

## Flexible Working Request Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 We believe that flexible working can increase staff motivation, promote work-life balance, enrich employee wellbeing and improve performance and productivity.
- 1.2 This policy sets out our approach to flexible working requests under the statutory procedure.
- 1.3 It does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

### 2 Scope

2. This policy applies to employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

### 3 Eligible employees

- 3.1 All employees have the statutory right to request flexible working.
- 3.2 Under the statutory procedure, you can make two requests in every 12-month period.
- 3.3 If you have submitted a flexible working request, you must wait until that one has been considered and any appeal has been dealt with, before submitting another.

### 4 Types of flexible working

- 4.1 We will consider requests for any type of flexible working with an open mind. Examples of flexible working include:
  - 4.1.1 hybrid working;
  - 4.1.2 part-time working;
  - 4.1.3 homeworking;
  - 4.1.4 flexible hours; and
  - 4.1.5 compressed hours.

### 5 Making a request for flexible working

- 5.1 All requests must be made in writing by email or letter and submitted to your Line Manager.
- 5.2 Any request made under this policy must include:
  - 5.2.1 the date of the request;
  - 5.2.2 the changes that you are seeking to your terms and conditions of employment;
  - 5.2.3 the date on which you would like the change to come into effect;
  - 5.2.4 a statement that this is a statutory request;
  - 5.2.5 if and when you have made a previous application for flexible working; and
  - 5.2.6 if you have made a previous request, when you made that application.
- 5.3 If your request does not contain all the required information, you will be asked to resubmit it with the necessary additional information.

5.4 Any request that is incomplete or contains errors will not be automatically rejected.

## **6 Timescales**

6.1 Once you submit your flexible working request, it will be dealt with as soon as possible.

6.2 All requests will be dealt with within 2-months from receipt of the request to notification of any subsequent appeal decision.

6.3 The timescales within this policy may be extended where this is mutually agreed.

## **7 Consultation meeting**

7.1 Your Line Manager will arrange a consultation meeting to discuss your flexible working request. The consultation meeting will be held within 7-days of receiving your request. However, if this is not possible, you will be informed of the reason for any delay.

7.2 You may, if you wish, ask a fellow worker or a trade union official to attend the meeting with you.

7.3 The consultation meeting is an opportunity for you to explain how the proposed working arrangements would benefit you and for us to consider and discuss any alternative flexible working options that may be available and suitable for you and us.

7.4 At the consultation meeting, we urge you to be as open as possible about your needs so that we are able to engage in a constructive discussion about what is feasible.

## **8 Considering your request**

8.1 After the meeting, your Line Manager will consider your proposed flexible working arrangements carefully, weighing up:

8.1.1 the potential benefits to both you and the organisation; and

8.1.2 any adverse impact of implementing the changes.

8.2 Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

8.3 Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working patterns.

## **9 Notifying you of the decision**

9.1 Your Line Manager will inform you in writing, usually within 7-days after the consultation meeting, of their decision and why.

## **10 Where your request is granted**

10.1 Your request may be granted in full or in part.

10.2 We may propose a modified version of your request;

10.3 Your request may be granted on a temporary basis; or

10.4 You may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

10.5 Where your request is granted in full or in part, your Line Manager will meet with you to discuss how and when the changes might be implemented.

10.6 Any changes to your terms and conditions of employment, whether permanent or temporary, will be put in writing and sent to you as an amendment to your contract of employment.

## **11 Reasons for rejecting a request**

11.1 While we are committed to encouraging flexible working patterns, we need to remain realistic. In some cases, it may not be possible for us to accommodate a request because of:

- 11.1.1 the burden of additional costs;
- 11.1.2 an inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- 11.1.3 an inability to recruit additional staff;
- 11.1.4 a detrimental impact on quality;
- 11.1.5 a detrimental impact on performance;
- 11.1.6 a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- 11.1.7 insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work; and
- 11.1.8 a planned structural change to the business.

11.2 We will not reject your request for any other reason.

## **12 Your right to appeal**

12.1 You have the right to appeal if your request for flexible working is rejected or only agreed in part.

12.2 Your appeal should be sent in writing to your Line Manager within 7-days of receiving our decision.

12.3 Your letter should set out the grounds on which you are appealing.

12.4 An appeal meeting, where possible with a manager who did not make the original decision, will be held within 7-days of you lodging your appeal.

12.5 You may, if you wish, ask a fellow worker or a trade union official to attend the appeal meeting with you.

12.6 Following the appeal meeting, the manager will inform you in writing, usually within 7-working days, of the outcome.

12.7 The outcome of the appeal is final.

## **13 Treating your application as withdrawn**

13.1 If you fail to attend, without good reason, both the first and second meeting to discuss your application, or both the first and second meeting to discuss your appeal, we will treat your application as withdrawn.

## **14 Data protection**

14.1 When managing your flexible working request, we process personal data collected in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

14.2 Data collected from the point at which we receive a flexible working request is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the flexible working request.

## **15 Review**

15.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

## **16 Definitions**

16.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")

16.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

**Document control box**

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