

REDUCED WORKING HOURS POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to assist services achieve service efficiencies by providing employees with the opportunity to reduce their working hours subject to operational requirements. Any reduction in working hours will be a permanent change to the employee's contract.
- 1.2 The policy applies to all employees engaged on both full time and part-time contracts of employment and supplements the council's existing Procedure for Requesting Flexible Working for Parents and Carers, available at [MyToolkit](#).
- 1.3 Service Managers will consider all requests submitted in accordance with the criteria set out within this policy.

2 REDUCTION IN HOURS

- 2.1 Any employee with 26 weeks continuous service may apply to voluntarily reduce the number of hours worked each week.
- 2.2 Any request to reduce working hours will be considered in conjunction with service requirements.
- 2.3 The reduction in hours will be a permanent change to the employment contract.
- 2.4 The minimum reduction in hours considered will be 10%.
- 2.5 Reduction in hours can be achieved through term time working, taking additional unpaid leave or reducing working hours.

3 TERM TIME WORKING

- 3.1 Employees may wish to reduce their hours to work a term time contract, being a working year which shall consist of 195 days (38 weeks per year) and which will coincide with the school year for pupils.
- 3.2 Annual salary will be paid in 12 equal monthly payments, inclusive of pro rata annual leave entitlement.

4 ADDITIONAL UNPAID LEAVE

- 4.1 Employees may wish to permanently increase their annual leave entitlement.
- 4.2 Employees can request up to a maximum of an additional 6 weeks unpaid annual leave per year.
- 4.3 The additional leave does not have to be taken as a block but must be taken within the leave year.

5 APPLICATION

- 5.1 Applications should be made to the relevant service manager and employees who wish to reduce their working hours should complete the appropriate application form as set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 Where an employee wishes to exercise their statutory rights under the Work and Families Act (2006), the application should be processed in accordance with Right to Request Flexible Working Managers Guide, available at [MyToolkit](#).
- 5.3 Employees should state whether they are applying for; a reduction in hours, an increase in unpaid annual leave or term time working. Employees should also outline what impact, if any, this reduction will have on service delivery and suggestions as to how their duties could be re allocated.
- 5.4 Applications should be made a minimum of 1 month prior to the proposed date of change.
- 5.5 Managers will respond to requests in writing within 10 working days. In some circumstances a decision may be taken to agree to the request in principle with a variation on the reduction in hours proposed or amount of unpaid leave.
- 5.6 Where the service manager decides that the post is not suitable for reduced hours working, reasons for this decision will be communicated to the employee in writing, outlining the appeals process.

6 RIGHT OF APPEAL

- 6.1 Employees may appeal against a decision not to grant their application by writing to the Head of Service within 14 days of being advised of the outcome of their application.
- 6.2 The Head of Service must arrange an appeal hearing within 14 days of receipt of the appeal.
- 6.3 The Head of Service must provide a written decision within 14 days of the hearing, unless an extension is mutually agreed
- 6.4 If the appeal is rejected the Head of Service must provide a written explanation or the grounds for dismissing the appeal.

7 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Reductions in hours will constitute a permanent change to the employment contract.

7.2 Where a reduction in hours is agreed, employees will be paid pro-rata for the actual hours worked.

7.3 Annual leave and public holiday entitlement will be recalculated to reflect the reduction in hours. All other contractual arrangements will remain unchanged.

7.4 Where additional unpaid leave is agreed, arrangements will be made to deduct the relevant payments.

8. PENSION

8.1 Employees are advised to contact Lothian Pension Scheme (www.lpf.org.uk) or Scottish Public Pensions Agency (www.sppa.gov.uk) to discuss the impact the reduction in working hours may have on their pension. Employees should do this prior to making an application to reduce their working hours.

8.2 If an employee decides to take an extended period of unpaid annual leave, the employee is still required to make pension contributions for the first 30 days of absence.

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

9.1 Heads of Service will be responsible for monitoring the application of the Policy within their service area. The Head of Corporate Services will carry out corporate monitoring of the policy to evaluate effectiveness and undertake a review where necessary.

9.2 Agreed changes to terms and conditions such as a reduction in hours or unpaid leave are deemed to be permanent contractual changes. An employee does not have a legal right to revert to their previous working arrangements, although the council will consider any such requests as they arise.

10. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

10.1 This policy may be reviewed as required in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

APPLICATION TO REDUCE WORKING HOURS

Employee Details	
Name	Job Title
Work Location	Service Area
I have read and understood the council's policy on reducing working hours and I have more than 26 weeks service with West Lothian Council. I confirm the details in this application are correct.	
Signed	Date

Current Working Hours: -

Please tick which option you wish to apply for,

	Please Tick	Total
Reduction in Hours (% reduction)		
Additional Unpaid Annual Leave (no. of additional days requested)		
Term time contract		

Date you would like the change to start:

Affects of reduction in hours to working arrangements.

Please delete as applicable

I have considered the effects of my request on service provision and do not consider that there will be any detrimental impact on service delivery

OR

I have considered the effects of my request on service provision and consider that the following adjustments will be necessary to ensure there is no detrimental impact on service delivery:

To be completed by line manager

Name:

Job Title:

Date Application Received:.....

Was the request approved: YES/NO

If yes, start date:

If NO please provide reasons for your decision:

Manager Signature:.....

Date:.....

Completed form and contractual change documentation should be sent to
HRChanges@westlothian.gov.uk