

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANUAL SYSTEM

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SUBJECT: Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)

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I. GENERAL

This DPM Letter outlines the Department of Transportation (DOT) policy and procedural requirements for flexible and compressed work schedules, jointly referred to as Alternative Work Schedules (AWS). AWS is authorized by 5 U.S.C., Chapter 61, Subchapter II and 5 C.F.R. Part 610, Subpart D.

II. POLICY

- A. DOT is committed to the implementation of personnel policies which improve the quality of life for employees and thereby improve the productivity and effectiveness of the workplace. The general experience of both the private and public sectors with AWS indicates these programs provide employees a freedom and control over their personal and working lives which in turn have a direct and positive contribution to the overall effectiveness of the work of the organization.
- B. DOT organizations are encouraged to consider the benefits to the overall work mission and their employees that may be derived from the implementation of AWS programs.
- C. AWS programs may be implemented if management has determined that the schedule will have no adverse impact on the work of the organization and each program meets the program guidelines specified in Attachments 1 and 2.
- D. If, at any time, it is determined that an AWS program is having an adverse impact on work operations, the program shall be modified or terminated immediately

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consistent with the requirements of 5 U.S.C., Chapter 71, the labor-management partnership provisions of Executive Order 12871 and any existing negotiated agreements.

- E. Each AWS program shall be conducted in such a manner that managers, supervisors, and employees fully understand that new and different work requirements accompany AWS arrangements. The success of each AWS program will depend to a very large degree upon the joint commitment and partnership between management and employees to ensure the AWS program is conducted in the most optimal way to, first, meet the work needs of the organization and, second, meet the personal needs of employees.

III. COVERAGE

The provisions of this DPM Letter apply to all DOT employees, grade level 15, or equivalent, and below. The provisions of this DPM Letter do not apply to DOT employees above grade level 15, or equivalent. DOT elements may include or exclude selected units or categories of employees in order to meet organizational goals, missions, or needs, consistent with the labor management considerations specified in Section VI.

IV. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- A. The objective for establishing an AWS program must be clearly defined and communicated to both employees and managers. This will help to ensure the success of the program. Specific expectations that show benefits to the organization and employees will serve as the basis for implementation and program assessment.
- B. AWS program objectives might include any of the following:
 - 1. improved service to the public;
 - 2. improved operational efficiency and productivity;
 - 3. decreased operating costs;
 - 4. decreased traffic, parking congestion, energy consumption, and air pollution;
 - 5. enhanced ability to attract a diverse work force;
 - 6. improved competitiveness in recruiting and retaining high quality employees;

7. improved quality of worklife and employee morale;
or
8. improved accommodation of employees with temporary
or continuing health problems or disabilities.

V. AWS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Appendices A and B provide program guidelines for AWS programs in DOT.

VI. LABOR MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The development, establishment, termination, or modification of AWS for bargaining unit employees is subject to the labor-management partnership provisions of Executive Order 12871, the requirements of 5 U.S.C., and any existing negotiated agreements.

VII. PAYROLL COORDINATION

Special time/attendance training will need to be provided to time and attendance clerks and supervisors. This should be coordinated with the Consolidated Uniform Payroll System.

VIII. DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT

Questions regarding this policy may be addressed to Mrs. Gail Batt of my staff on 366-9448.



Director of Personnel

Attachments

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES (AWS)

Program Guidelines

I. Program Establishment

- A. A written assessment of the potential positive and negative aspects of AWS programs is required prior to the implementation of any program. General criteria for this assessment is provided in Appendix B, "Program Assessment of Alternative Work Schedules".
- B. A written determination must be made by the Head of an Operating Administration or Departmental Officer, or his/her designee, that implementation of AWS will not disrupt work operations or the accomplishment of the work mission.

II. Program Approval

AWS programs which meet these program guidelines may be approved by the Head of an Operating Administration or Departmental Officer, or his/her designee.

III. Program Control

- A. Proper supervisory control and oversight of work operations is a mandatory requirement for all AWS programs in DOT. This provision is to ensure successful AWS programs which contribute to, not hamper, the work of the organization.
- B. Each organization must establish a formal, written mechanism to control and monitor AWS programs to prevent any adverse impact.
- C. Program control and oversight must ensure there will be no "adverse agency impact". This is defined as a reduction of productivity, a diminished level of services furnished to the public, or an increase in the cost of operations (other than a reasonable administrative cost relating to the process of establishing AWS).

IV. Training and Technical Assistance

- A. AWS requires a new approach by both management and employees to work management that is very different from traditional methods. Experience indicates that AWS programs generally are not successful if conducted in the manner of "business as usual".
- B. A central focus of each AWS program shall be the development of a training/orientation program which ensures managers and employees fully understand that the success of each AWS program will depend largely on the establishment of a joint employee/management commitment and partnership. This partnership must have the following goal:

To ensure the AWS program is conducted in the most optimal way to, first, meet the work needs of the organization and, second, meet the personal needs of employees.

- C. Each organization must provide training and/or orientation sessions relative to the AWS program which emphasize:
 - 1. the employee/management partnership; and
 - 2. the new and different responsibilities required for successful AWS programs.
- D. Attendance at a training/orientation session is a mandatory requirement for both managers and employees before participating in an AWS program. In work situations where this is impractical, e.g., remote locations, alternative methods may be substituted which ensure all participants are provided with the necessary tools and knowledge to make the AWS program successful.
- E. Union representatives should be invited to attend training and orientation sessions.

V. Program Evaluation

- A. Evaluations shall be conducted at the end of the first year of the AWS program. These will be provided to the Heads of Operating Administrations and Departmental Officers, or their designees, for use in determining if the program is to be continued, modified, or terminated.

- B. Subsequent evaluations should be conducted periodically to ensure the AWS program is in no way adversely impacting the work of the organization.

VI. Program Recertification

- A. It is recommended that the Heads of Operating Administrations and Departmental Officers, or their designees, certify annually authorizing the continuation of each AWS program.

Program Assessment of Alternative Work Schedules

Potential Benefits

1. Operational Efficiency and Productivity

Consider: Will the AWS program result in increased operational efficiency and productivity? Will management have increased flexibility in arranging work schedules to meet the particular operational requirements of the organization?

For those organizations where the output can be quantified, a positive increase in production might be considered to be approximately 5 percent or more. This will vary, however, depending on the nature of the organization.

For organizations where the output is not quantifiable, the organizational goals, work requirements and accomplishment plans would serve as the most appropriate means for determining impact of AWS. For example, implementation of AWS might be considered as beneficial if the program would contribute positively to achieving a critical organizational goal that otherwise might not be met on time.

2. Operating Costs

Consider: Will the AWS program reduce, or in any way impact, the operating costs of the organization?

A beneficial cost impact for some organizations might be a reduction of approximately 5 percent of the total operating budget of the organization. This, again, may vary substantially depending on the nature of the organization.

Any reduction in costs for related services directly attributable to the AWS program may be considered as a benefit, e.g., a decrease in the cost of heating, air conditioning, lights, security service, building maintenance and phone usage.

3. Service to the Public

Consider: Will the AWS program result in increased or better service to the public?

Service to the public would include routinely providing official services to, or having official interchanges, with private citizens, organizations, institutions, industry, Federal, state and local governments, and other offices within the Department.

Increased service to the public may be achieved through AWS programs through extended hours of operation and better alignment of the organization's operating hours with those of the public service. Increased service may be viewed as beneficial if the AWS program improves these services by 1 hour or more or allows the organization to offer services during the hours services are needed by its major clientele.

4. Organizational Realignment

Consider: Will the AWS program necessitate a realignment of functions, staff responsibilities, or the manner in which business has traditionally been conducted?

AWS may require management to change the structure of the organization or realign responsibilities to ensure the work mission is accomplished. This could result in positive benefits to the organization that would not have been realized with traditional work schedules. For example, employees broaden their work responsibilities to serve as a "backup" to a coworker and all staff members may be required to become more familiar with the work of others.

5. Recruitment and Retention of Employees

Consider: Will the AWS program assist the organization's ability to compete for and retain a high quality work force?

AWS programs may be beneficial if they offer current and potential employees work schedules that are comparable to those offered by competing employers in the area.

6. Employee Morale

Consider: Will the AWS program improve the morale of the work force?

AWS programs may help diminish the potential conflicts between work and family life. Employees who are able to balance both work and family demands may become more productive and efficient because of improved morale, reduced stress and reduced distractions.

**Program Assessment of Alternative Work Schedules
Potential Adverse Impacts**

1. Organizational Efficiency and Productivity

Consider: Will the AWS program in any way interfere with the ability of the organization to effectively meet its program objectives?

Any interference by an AWS program with the ability of the organization to effectively meet its program mission and objectives must be viewed as an adverse impact.

Any decrease in productivity as a result of an AWS program must be viewed as an adverse impact.

For those organizations where the output is not quantifiable, the organizational goals, work requirements and accomplishment plans may serve as the most appropriate means for determining the impact of AWS. For example, implementation of AWS may not be appropriate if it is determined that the schedule will interfere with achieving a critical organizational goal on time.

2. Operating Costs

Consider: Will the AWS program result in an increase to the operating or utility costs of the organization?

Any increase in cost to the organization must be viewed as an adverse impact and must be carefully weighed against any potential benefits achieved by AWS.

An increase in costs for related services directly attributable to the AWS schedule must also be carefully considered in comparison to any potential benefits achieved through AWS. This would include consideration of such things as heating, air conditioning, lights, security service, building maintenance and phone usage.

3. Service to the Public

Consider: Will the AWS program result in any decrease in service to the public because of reduced hours of operation?

Service to the public includes routinely providing official services to, or having official interchanges, with private citizens, organizations, institutions, industry, Federal, state and local governments, and other offices within the Department.

Any decrease in service resulting from an AWS program must be viewed as an adverse impact.

4. Work Operations and Supervisory Control

Consider: Will the AWS result in a decrease in the control or supervision of work operations or the proper balance of number and type of employees required to perform the work of the organization?

Any decrease in control of the work or employees must be very carefully studied to determine if there is any resulting adverse impact on the organization.

5. Support Services

Consider: Will the AWS program require any significant adjustment to support services, such as computer support, building maintenance and security, which would be considered as adverse to the organization?

Any adjustment to support services resulting from AWS must be carefully analyzed.