**Flexible Working Arrangements**

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide options for flexible working arrangements and alternative ways that best achieve overall programme objectives and optimal performance, while balancing the needs of staff members with the demands of work. This policy supersedes all other versions of policies and procedures on working arrangements.

**Guiding Principles**

# A facility, not an entitlement

2. Flexible working arrangements must be applied consistently and equitably. However, it is understood that flexible working arrangements may be more suitable to some jobs or functions than to others, and as such the decision on how best to implement flexible working arrangements remains at the discretion of the manager who is responsible for the results of the organizational unit. Therefore, the granting or continuation of an already approved flexible working arrangement is not an entitlement. A flexible working arrangement may be deferred or cancelled at any time, if the manager considers that the urgent needs and priorities of work require staff members to return to a normal schedule of reporting to the office. The withdrawal or decline of a request for flexible working is not subject to UNDP’s grievance/appeals procedures.

# Cost neutrality

3. The introduction and operation of flexible working arrangements do not normally represent additional costs for the Organization unless exceptionally approved by the Head of Office/Bureau.

# Performance and accountability

4. The organizational unit is accountable for maintaining its overall productivity levels, a mutual accountability exists under flexible working arrangements. Therefore, staff members must ensure that their level of productivity is sustained by choosing to work flexibly. The work plan of a unit and an individual must reflect the flexible working arrangements, including arrangements for an individual who will serve as a backup for a specific function. In addition, supervisors must take into account the backstopping element and reflect it in the performance assessment of the staff members concerned. Managers and staff members are expected to define clear deliverables prior to the start of a flexible working arrangement and keep lines of communication open throughout its duration, even on a telecommuting arrangement (See paragraph 64 and subsequent paragraphs).

# Discussions with appropriate parties

5. The implementation of flexible working arrangements should always take place following detailed discussions on the work implications for all involved; this could mean intra-office discussions and, in some instances, also inter-office discussions. Office supervisors have a responsibility for consulting all parties concerned, especially other team members who work with the individual who is requesting flexible working arrangements. The arrangements are subject to review on an on-going basis.

# Options

6. UNDP offers the following flexible working arrangements:

1. Flexitime
2. Compressed working schedules
3. Part-time employment
4. Telecommuting.

# Flexitime

## Definition

7. Flexitime is defined as flexible working hours at the beginning and/or end of the day, that are core hours established by respective offices during which all staff members must be present at work.

## Eligibility

8. The option for flexitime work is open to all categories of staff members. However, the needs of the Organization must come first, and flexitime is an option, not a right. In very small offices, flexitime may not be feasible; however, such decisions are at the discretion of each individual office.

## Length of work day

9. All staff members must work a set number of hours per day, though this policy permits a flexible time schedule within the limits defined herein. All staff members, including those who opt to work under a flexitime arrangement, except those working on a part-time basis, must take a 30-minute lunch break according to parameters defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

## Core time

10. Core time refers to the hours of the day when staff members must be at work. For example, the core hours established for UNDP headquarters in New York are 10:00am to 4:00pm. They are intended to guide managers in the organization of activities, such as meetings where input from all staff members is required. Outside core hours, staff members may complete functions not requiring interaction with other staff members; however, they are expected to work the number of hours per day established by respective offices, under the common workweek.

## Starting and ending times

1. Starting and ending times can be varied to meet personal needs of staff members. However, this is not an entitlement but an agreement between managers and staff members, with an understanding of the impact on colleagues in the section/unit.

1. Flexitime example for New York: The official core hours are from 10:00am to 4:00pm daily. Examples of flexible hours could be: from 8:00am to 4:00pm (4:30pm during October, November and December) daily; or from 10:00am to 6:00pm (6:30pm during October, November and December) daily, established for a fixed and renewable period of time.

## Resumption of normal working hours

1. The supervisor or staff member may request that flexitime arrangements cease if the supervisor considers that the needs of the Organization necessitate a return to normal working hours, or the needs of the staff member change.

1. In cases where the supervisor requests a return to normal hours, the staff member will be given a reasonable time (maximum one month) to make arrangements to facilitate a return to regular, full-time working hours.

# Compressed working schedules

## Definition

15. Compressed working schedules permit staff members to increase the number of hours worked per day to:

1. gain free time on other days; or
2. have a day off.

This can be accomplished by adding a small amount of work time to each working day, enabling the accumulation of enough hours to take every alternate Friday off, for example. Options to consider are outlined below:

## The ‘10 in 9’ option

1. Under this option, a staff member works a two-week schedule of 10 days in nine days.

1. The Head of office – after consulting with the staff association – determines which day of the week will be the potential free day every other week. In duty stations where Friday is part of the weekend, the alternative day off would fall on the last day of the working week, or Country Offices might decide that the first working day of the week would serve as the most suitable day for supporting this programme.

1. Determining the time that must be added to each working day is simple. At headquarters, for example, staff members would have to work an additional 50 minutes per day.

1. While all categories of staff members are eligible to participate, supervisors should ensure staggered use of the alternate Friday off/day off. Coverage at all times is an essential part of smoothly integrating flexible working arrangements into the work of a section/unit. Discussions need to take into account the distribution of work among staff members.

1. Occasions may arise where the immediate demands of work prevent a staff member from enjoying a specific alternate day off. When this happens, there is no deferral of the day off to another day or the accrual of free days to be taken in the future.

1. A lunch break should be used for its intended purpose. Therefore, staff members are not permitted to forfeit the lunch break in lieu of additional working hours.

1. Managerial discipline is required to avoid scheduling meetings on staff members’ scheduled days off.

1. A compressed working schedule must be modelled on the following examples for a specified period and be agreed by the immediate supervisor:

## The ‘5 in 4 1/2’ option

1. Under this option, the staff member is allowed to work the total number of working hours of five days in four-and-a-half. Example: In an office where the total workweek comprises 35 working hours, the staff member works eight hours from Monday to Thursday and three hours on Friday.

## The ‘3 and 2’ option

25. Under this option, the staff member may leave up to three hours earlier two days per week. The six hours are compensated by adding two hours to the remaining three days of the week.

## The ‘2 and 2’ option

26. Under this option, the staff member may leave up to two hours earlier two days per week. The four hours are compensated by adding one hour and 20 minutes to the remaining three days of the week; or one hour-and-a-half to two of the remaining three days and one hour to the third day.

## The ‘1 and 3’ option

27. Under this option, the staff member may leave up to one hour earlier three days per week. The three hours are compensated by adding one hour and a half to the remaining two days of the week.

## The ‘1 1⁄2 and 3’ option

28. Under this option, the staff member may leave up to one and a half hours earlier three days per week. The four and a half hours are compensated by adding two-and-a-quarter hours to the remaining two days of the week.

# Part-time employment

## Definition

29. Part-time employment allows existing staff members to adjust their work schedule for a limited period of time, to less than 100 percent full-time work. Work can only be reduced to 50 percent to 80 percent of the established work time, as agreed between staff members and their supervisors.

## Eligibility

1. Part-time employment is available to all categories of existing staff members for a limited period, while occupying and serving in a specific post. Part-time employment may be granted for child-care responsibilities, illness in the family, pursuit of outside studies relevant to UNDP work, and other such situations.

1. Bearing in mind that part-time work can only be considered in the context of the post’s description/duties, the Organization must be satisfied that:
   1. Part-time work is justifiable;
   2. There is a structure in place for the staff member to carry out the agreed responsibilities of the post on a part-time basis; and
   3. The work of the Organization will not suffer as a result of this part-time arrangement.

1. If at any time during the part-time arrangement the supervisor considers that the work is adversely affected as a result of the arrangement, the supervisor will review the situation with the Head of office and will ask the staff member concerned to change to full-time employment, normally within one month.

1. Establishment of part-time employment depends on agreement between the staff member and supervisor and approval by the Head of office concerning the structure of work and the delivery of sufficient productivity to support the office work programme; each request to enter into part-time employment arrangements must be carefully reviewed.

# Contractual Status

1. When a staff member avails of the part-time employment arrangement, offices will be allowed to monetize the remainder of the full-time position to fund additional capacity, as needed.
2. A change to part-time employment shall not affect the staff member’s contractual status. Part-time staff members benefit from the same privileges and immunities and are subject to the same obligations and restrictions relating to outside activities under the relevant staff rules as full-time staff members.

# Official Holidays and Overtime

1. Staff members on part-time employment will be granted official holidays only when such holidays fall on a regular working day in their regular schedule. Part-time staff members may not change their regular schedule to take advantage of an official holiday.

1. General Service part-time staff members who are required to work in excess of their regular schedule shall be remunerated at the straight time rate for additional hours worked up to the normal scheduled workday of full-time staff members. Thereafter, and for work required on the sixth or seventh day of the scheduled workweek or on an official holiday, they shall be compensated according to the conditions governing compensation for overtime work.

# Salary and Allowances

1. Under a part-time work schedule, compensation is adjusted to the agreed proportion of work at the staff member’s grade level and step, and forms the basis for determining prorated salary and applicable allowances, except for health, dental and life insurance. BES/GSSC helps assess how entry into a part-time work schedule would affect the compensation package.

1. Within-grade salary increments accrue under the same conditions and with the same periodicity as for full-time staff members.

1. Under a part-time work schedule, a staff member who is temporarily assigned to a higher-level function is only eligible for Special Post Allowance if the staff member reverts back to a full-time working schedule.

# Dependent child allowance

1. In cases where a part-time staff member or the staff member’s spouse receives a direct governmental grant in respect of dependent children, the total amount of the grant shall be deducted from the prorated amount of the dependency allowance payable to the staff member. If the government grant exceeds the amount of the prorated dependency allowance, this will not preclude the recognition of the children as dependants of the staff member for other purposes such as coverage by medical insurance.

1. The earnings limit for the dependent spouse allowance shall not be prorated.

# Mobility and hardship allowance

1. The qualifying period of service shall be prorated for staff members in part-time employment. For example, 15 months of service at 80 percent will count as one year.

# Education grant or special education grant

1. Payment to eligible part-time staff members shall be under the same terms and conditions as for full-time staff members in similar circumstances but prorated based on the agreed proportion of work.

# Rental subsidy

1. Part-time staff members shall be entitled to rental subsidy under the same terms and conditions as full-time staff members, except that they will receive a prorated portion based on the agreed proportion of work.

# Annual leave

1. The 2 1⁄2 days per month of annual leave provided to full-time staff members will be adjusted for part-time employment based on the agreed proportion of work. For example, for staff members on an 80 percent part-time basis, they will be entitled to two full days of annual leave per month (80 percent of 2 1⁄2 = 2). A maximum of 48 full days of annual leave may be carried forward from 31 March of each year (80 percent of 60 days = 48);

1. Staff members seeking 80 percent part-time employment should first bring their accrued annual leave balance to 48 days or less before changing to part-time employment, so as not to lose any accrued annual leave beyond the 48-day maximum entitlement. Following a change to part-time employment, a staff member cannot use accrued annual leave to remain on full pay.

# Sick leave

1. The same provisions governing sick leave in respect of full-time staff members apply to part-time staff members. During sick leave, part-time staff members will receive their respective prorated salary and allowances. For example, staff members on 80 percent part-time employment are entitled to five and a half days of uncertified sick leave per calendar year — representing 80 percent of the normal seven-day entitlement for full-time staff members.

# Maternity leave

1. The maternity leave benefits granted to full-time staff members are also afforded to part-time staff members. During maternity leave, part-time staff members will receive their respective prorated salary and allowances. As a general rule, requests for extended leave (either annual or unpaid) up to 6 months and flexible working hours following maternity leave should be granted. In case there is a compelling reason that prevents the supervisor from granting the request, a written justification must be endorsed by the Head of Office and the respective Bureau.

**Paternity Leave**

1. The paternity leave benefits granted to full-time staff members are also afforded to part-time staff members. During paternity leave, part-time staff members will receive their respective prorated salary and allowances. As a general rule, requests for extended leave (either annual or unpaid) and flexible working arrangements following paternity leave should be granted. In case there is a compelling reason that prevents the supervisor from granting the request, a written justification must be endorsed by the Head of Office and the respective Bureau.

**Adoption and Surrogacy Leave**

1. The adoption and surrogacy leave benefits granted to full-time staff members are also afforded to part-time staff members. During adoption or surrogacy leave, part-time staff members will receive their respective prorated salary and allowances. As a general rule, requests for extended leave (either annual or unpaid) and flexible working arrangements following adoption or surrogacy leave should be granted. In case there is a compelling reason that prevents the supervisor from granting the request, a written justification must be endorsed by the Head of the Office and the respective Bureau.

# Education grant travel

1. Part-time staff members eligible for education grant travel for their children shall be granted such travel under the same conditions as full-time staff members, except that they shall receive a prorated portion of the lump sum based on the agreed proportion of work, or they shall be requested to contribute the remaining portion of the actual cost of the ticket which would be payable to full-time staff members for each travel actually undertaken. Travel documents raised (e.g. travel authorization) should reflect the relevant arrangement.
2. At the time of changing from full-time to part-time employment, the rate of reimbursement for the first education grant travel following the change shall be established on the basis of the longest period of time the staff member has been employed full-time or part-time during the relevant school year. For example, if the school year has a duration of 10 months and within this period the staff member has worked full-time for five and a half months, the staff member will be entitled to the full costs of the travel expenses.

# Home leave and family visit travel

1. Part-time staff entitled to home leave and/or family visit travel shall be granted such travel and related entitlements under the same terms and conditions and with the same periodicity as full-time staff, except that they shall receive a prorated portion of the lump sum based on the agreed proportion of work, or they shall be requested to contribute the remaining portion of the actual cost of the ticket which would be payable to full-time staff for each travel actually undertaken. Travel documents raised (e.g. travel authorization) should reflect the relevant arrangement.

1. At the time of changing from full-time to part-time employment, the rate of reimbursement for the first home leave/family visit travel following the change shall be established on the basis of the longest period of time the staff member has been employed full-time or part-time during the period between the staff member’s return from their last home leave and the departure date of the staff member’s next home leave.

# Medical insurance

1. Part-time staff members shall be eligible for full medical insurance under the same terms and conditions specified as full-time staff members, except that they will be required to meet the difference in cost for full coverage under their selected medical plan and the proportion covered by the Organization. The amount of the subsidy paid by the Organization will be prorated based on the agreed proportion of work, and the staff member must pay the rest of the premium themselves.

# Pension fund participation

1. Part-time staff members are entitled to participation in the [UNJSPF](https://www.unjspf.org/) in accordance with supplementary Article A of the Regulations of the Fund. A change to part-time employment will not interrupt a staff member’s participation. The entitlement to and the amount of benefits resulting from part-time employment shall be reduced in the ratio which part-time employment bears to full-time employment. For example, the ratio for someone after one year of work at 80 percent part-time will count as nine months and 18 days of contributory service. The pensionable remuneration used for the calculation of benefits is the pensionable remuneration that would have been applicable for full-time employment.

1. Part-time pension participants who are on special leave without pay shall be entitled to count such leave without pay as contributory service in the UNJSPF, provided full contributions are received by the Pension Fund. The total amount of these contributions would be the same as that which would have been payable by the participant and the Organization if the participant had continued in part-time employment during that period. In accordance with Article 25(b)(I) of the Regulations of the Fund, if the staff member wishes the time on SLWOP to count as contributory service in the Pension Fund, the staff member must pay these contributions in full.

# Seniority in grade

1. For the purpose of seniority in grade, the qualifying period of service shall be prorated in the case of staff members in part-time employment. For example, 15 months of service at 80 percent will count as one year.

# Application for a higher-level post

1. If part-time staff members wish to apply for a vacancy at a higher grade, they must be advised that they have to revert to full-time employment to be considered eligible. If selected for a higher-level post, the staff member will have to submit a new request to continue part-time employment following the staff member’s placement.

# Appendix D entitlements

1. The compensation benefits payable under [Appendix D](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/148787?ln=en#:~:text=the%20United%20Nations.-,Appendix%20D%2C%20Rules%20governing%20compensation%20in%20the%20event%20of%20death,behalf%20of%20the%20United%20Nations.&text=the%20United%20Nations-,Rules%20governing%20compensation%20in%20the%20event%20of%20death%2C%20injury%20or,behalf%20of%20the%20United%20Nations.) of the UN Staff Rules in the event of death, injury or illness shall be prorated based on the agreed proportion of work of the amounts determined in accordance with Articles 10.2 and 11.1(c), respectively, except that in the event of death the benefits shall take previous full-time service into account on a prorated basis. The additional lump-sum payments made in the case of injury or illness resulting in permanent disfigurement or permanent loss of a member or function shall be the full amounts indicated in Article 11.3(c) and the full amounts determined in accordance with Article 11.3(d).

# Separation from service travel

1. Eligible part-time staff members separating from the Organization are entitled to return travel under the same conditions as full-time staff members, provided the appropriate service requirements have been satisfied. Such staff members shall be entitled to the same unaccompanied shipment and removal entitlements as full-time staff members, provided their combined period of full-time service is equivalent to the period of service required for full-time staff members to receive such entitlements. A period of part-time service will be counted on a prorated basis for these purposes at the agreed proportion of the work.

# Termination indemnity

1. Part-time staff members shall be paid termination indemnity in accordance with the provisions of Annex III to the UN Staff Regulations under the same terms and conditions of full-time staff members, except that periods of service in part-time employment shall be prorated accordingly. For example, for staff members working at 80 percent part-time, 15 months of service shall be counted as one year of service.

# Repatriation grant

1. Repatriation grant shall be paid to part-time staff members under the same terms and conditions as for full-time staff members in accordance with Annex IV of the Staff Rules, except that periods of service in part-time employment shall be prorated accordingly. For example, for staff members working at 80 percent part-time, 15 months of part-time service shall be counted as one year of service.

# Commutation of accrued annual leave

1. For part-time staff members separating from the Organization, annual leave may be paid up to the maximum number allowed based on their part-time employment — i.e. whether 50 percent or 80 percent of the total 60 days granted to full-time staff members.

# Death benefit

1. For the purpose of calculating a death benefit, the period of service in part-time employment shall be counted at the prorated proportional rate as the period in full-time employment.

**Telecommuting**

# Definition

1. Telecommuting allows staff members to perform their regular work schedule in an alternate location away from the office.

# Options

1. To effectively implement a telecommuting arrangement, both the staff member and the staff member’s office must be able to support the telecommunication/automation platform that makes the separation from the workplace insignificant.

1. UNDP currently offers two types of telecommuting that now serve as the models for broader application: an alternate dedicated worksite, for full-time work performed outside the office; or scheduled periodic work away from the office, for work temporarily performed outside the office.

# Alternate dedicated worksite

1. Full-time telecommuting is currently considered most appropriate for highly specialized work where the service is delivered primarily through automated systems. To consider the creation of a full-time telecommuting arrangement, staff members and their supervisors must first address together several issues:
2. Does the nature of the work allow it to be easily done away from the office?
3. Can an individual work plan be crafted which specifies measurable outputs to be achieved within fixed time-frames?
4. Can the work of the staff member be easily integrated with the work of colleagues in the office?
5. Are the costs of telecommuting sustainable for the staff member and the office?

# Telecommuting compact (full time)

1. UNDP has established a structure for assessing the conditions that must be met for a staff member and the staff member’s supervisor to establish a formal telecommuting arrangement. The [Telecommuting Agreement](https://popp.undp.org/node/5336) contains a structured compact that addresses each issue where the terms of the telecommuting arrangement are specified. At the end of the compact both staff member and supervisor establish the term of the arrangement. It is understood by both parties that either party may terminate the arrangement at the end of the agreed term with a return to the traditional working environment consistent with the staff member’s employment contract.

1. Telecommuting can take place from a site as close as the normal commuting distance from the office or as far as from another country on another continent. Depending on this distance, the creation of a telecommuting arrangement may require an adjustment in the staff member’s conditions of service. This may require a change of duty station for the purpose of entitlements for which the HR focal point at the duty station must inform the HR Team Lead in BES/GSSC. If the full-time telecommuting arrangement commences before completion of one year in the duty station of assignment, the payments related to relocation and settling-in shall normally be prorated and recovered or adjusted accordingly. Entering into a full-time telecommuting arrangement does not change the contractual status under which a staff member is employed. Where there is no change in duty station required to establish the alternate dedicated worksite, conclusion of the telecommuting compact would be sufficient to establish the arrangement. For nationally recruited staff members, telecommuting arrangements are currently restricted to alternate dedicated worksites within the country or within commuting distance.

# Equipment needs

1. The responsibility to comprehend and apply computer-based approaches to everyday work rests primarily with the individual. While the Organization facilitates the introduction of automation technologies to the workplace, formal organized training will not be a regular feature for most new computer applications. Therefore, the establishment of a telecommuting work arrangement pre-supposes the capacity of the staff member, supervisor and colleagues to work effectively in the virtual environment.

1. The Organization may mandate certain telecommunication/computer specifications necessary to support a telecommuting workplace away from the office. These specifications cover the equipment, software and telecommunication interface which are minimally necessary. The capability to set up and maintain this platform must rest with the staff member. The cost of the computer equipment may be fully or partially supported by the Organization, depending on which option for telecommuting governs the working arrangement.

# Equipment costs

1. Where telecommuting has been arranged as a full-time form of employment, the cost of computer equipment, up to the cost of equipment which would be normally provided by the Organization for a standard employment arrangement, can be applied to support telecommuting. The staff member should meet additional costs for peripheral equipment such as printers, scanners, cameras and modems. Equipment purchased by UNDP to support a telecommuting arrangement must be entered into the equipment inventory of the office concerned and returned to the Organization at the conclusion of the telecommuting arrangement. The computer must be password protected and dedicated to the work of UNDP.

1. Telecommunication costs related to the maintenance of a telecommuting arrangement incurred by the staff member must be borne by the staff member. Much like the transportation costs incurred by staff members who commute to work under the standard working arrangements, the telecommuting costs incurred should be seen as intrinsic costs of this type of employment. With respect to the cost for occasional travel by a telecommuting staff member to the office for consultations and work planning, it should be possible for offices to demonstrate savings in other areas (e.g. mission travel), which may be used to offset these costs. Offices should be aware that a telecommuting staff member should be present in the office for at least one week per year to review the work arrangement and arrange for continuation or re-integration into the office.

# Scheduled periodic work away from the office

1. The other form of telecommuting is a hybrid form of employment that combines work within the standard office with periodic work from an alternate site. Under informal arrangements, staff members are permitted to work occasionally from home and are listed for attendance purposes as if present at work. For the occasional need to work from home to support a particular assignment or for a very short unforeseen personal need, UNDP will leave the current informal approaches in place. These approaches depend on close communication between the staff member and supervisor to ensure that the occasional work from home meets the staff member’s commitments to the Organization.

# Telecommuting compact (part time)

1. Under the arrangements for scheduled periodic work away from the office, a staff member may work from an alternative site up to two days per week. This work must be supported by a telecommunications/automation platform that allows the staff member to connect fully to the office. A telecommuting compact must also be established between the staff member and the supervisor for telecommuting as provided for in the Telecommuting Agreement, which includes a sample agreement that establishes the schedule for work away from the office. This schedule should provide for clearly established times when the staff member will be telecommuting.

1. With a hybrid working arrangement, the Organization will be required to maintain working facilities in the office for the staff member. While other staff members, temporary assistance or consultants may use these facilities during the scheduled periods of telecommuting, it is unlikely that the Organization will realize any significant resource savings through this telecommuting arrangement which can be applied to assist in meeting the costs of creating a viable work platform at the alternate site. Therefore, under this arrangement, the cost for the computer equipment and related telecommunication connections are normally borne entirely by the staff member, but exceptions may be made by the Head of the Office/Bureau. Similarly, telecommunication costs incurred by the staff member in support of the telecommuting arrangements also must be met by the staff member.

# Duration

1. As with full-time telecommuting, the arrangements for scheduled periodic work away from the office should be established for a maximum of one year. These arrangements will be subject to review and the agreement of both the staff member and the supervisor for extension. Similar to the approach for introducing flexible work arrangements, the introduction of telecommuting should take into account the impact on the work of colleagues and co-workers in the section/unit/working team. For telecommuting to work effectively, means of communication not only between the staff member and supervisor but also with peers must be established.

# Considerations pertaining to costs and liabilities

1. UNDP will not be liable for damages to the staff member’s personal property while the staff member is performing official duties or while using UNDP equipment. If the staff member’s home has been designated as the place for telecommuting, the staff member should review their home insurance policies, as the use of the home as an office may not be covered by existing contracts.

1. Staff members are responsible for providing a reasonably safe and secure working environment to carry out their responsibilities.