

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



**Solihull
Life
Opportunities**

St Andrew's Centre
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Birmingham
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Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Flexible Working

Category: staff

Introduction

Solihull Life Opportunities recognises that the nature of the work providing leisure opportunities and associated activities for people with learning disabilities requires staff who can take a flexible approach to their work. SoLO wishes to ensure that this flexibility does not exploit its staff and this policy outlines the various ways in which staff can benefit from flexible working conditions.

Policy Statement

Flexible working is not an expectation but is an approach that enables SoLO to provide the best services to its service users and also provides staff with caring responsibilities and other commitments the opportunity to manage their work/life balance.

Time Off in Lieu

Solihull Life Opportunities operates a 'Time Off In Lieu system' for core staff who require flexible working conditions to enable them to effectively carry out their duties. These staff are, generally, those who (by the nature of their work) are required to operate outside of their normal working hours (9.00 – 5.00 pm)

Exceptional circumstances may arise when overtime can occasionally be paid. However, these are only with prior agreement from the line manager and will depend, entirely, on additional funding being made available.

Policy Name: Flexible Working

Organisation: Solihull Life Opportunities

Date policy issued: September 2008 Approved by: SoLO Board of Directors Date: 8.9.08

Amended March 2010 Approved by: SoLO Board of Directors Date: 17.3.10

Next Review Date: March 2012

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Flexible working conditions should work both ways to the advantage of both the organisation and the worker. This balance is very difficult to manage and it is important that SoLO does not exploit its workforce.

This policy is designed to ensure that staff do not work more hours than they are contracted for and to assist in the management of their workload.

The following guidelines should be used in managing the ‘Time Off In Lieu system’

- Timesheets must be kept and discussed with the Line Manager, before extra hours become excessive and difficult to take off.
- Wherever possible, hours accrued through the ‘Time Off In Lieu system’ should be used up within four weeks. It is recognised, however, that the demands of the job may occasionally make this difficult. Any time off in lieu that you wish to carry forward for more than four weeks **must** be agreed with your Line Manager. This is to ensure the time accrued does not reach an unmanageable level for either the worker or the organisation.

Time Off In Lieu must be clearly identified from time taken off as holiday (holiday to be booked using the holiday booking system with your Line Manager)

Banked Hours

Banked hours differ from Time Off In Lieu, as they are when a worker wishes to work extra hours at specific times to enable them to take time off to alleviate issues such as child care or family responsibilities.

Where there are exceptional circumstances, banked hours will be agreed as a short term response to specific issues. For instance, if the worker has difficulty with childcare and needs to cover a short period of holiday, they may be allowed to work extra hours and bank these. This **must** be agreed beforehand with the Line Manager. In all cases work commitments and home life requirements will be taken into consideration.

Flexible Hours

Due to the nature of the work, some staff will need to start later or finish earlier than their normal working day. An example of this could be if a staff member is required to attend an evening meeting, they can start work at lunchtime and finish after the meeting. Equally, they may have occasional caring responsibilities, for instance if their childcare arrangements break down. This is acceptable if it is agreed with the Line Manager and it does not adversely affect the carrying out of the SoLO activities.

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Working from Home

It is recognised that from time to time it may be preferable to complete pieces of work at home in a quiet environment away from office distractions. Examples may include such things as evaluation reports, funding applications and training/presentations preparation. With prior agreement from line management these hours can be claimed as normal hours and recorded on the individual's timesheet. It is anticipated that this will not be a frequent occurrence, and if a member of staff feels obliged to complete work at home they should discuss their workload with their line manager.

Working time Directive

The normal working week for full time staff members is 37.5 hours (in exceptional circumstances this can extend to 40 hours). SoLO is required to ensure that no staff member works longer than 48 hours a week over a period of 11 weeks, as this would be detrimental to their health and well-being. Staff have a responsibility to manage their workload to ensure that they do not exceed the full time hours and Line Managers are responsible for monitoring staff's workload.

If at any point, staff feel that their workload is impossible to manage within the agreed hours, they need to discuss this with their Line Manager, at the earliest point, to enable work to be reprioritised or re-assigned if possible.

Linked with: policies

- Stress Management
- Health and Safety and related policies

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