4 months off consecutively is not allowed.

➤ Application:

- Could post and recruit for new positions that are eligible for this work schedule.
- A Data Change Document will have to be processed to place employees in the 10 Month Employee Category and adjust the FTE.
- Both Monthly and Bi-weekly paid employees will have to be placed on Leave Without Pay during the months that they are not working.

Reduced weekly schedules of at least 32 hours

➤ Definition:

- A work schedule that would consist of at least 32 worked hours each week.

➤ Basics of this option:

- Offered all year round or seasonally (summer and semester breaks) and would be reflective of a department's expected work load.
- Could be either bi-weekly or monthly.
- Salary/pay rates would be adjusted for monthly paid employees.
- Biweekly pay rates would not be adjusted, but rather paid for hours worked.
- Would be based on a .8 FTE or higher.
- Paid over twelve months.
- Eligible for benefits as other full-time employees, including full TRS year credit, benefit accruals (prorated), as well as overtime if non-exempt and earned.
- Benefit accruals will be calculated at a prorated rate based on FTE for Monthly paid and hours worked for Biweekly paid. In lieu of designated holidays, employees on the 32 hour schedule will use personal holidays.
- Incumbents may volunteer to transition to a weekly work schedule of at least 32 hours. Any volunteer transitions would require the approval of the manager.
- Managers should remember that exempt employees are paid for the work that they do not the hours they are paid, if they begin to monitor the hours too closely it could become problematic.

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- Employees should make every effort to schedule routine doctor's visits or other personal appointments on their scheduled time off.
- Application:
 - Could post and recruit for new positions that are eligible for this work schedule.
 - A Data Change Document will have to be processed to place employees in the 32 Hour Employee Category and adjust the FTE.
 - No leave documents will be processed for employees in this category, but rather monthly paid pay rates will be reduced and biweekly paid hours will be paid as worked.
 - A Salary Schedule Document will have to be processed to adjust the pay rate for monthly paid over twelve months.

Process to follow

- In collaboration with Human Resources, department leaders could identify certain positions as "eligible for ten month assignments" or as "eligible for reduced weekly schedules".
 - New or replacement positions could be posted and recruited as such.
 - Incumbents may volunteer to transition to either a ten month assignment or request a reduced weekly schedule.
 - If the department decides there is a business need to discontinue the ten month or reduced weekly schedule, every consideration should be given to the prior arrangements or commitments made by the employees in order to work this schedule. Where possible the employee should be given at least two-weeks notice of the required change in schedule.
 - If an employee wishes to discontinue the ten month or reduced weekly schedule, the department must approve the change. Any changes, such as an employee returning to a full time schedule, must be reviewed to see what budget impact this may create.
 - If paid over ten months, employees will be in the arrears for benefit deductions which will be collected upon their return from leave for monthly, or once worked hours are reported again for biweekly.
 - Employees who have transitioned to ten month or reduced weekly schedules may not use benefit accruals to supplement their FTE to be paid over the normally scheduled days or months off.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

- ❖ **What do I do differently to post a job for one of these work schedules?**
When the Position Request Form (PRF) is received in the Employment Office you will be contacted by the Staffing Specialist assigned to recruit for your job. The Staffing Specialist will ask you what the proposed work schedule is for the position. The days and hours will be posted on the UAB Employment Office website based on your needs.
- ❖ **Will employees who work a reduced schedule still be allowed to take family or medical leave (FMLA) time during their shortened work week?**
Yes. Employees with one year of service who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve-month period preceding a leave would be eligible to take FMLA on days the employee is regularly scheduled to work.
- ❖ **Can employees on a reduced schedule still schedule regular vacation, personal holiday, and intermittent sick leave?**
Yes. With supervisor approval.

- ❖ **Is there another option for paying for benefits other than arrears for employees on 10-month assignments?**

Yes. Once an employee is placed on an official leave of absence in the Oracle system, the Benefits Office will send them a letter outlining their options for making payments while out on leave. If the leave is related to the two months off during the 10-month schedule, employees will still be eligible for the employee rate for insurance benefits and may mail in a check for the premiums during the leave. If the Personal leave is not related to the two months off, then the full cost of the insurance plans may apply.

If an employee is placed on leave and does not pay for benefits while away, Oracle arrears will take the deductions upon return. The Oracle leave process will take the entire amount owed in arrears from one check. The arrears payments cannot be made over multiple paychecks. For this reason many employees may wish to make their payments to the Benefits office while away without pay.

It is imperative that departments appoint and return employees from the personal leave in a timely fashion. Otherwise, proper communication to the employee may be delayed and arrears may not be cleared prior to the payroll run for employees who elected to make payments while away.

- ❖ If a monthly employee works 32 hours could that impact the exemption status of their job?
No, as long as the content of the work does not change.
- ❖ When will overtime begin?
Only employees in non-exempt classifications will be eligible for overtime. Overtime calculations will not change, overtime paid will begin after 40 hours have been worked during a work week.
- ❖ Will current 03-status employees who consistently work at least 32 hours per week be eligible to change to this category?
If they are consistently working 32 hours prior to this new option, they will be eligible for this work schedule. (need to move current 03's that are already working 32 hours or more consistently to 01 status).
- ❖ Will employees on the 10-month schedule be required to take the 2-months consecutively or could they take it at different times throughout the year?
It is recommended that the employee take the 2 months consecutively, however, it is a decision that is made between the employee and the manager. Consideration should be taken into account for departmental workload fluctuation and ease of tracking employee hours worked (can't take 2 months back to back, total of 4, particularly in a TRS year).
- ❖ Can departments move employees to one of these work schedules regardless of if they volunteer or not?
Yes. The alternative work schedule may be voluntary or can be required by management due to operational or budget requirements.
- ❖ Can vacation, personal holiday, or sick leave be used during the 2 months that someone is off while on the 10 month option?
No. Leave accrual time cannot be paid while an employee is on leave without pay.
- ❖ Will employees that are on the 10 month option still receive holidays for those that fall during their scheduled 2 month leave?
No. The employee will be on a leave without pay, and will not receive the holidays when they return to work.
- ❖ Will employees that are on the 32 hour option be eligible for designated holidays?
No. Employees must use prorated personal holidays.

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- ❖ When should a leave start for those on the 10 month option?
At the start of a pay period.