

TIME AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Tayside Contracts recognises the need for flexibility and the mutual benefits to be gained from offering employees more flexibility in the workplace. Tayside Contracts is committed to being a modern, flexible employer of choice and to helping all employees achieve a positive work-life balance.

Tayside Contracts' Time and Attendance Policy provides employees with the opportunity to accumulate time, where it is operationally viable, and use it when most needed, improving work satisfaction and productivity. In return, Tayside Contracts anticipates employees to be flexible to accommodate changing operational requirements, where necessary, to ensure the best and most cost efficient service delivery.

SCOPE OF POLICY

It is hoped that as many employees as operationally viable will benefit from this policy but, due to the nature of the services provided by Tayside Contracts and the requirement to provide specific services at a particular time and in a particular way, certain posts and groups of employees may be excluded by management from working under the terms of this Policy.

Individual employees cannot opt out of participation in the Policy but can choose to simply work their standard weekly hours/start and finish times i.e. all office based employees must 'clock in/out' using the Time and Attendance System but may opt not to accrue or use flexi leave.

Front line employees will be excluded from working under the terms of this Policy.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The operation of the Time and Attendance Policy must observe the following basic principles:

- The level of service delivery must not be reduced in any way through the operation of the Time and Attendance Policy, i.e., employees must consider the minimum staffing levels required prior to taking flexi leave
- The needs of the Division/Unit/Team must always have priority over accommodating an individual employee's request for flexi leave
- Appropriate levels of cover, determined by the operational line manager, must be in place during operational hours
- Any deviations beyond 1 hour of an employee's normal start/finish time must be authorised by their line manager in advance, other than in exceptional circumstances

TAYSIDE CONTRACTS' STANDARD WORKING PATTERNS

The standard working week for Tayside Contracts employees is 37 hours, Monday to Friday (pro-rata for part-time).

MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY

Each line manager has responsibility for ensuring that the rules and spirit of the Policy are adhered to at all times to ensure operational needs are met at all times. This will include overall supervision, resolution of problems and smooth running of the Policy within the Division/Unit/Team.

Line managers should also closely monitor irregularities with individual employees timekeeping, balance or failure to follow procedures or principles of the Policy. Line managers should ensure that authorised flexi leave does not adversely impact on the operational effectiveness of their Division/Unit/Team. They should therefore carefully consider all requests before making a decision to agree or reject requests from employees to deviate from their normal working pattern or to take flexi leave.

Any line manager who does not comply with the provisions of the Policy may be subject to exclusion from the Policy and/or disciplinary action as per Tayside Contracts' Disciplinary Policy.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE POLICY

The Business Support Section will have responsibility for administering the day-to-day running, dealing with system processes following authorised adjustments of hours, provision of management reports etc. of the Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Bandwidth

Tayside Contracts' bandwidth is 6.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday. Any hours worked outside the bandwidth are unpaid, and no flexi time will be accrued, unless the employee has been requested to work overtime by their line manager in advance.

Lunch Breaks

A minimum of 30 minutes lunch break must be taken daily for all full-time employees or for part-time employees who work 3.5 hours or more in a continuous period. An employee can take up to a 2 hour lunch break.

Any lunch break longer than 45 minutes and up to the limit of 2 hours must be authorised by the line manager in advance and only be requested in accordance with workload and team/unit requirements. An employee must ensure that they 'clock in/out' for the entire duration of their lunch break. The System will automatically deduct an employee's standard lunch break, as per the employee's agreed working pattern, should they fail to 'clock in/out' and unless an adjustment is made through the Time and Attendance System thereafter, the Business Support Section will deduct the full 2 hour penalty for each occasion of a missed lunch clock from the employee's flexi balance. This deduction will be made on a Wednesday morning for any missed lunch clocks in the previous week.

Note:

This adjustment can only be made by the employee's line manager/Head of Section. Any adjustments that have to be made on the system must be updated by lunch time each Monday for entries relating to the previous week, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Personal Breaks

All employees are entitled to one 10 minute break in the morning, or first part of a shift, and one 10 minute break in the afternoon or second part of a shift. Part-time employees who work 3.5 hours or more in a continuous period, will be entitled to a 10 minute break.

Employees who wish to take personal breaks during their working day may do so and these breaks can be used for the purposes of tea breaks and smoking breaks. As an alternative to taking a set, ten minute personal break employees may choose to take tea/coffee etc. at their desk during the working day, provided this is operationally viable. There is no requirement to 'clock in/out' for personal breaks.

Flexi Leave

Flexi leave can be taken subject to the debit hours rules. Any deviations beyond 1 hour of an employee's normal start/finish time must be authorised by their line manager in advance, other than in exceptional circumstances.

An employee is permitted to take up to 14 hours and 48 minutes, or 14.8 hours (two days or four half days) flexi leave in each calendar month, or 40% of the total weekly working hours for employees working reduced hours. This total is also subject to a maximum of 111 hours (15 days or 30 half days) flexi leave in each calendar year (pro rata for employees working reduced hours), again subject to the debit hours rules.

Notes:

Only half or full days flexi leave will be calculated as part of the flexi leave totals. An employee may choose to start and/or finish work outside their normal contractual hours as frequently as permitted, subject to approval from their line manager in accordance with the rules of this Policy, without these deviations being considered part of the flexi leave totals.

A request for full or half days flexi leave is also subject to prior approval from the employees' line manager. Although there is no requirement for an employee to have accrued credit hours prior to making a request for time off under the terms of this Policy, prior consideration must be given by the employee and manager to ensure that there will be sufficient workload in the future in order to make back the debit hours accumulated as a result of the time off.

OVERTIME

Overtime will only be available for certain key posts or employees undertaking significant specific projects or activities, such as employees who are contractually required to undertake winter maintenance standby duties. Any employee carrying out required overtime (which must be authorised in advance) must ensure that the additional hours worked are recorded in the Time and Attendance System by 'clocking in/out' as normal. The relevant line manager will then be required to authorise the overtime on the System to ensure that the overtime payment is made, as opposed to the time being added to the employee's flexi balance.

Overtime is defined as hours worked over and above 37 hours in a week which are necessitated by management for a specific purpose and to which overtime rates, as detailed in Tayside Contracts' Terms and Conditions Handbook, are applicable. Any hours over 37 per week which an employee chooses to work in order to finish a specific piece of work for example or which have not been approved in advance by the employee's line manager will not be considered overtime hours, these are flexi hours. Only hours in excess of 37 per week where there has been a clear management request made to the employee will be defined as overtime and therefore be eligible to have any enhanced rates applied to them.

Credit and Debit Hours

Credit and debit hours are accrued at plain time only.

Credit hours refers to the hours worked beyond an employee's contractual hours. The maximum amount of credit hours that an employee can carry forward into the subsequent month is 14 hours and 48 minutes, or 14.8 hours (2/5th of the standard working week). Any hours in excess of this, other than for specifically authorised overtime, will be lost except in exceptional circumstances with the prior approval of the Managing Director.

There is a maximum amount of hours flexi leave that can be taken in a calendar month or that can be carried forward into the subsequent month when the employee has no credit hours. These are known as debit hours.

The maximum total amount of debit hours that an employee can carry forward into the subsequent month is 7 hours and 24 minutes, or 7.4 hours (1/5th of the standard working week).

Employees who work a reduced week will be permitted to carry forward a pro rata amount of credit/debit hours based on the number of hours they are contracted to work.

At the end of each month the System will automatically calculate the difference between the actual hours worked and the employee's contractual hours. The hours are then compared and credit/debit hours are calculated and transferred to the subsequent month, taking into account any credit/debit hours carried forward from the previous month.

Time accrual will be calculated to the nearest minute.

Notes:

In order for an employee to accrue credit hours to use under the terms of this Policy, the employee must have sufficient workload to justify the accrual of hours. Employees also cannot carry out additional hours in order to accrue credit hours which then results in insufficient workload for the remainder of their working day/week.

Employees are not permitted to remain in a negative balance for three consecutive calendar months. If an employee remains in a negative balance for three consecutive calendar months, their entire deficit hours balance will be cleared with their annual leave by the HR Systems Administrator after obtaining authorisation from the HR Manager. Should an employee continually remain in debit hours, or fail to work back debit hours on an ongoing basis, consideration may be given to excluding the employee from participation in the Policy.

'Clocking In/Out'

All employees will be required to 'clock in/out' using the Time and Attendance System when ready to commence/finish work and for the entire duration of their lunch break.

Employees should only 'clock in' when commencing work on behalf of Tayside Contracts and should not 'clock in' as a matter of course upon arrival at their work station. Similarly, employees should ensure that they 'clock out' upon completion of work on behalf of Tayside Contracts.

Should an employee be unable to 'clock in/out' at their actual start/finish time due to unforeseen circumstances (for example, network failure or PC issues), the employee must notify their line manager who will ensure the Time and Attendance System is adjusted.

Under no circumstances should an employee 'clock in/out' on behalf of a colleague.

WORKING AWAY FROM NORMAL BASE/ATTENDANCE AT BUSINESS MEETINGS

Employees who are required to start/finish work away from their normal base will not be required to report to that base at the start/end of their journey. However, the employee must ensure that their manager is made aware of their actual hours of work to ensure the Time and Attendance System is adjusted.

Employees who are required to start/finish away from their normal base will accrue the time required to travel from home to the other site, or the normal base to the other site, whichever is the lesser and vice versa for journeys at the end of the working day, irrespective of the time taken for the employee's ordinary commute given that this is a 'working journey'.

Examples

- An employee who is based at Contracts House, lives in Broughty Ferry and finishes at Ruthvenfield, will accrue the time taken to travel from Ruthvenfield to Dundee.
- An employee who is based at Contracts House, lives in Inchtute and finishes at Ruthvenfield, will accrue the time taken to travel from Ruthvenfield to Inchtute.

ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING, SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

Employees who are attending training, seminars and/or conferences will be credited with a standard working day only regardless of any time taken to travel to attend the session (i.e. no flexi time or overtime will be accumulated for the time taken to travel to/from the event). However, in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from the relevant CMT member, additional flexi time may be credited to the employee for the purpose of travel.

If it is practical for the employee to attend work before/after the training session they should clock in and out as normal. Should an employee wish to finish early or start late due to a training session/seminar etc. flexi leave should be taken to cover this time and is subject to the rules outlined in this Policy.

AUTHORISATION FOR TIME OFF

Requests for any leave of absence should be made through the Time and Attendance System and will be authorised by the employee's line manager in advance. The request will be approved in accordance with demands of the service, the workload of the employee and/or the team and in relation to time off already authorised for other employees within the team/unit.

ABSENCE FROM WORK

All requests for leave due to the following reasons must be submitted through the Time and Attendance System:

- Annual leave
- Certified sick leave (this will be updated by Business Support Section only)
- Maternity/paternity/adoption leave

- Maternity/paternity/adoption support leave
- Bereavement leave
- Parental leave
- Study leave

The following leave requests must be submitted through the Time and Attendance System upon the employee's return to work:

- Hospital appointments, where evidence of the appointment is produced in advance of the appointment
- Antenatal appointments
- Seminars/conferences/training courses
- Time off for trade union duties
- Jury service
- Severe weather
- Time off for dependants

Please note that whilst time away from work may be granted, entitlement to time off for some of the reasons detailed above is unpaid time only e.g. time off for dependants, parental leave etc. a payroll deduction would apply in these cases.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement for the year will be calculated and credited in hours. Employees will be able to request annual leave for days, half days or individual hours.

Sick Leave

If an employee comes to work but becomes ill and has to leave part way through their shift, the hours sick will be treated as a day or half days sickness absence in accordance with the Sickness Absence Management Policy, although the system will show the hours the employee attended work (i.e. if the employee works less than half their contractual daily hours the whole day is treated as sick, if the employee works over half, then it is treated as a half days sickness absence). Flexi time cannot be accumulated on a day when an employee has gone home early due to sickness.

If an employee is on a phased return to work, as agreed at a formal sickness absence meeting, the hours that they are not at work will show on the system as sickness absence, but this is recorded as a phased return in accordance with the Sickness Absence Management Policy.

Flexi time cannot be accumulated during a phased return period, regardless of whether the employee has worked hours beyond the agreed phased return pattern. If the employee works less than their agreed work pattern the difference will be considered debit hours, which will be deducted from their flexi balance.

PERSONAL APPOINTMENTS

Non Emergency and Routine Appointments

Employees must ensure that they 'clock in/out' accordingly when attending all routine personal appointments (e.g. GP appointments, dental appointments etc.) to ensure that their time away is deducted from their flexi balance.

Hospital Appointments

All time off to attend a hospital appointment must be authorised by the employee's line manager in advance of the appointment. Depending on the nature of the appointment reasonable time off will be granted to attend hospital appointments. The authorised time off should be requested as leave through the flexi system upon the employee's return to work and the remainder of the time will be deducted from the employee's flexi balance. However, the employee should 'clock in/out' for the duration of their time away from work and the leave request will thereafter offset the agreed time away from work.

Employees should 'clock in/out' for any hospital appointment that would be considered unpaid leave and their time away will be deducted from their flexi balance.

HOME WORKING

Should an employee be authorised to work from home and no facility to 'clock in/out' using the Time and Attendance System, a record of the hours worked should be made and the employee's line manager will ensure the Time and Attendance System is adjusted.

This provision also applies to employees who are unable to attend work due to severe weather conditions but can carry out work on behalf of Tayside Contracts from their home.

In all circumstances, home working must be authorised in advance by the line manager of the employee.

CREDIT/DEBIT HOURS ON LEAVING EMPLOYMENT

Employees leaving the employment of Tayside Contracts must bring their credit or debit hours to zero by the date of leaving. Where it is not possible to zero debit hours, outstanding annual leave can be used to zero the balance. Where this is not possible, a salary deduction will be made. Where it is not possible to zero credit hours, payment in lieu of the hours will be made.

Similarly, employees who transfer to another Division/Unit/Section, must make every effort to clear their credit or debit balance to zero prior to transfer.

BREACH OF THE TIME AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

Any employee found to be in breach of this Policy may be subject to a disciplinary investigation and action in accordance with Tayside Contracts' Disciplinary Policy. The following list, which is not exhaustive, provides examples of abuse of the Policy:

- Accumulating credit hours without sufficient workload
- 'Clocking in' prior to being ready to commence work
- 'Clocking in/out' for a colleague
- Repeated failure to 'clock in/out'
- Exceeding the maximum debit hours

If an employee has a complaint about the operation of the Policy i.e. should their requests for flexi leave be continually refused by their line manager without reasonable justification, the employee may submit a formal grievance using Tayside Contracts' Grievance Policy if this matter cannot be resolved informally.

RELATED POLICIES

The Time and Attendance Policy links to the following policies, which can be accessed on the Intranet, or requested from your line manager or from the HR Admin Team:

- Disciplinary Policy
- Sickness Absence Management Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Severe Weather Policy
- Internet and Email Use Policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

POLICY REVIEW

The Time and Attendance Policy will be reviewed at three yearly intervals, or as required by legislative or other changes. The Managing Director reserves the right to remove the Time and Attendance Policy from operation at any time.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

Tayside Contracts respects the privacy of our employees, any personal data processed during the application of this policy will be in line with Data Protection Legislation. Further information on how we may process personal data for the purpose of applying this policy can be found in our Privacy Notice.

Should you have any queries or require further clarification regarding any aspects of this policy or related policies please contact, HR Services on 01382 812721 or employment.policies@tayside-contracts.co.uk

If you would like this document translated into another language or in another format such as audio or large print then please contact Angie Thompson, Equalities and Communications Manager on 01382 834165 or angie.thompson@tayside-contracts.co.uk