



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Title: Flexible Working Policy and Procedure

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Supersedes
W.B. No. Version 1

Date: 03/04/2020

Version 2
Date Effective: 03/08/2021

Introduction

Wire Belt believes that flexible working arrangements increase employees motivation, performance and productivity, reduces stress and encourages employees retention by enabling employees to balance their work life with their other priorities. Wherever possible the company will endeavour to accommodate flexible working requests, but it is important to recognise that the requirements of the business are paramount and it may not be possible to support flexible working arrangements for all jobs within the business.

This policy covers the statutory provisions for an employee's right to request to work flexibly which results in a permanent or temporary contractual change to an employees working practice. It also covers the range of flexible working practices available.

The Company will consider all applications seriously, reasonably, objectively and consistently. However, we reserve the right to decline a request where there are clear business grounds to do so.

Procedure

All employees can make a request to work flexibly through:

- Job Sharing
A form of part-time working, where two people share the responsibility for a full-time role.
- Part-time Working
Where the employee is contracted to work less than full-time hours, and will be paid pro rata for the hours worked.
- Flexible Working Hours
A flexible way of working which allows the employee to fit their working hours, within agreed limits, around their individual needs.



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- Homeworking

Where an employee performs part or all of their duties from their own home on either a permanent or occasional basis. Please refer to Wire Belt's Home Working Policy for further details.

- Term-time only

Where an employee will not be required to work during the school holidays. However, this will only be appropriate where the needs of the business fit around the academic cycle. Salary and other terms and conditions of employment will be pro rata.

- Annualised Hours

Where full or part-time employment is averaged across the calendar year and worked across the course of the year.

- Compressed Hours

Where an employee wishes to continue to work their contracted hours, but would prefer to compress the hours into a shorter week or fortnight, thereby allowing some 'free time' during the normal week.

There are two types of requests that can be made by employees when considering the above:

- Permanent – where the employees contractual terms will be varied and the employee has no automatic right to convert back to their previous pattern of work. This can only be withdrawn with the agreement of both parties.
- Temporary – agreed mutually with the employee and their Department Manager under the Flexible Working Policy and Procedure, which is not contractual, but is subject to regular reviews to ensure the arrangement continues to meet the needs of the business.



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In order to make a flexible working request, you must have worked for the Company for a continuous period of 26 weeks at the date of application. You must also not have made another request to work flexibly under the statutory right during the previous twelve months.

Employees may wish to apply for flexible working to accommodate caring arrangements, charity work, leisure activities, external study or for any other purpose. All employees are eligible to apply for flexible working regardless of their seniority, current working pattern, age, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, marriage/civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, whether they have a disability or whether employed on a permanent or fixed-term basis.

Although the Company is committed to being flexible on working patterns for its employees, they must recognise that the requirements of the business are paramount and it may not be appropriate or possible for flexible working arrangements to apply to all jobs across all areas of the business.

An employee may invite a union representative or fellow work colleague to accompany him/her at all stages of the formal flexible working procedure. Advance notice of no less than 24 hours of the meeting will be given to the individual.

Making an application

Any employee who wishes to apply for flexible working, should complete the Flexible Working Application form, available from the HR Department. They should outline:

- why they are making the request
- the flexible working pattern they wish to apply for
- the effect they think the change will have on the department and their colleagues, and how this might be dealt with
- the proposed date on which they would like the new arrangements to become effective
- whether a previous application has been made to the company and if so, the date it was made.



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Considering an application

On receipt of your application, the Company will carry out an assessment of the potential impact of the request on the business. A meeting will then be arranged with your Department Manager to discuss the changes applied for, and it will also be an opportunity to discuss possible alternative working patterns should there be a problem in accommodating those outlined in your application. You can be accompanied at this meeting by a fellow employee.

A decision will be made within three months of receiving your request, or if we require more time to consider it, we may extend the limit with your agreement. We therefore recommend that you give as much notice as possible when you submit your request. The Company will write to you to either agree to a new work pattern, with a start date, or to provide a clear explanation as to which of the business grounds for refusal applies in relation to the application. Depending on the circumstances of the case, at its absolute discretion the Company may be willing to agree to a temporary change to your terms and conditions of employment for a specified period only. In that case, you would then revert back to your previous pattern of working after the specified period comes to an end.

Applications that are agreed, will be subject to a trial period of 3 months, after which they will be re-reviewed before being agreed permanently.

Potential reasons for refusal

It is the responsibility of the Company to provide the employee with the reasons of any refusal.

Reasons may include:

- burden of additional cost
- a detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand
- inability to reorganise work amongst existing employees
- inability to recruit additional employees
- a detrimental impact on performance or quality
- planned structural changes
- insufficient work during the period the employee proposes to work.



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An employee is able to make one application per year, and an accepted application will identify changes to the terms and conditions of employment which will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

Each request for flexible working will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects the changes will have on the Company, the work of the department in which you are employed, your work colleagues and the particular circumstances of the case. This means that if the Company agrees to one employee's request, this does not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted the same or similar change to their work pattern.

Right to appeal

Employees have the right of appeal against any formal flexible working decision. Appeals must be lodged within five working days, giving detailed reasons for the appeal, from the date the employee receives written confirmation of the decision.

The appeal hearing will normally take place within 10 working days with the Managing Director who will either:

- uphold the appeal, specifying the agreed start date for the new working arrangements, or
- dismiss the appeal, stating the grounds for this decision.

The decision made at the appeal meeting is final. There is no further right of appeal.

The employee has the same right of representation at an appeal hearing.

Date of approval: 03/08/2021

Signed:
Print name: Gary Allen
Job Title: Managing Director
Date: 03/08/2021