

# **Administrative and Support Staff Voluntary Schedule Reduction Policy**

## **September 13, 2005**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to allow employees to voluntarily request a reduction in their work schedule on a temporary basis. Employees who participate will receive time off without pay for the reduction in schedule, but will continue to receive health insurance and other benefits in accordance with college policies. No request will be approved if the duties need to be covered by hiring temporary staff, by increasing the schedule of a part-time employee, or by increasing the salary of an employee to handle the additional work. The policy also serves as a consistent means of approval or denial of a request.

While the University will attempt to honor all approved reduced work schedules, the University reserves the right to rescind a reduced work schedule at any time and for any reason. Employees on a reduced schedule are able to return to their full-time schedule at the conclusion of the reduced schedule, or at any time prior to the conclusion of the reduced schedule. Further, the University reserves the right to rescind or modify the policy at any time in the future.

### **2. Eligibility**

Administrative and hourly staff with 3 years of consecutive full-time service may request a reduced work schedule. Four application periods will be held each year, February, May, July & November. Employees must be employed full-time, 12 months per year. Faculty are not eligible for this program.

### **3. Reduced Schedule Options**

There are several reduced schedules available. Employees who participate must meet the University's definition of a full-time employment of at least 1500 hours per year.

#### **Fiscal Year Reduced Schedules**

37.5 hour employees can request to work five days per week, no less than 6 hours per day

40 hour employees can request four days at no less than 6.5 hours and one day at no less than 6 hours

37.5 hour employees can request to work four 7.5 hour days per week

40 hour employees can request to work four 8 hour days per week

Administrative employees must take reduced schedules in minimum increments of one full calendar month (1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>). Biweekly employees must take reduced schedules in minimum increments of 2 weeks beginning with the start of any biweekly pay period.

Specific days of the week and hours of the day are up to the individual discretion of each department supervisor, keeping in mind that satisfactory service levels must be maintained.

#### **Academic Year Reduced Schedules**

Work full-time from August 1 – May 31 (off in June and July)

Work full-time from August 1 – June 30 (off in July)

Full-time from July 1 – May 31 (off in June)

Employees on an academic year reduced schedule do not receive any paid-time off benefits during the month(s) they are not working.

#### **4. Compensation and Benefits**

- **Pay:** Gross pay will be reduced based on reduced schedule.
- **Retirement and Social Security:** Benefit contributions will be based on an employee's reduced salary while on a reduced work schedule.
- **Health Care:** The University's contribution to health care benefits will continue, as long as the employee makes his/her premium share contribution. Employees on an academic year reduced schedule will be required to pay their premium shares in advance.
- **Sick Leave:** Sick leave taken during a reduced fiscal year reduced schedule will be paid on a pro-rated basis based on the reduced schedule, but will be earned at the regular accrual rate. Sick leave is not earned when an employee is on an academic year reduced schedule.
- **Holidays:** Holidays will be paid at pro-rated basis if someone is on a fiscal year reduced schedule. If someone is on a four day schedule – only holidays that fall during the reduced schedule will be paid.
- **Vacation:** Will be paid on a pro-rated basis based on fiscal year reduced schedule, but will be earned at the regular accrual rate. Vacation is not earned during months not worked as part of an academic year reduced schedule.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts and Other Deductions:** Medical care and dependent care deductions will continue to be withheld in full, as well as other deductions such as United Way, Annual Fund, Computer Loans, etc. Employees on an academic year reduced schedule will be required to have sufficient deductions taken to cover the total amount set aside for a HCRA or DCRA.

- **Short-term disability:** An employee who goes on short-term disability leave while on a reduced schedule will be paid on the basis of his/her reduced schedule earnings.
- **Funeral Leave:** Will be paid on a pro-rated basis based on reduced schedule.
- **Jury Duty:** Will be paid on a pro-rated basis based on reduced schedule.
- **Seniority:** Will not be negatively impacted.
- **Life Insurance, Short and Long-Disability, Supplemental AD & D:** Coverage will not change. Individuals on an academic year reduced schedule will be required to pay their supplemental AIG premium shares through payroll deduction in advance.
- **Summer Hours:** An employee will be eligible for the ½ hour reduction per day if reduced schedule is taken when summer hours are in effect (e.g. four 7 hour days paid at 7.5 hours per day and five 5.5 hour days paid at 6 hours.)
- **Transfers:** If an employee accepts a new position in their current department or in a new department while on a reduced work schedule, s/he must reapply for a reduced work schedule if s/he wishes to continue working reduced hours in the new position or new department. If an employee transfers to a part-time position, s/he is no longer eligible for a reduced work schedule.
- **Tuition Benefits:** Tuition benefits will not be negatively impacted.

## 5. Application Process

An employee can request a reduced schedule by completing a Voluntary Schedule Reduction form (<http://www.bw.edu/hr/resources/forms>) in February, May, July or November. The form is available on-line and from Human Resources and Payroll. A completed application must be accompanied by a written statement that includes:

- An explanation on how the primary and secondary duties of the employee's job will be covered if the reduced schedule is approved.
- Proposed schedule.

The application form must be submitted by the employee to their immediate supervisor who will make a decision within 10 working days after receipt of the application.

Applications must be reviewed and approved by the immediate supervisor up through the appropriate vice president. The original approved application is forwarded by the appropriate Vice President to Human Resources at least 10 working days before the start of the requested leave. Denied requests will be forwarded by the immediate supervisor directly to Human Resources. Written documentation will be maintained in the employee's personnel file, including both accepted and rejected applications and the reasons for acceptance or rejection. Rejection of a request for a reduced schedule is not subject to the College's Grievance Procedure. Reasons for denying a request may include, but are not limited to:

- Workload issues
- An essential employee who performs a singular function

Payroll will calculate salary/wages to be paid and the employee must sign off to the voluntary reduction in hours and pay. An employee who voluntarily returns to work before his/her reduced work schedule is completed must immediately inform Payroll.

An employee who returns before the reduced schedule is completed will be required to wait at least one year before s/he can request another reduced work schedule. An employee who rescinds the agreement at least two weeks before s/he is to start a reduced work week is not required to wait a year to reapply. An employee is not permitted to perform any work for the University outside their reduced schedule, in or out of his/her home department, nor can s/he request to have hours worked without authorization applied to his/her reduced schedule.

## **6. Criteria for Approving or Denying Requests**

Each request must be looked at individually and impartially. There is no guarantee that an employee will receive a reduced work schedule. There will be offices and positions that may not be able to participate in this program due to departmental needs.

The approval of a reduced schedule must not have a significant negative impact on normal office operations. For example, allowing a four-day reduced schedule in a one-person office when there is no additional coverage on the fifth day would be considered to have a significant negative impact on operations. However, an employee in an office with a large staff might be able to work a four-day reduced schedule without significantly impacting operations, unless all employees in the department wanted the same day off.

If multiple employees in an area request a reduced schedule for the same time period and it cannot be accommodated without creating a significant impact on office operations, then seniority within the University will be used in determining whose schedule is approved.

## **7. Non-Medical Unpaid Leave of Absence**

At any time after completing his/her probationary period, a full or part-time employee may request an extended period of time off without pay. A department head may grant an employee a leave of absence without pay for not less than one week and no more than three months in any twelve month period. An employee must return to work at the end of approved leave of absence or obtain approval for an extension from his/her department head; otherwise his/her absence will be interpreted that s/he has resigned his/her position. The following procedures are to be followed when requesting an unpaid leave of absence.

Complete the Voluntary Schedule Reduction/Non-Medical Leave of Absence Request form in its entirety, specifying length of leave.

- If the leave is approved, forward copy of the leave form to Payroll and Human Resources.
- An employee must report to his/her immediate supervisor at least once every month during leave concerning status of leave.

All benefits will cease during any leave of absence in excess of two weeks, although the full health care premium can be paid by the employee, if desired. In addition, upon returning to work, all other benefits will be restored in accordance with reinstatement procedures for each benefit.

There also may be situations where FMLA can handle an employee's need to take time off in accordance with the University's FMLA policy.

## **8. Duration of Policy**

This policy will initially be in effect from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006. The University reserves the right to discontinue or modify this policy at any time.