

# TOWN OF KENTVILLE POLICY STATEMENT G77

## STAFF FLEX-TIME AND WORK FROM HOME POLICY



### 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide flexibility in scheduling is to attract and retain employees and other staff whom we value.

The Town of Kentville acknowledges that staff have a commitment to their families that does not diminish their equally strong commitment to the performance of their job; and further, the existence of a disability that requires accommodation has no effect on professional commitment. This acknowledgement requires the Town to be as supportive of the professional growth and the opportunities available to those on flexible work arrangements as it would be in the case of those on regular schedules.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

#### 2.1 Responsibilities and Entitlements of the Town:

The Town will make every effort to accommodate requests for flexible scheduling, recognizing that the interests of the Town, its clients and other employees will need to be considered in each instance, as well as the interests of the employee participating in the alternate work arrangement.

The Town will make reasonable efforts to encourage all members of the Town workforce to recognize that flexible scheduling is beneficial both for the organization and for the individual member of the Town.

The Town will expect persons on alternate work arrangement schedules to be available to the Town during unscheduled hours only when absolutely necessary.

The Town will inform the employee on an alternate work arrangement promptly if it has any concerns about the way in which the arrangement is working.

#### 2.2 Responsibilities and Entitlements of the Individual:

An employee on an alternate work arrangement is expected to communicate promptly with the organization about any concerns or problems with the arrangement.

Alternate work arrangement employees remain committed professionals and are expected to carry out their responsibilities to the Town in a professional and competent manner even though that obligation may at times conflict with the flexible work arrangement schedule.

It is imperative that individuals on an alternate work arrangement demonstrate a reasonable amount of accommodation in regard to unforeseeable needs of the Town. They should be prepared to undertake occasional travel, last-minute work requirements and concentrated periods of work outside the schedule.

### **3.0 PROCEDURES**

#### **Work arrangements that will be considered by the municipality**

##### **3.1 Full-time options**

###### **3.1.1 Flexible Work Week – “Flex-time”**

3.1.1.1 A rearrangement of full-time hours so that the regular day's work begins at a different time from most others in the workplace (e.g. 8:30am).

3.1.1.2 An employee may be granted flex-time provided that such arrangement is consistent with the administration or operational requirements of the department in which the employee works, results in no increased cost to the Town and is mutually agreed to by the employee and their supervisor.

3.1.1.3 Employees may bank extra hours worked per day, with prior approval, to a maximum of 28 hours. Extra time worked may be banked only when the period of extra time is a minimum of 30 minutes per occasion.

3.1.1.4 Employees may carry over from month to month a maximum of 28 hours.

###### **3.1.2 Compressed Work Week**

3.1.2.1 A type of flex-time arrangement where fewer but longer days are worked with the result that other days are shorter or not scheduled as work days.

3.1.2.2 The same number of hours are worked each one- or two-week period but over a reduced number of days. Instead of working 10 - 7 hour days (70 hours per two week period), staff could work 7 – 8 hour days and 2 – 7 hour days. This would result in 25 less travel days per employee per year. Alternately, 3 – 9 hour days and 1 - 8 hour day would result in a 4 day work week reducing 50 travel days per employee per year.

###### **3.1.3 Working from Home – “Remote Work”**

3.1.3.1 A full-time workload is handled with a portion of that time worked at a location outside the office.

- 3.1.3.2 Each Remote Work proposal will be considered on an individual basis after taking into account the nature of work, and the needs of the employee, supervisor and the Town. Only employees with proven satisfactory performance in the position may be considered for remote work opportunities. Any proposal for Remote Work that is not approved may be subject to review, and the reasons for denial will be provided upon request by the employee. A statement, outlining the Work from Home arrangements and clear performance expectations will be discussed with and signed by the employee and supervisor. A copy of the agreement will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.
- 3.1.3.3 The participation in this work arrangement shall be limited to functions which, according to the Town, can be carried out remotely/from home. Participation shall be limited to regular employees and require the mutual consent of the volunteer and the CAO/Clerk.
- 3.1.3.4 In each Work from Home arrangement, the IT Manager determines the need for remote work equipment. The Town of Kentville may provide Work from Home equipment based on the changing needs of the Town and the nature of the work assignment. All equipment provided is solely owned and managed by the Town of Kentville. A detailed inventory will be kept by the IT Manager and provided to the CAO. In the event of the employee leaving (retirement, termination, or position change etc.) equipment will be returned to the IT Manager.
- 3.1.3.5 If the IT Manager determines that the employee should have Town-owned equipment in their off-site location, the equipment may be provided with the CAO's approval. If approved, the installation repair and maintenance of equipment becomes the Town's responsibility.
- 3.1.3.6 The employee is responsible to:
  - 3.1.3.6.1 ensure that the workplace is adequately equipped and maintained from a health and safety point of view;
  - 3.1.3.6.2 ensure that equipment and supplies provided by the Employer are used only for the purpose of carrying out the Employer's work;
  - 3.1.3.6.3 ensure that the environment of the workplace is such that the employee is able to respect the terms and conditions of employment, as well as relevant, legislation, regulations and policies;
  - 3.1.3.6.4 ensure that dependent care arrangements are in place and that personal responsibilities are managed in a way which allows them to successfully meet their job responsibilities. Work from Home is not a substitute for long term dependent care.
  - 3.1.3.6.5 The Town's confidential records, communications, exclusive information, in paper or digital format, and any equipment, shall be kept secure both during and outside work hours.

3.1.3.6.6 Participants shall be considered to be at work in the same way as if they were at their normal place of work.

### **3.2 Reduced-hour options**

3.2.1 Part-Time Work Weeks - Reduced work schedule

3.2.1.1 Fewer hours are worked than the number required on a full-time schedule. Pay is reduced accordingly. A reduced work schedule can be structured,

3.2.1.1.1 as fewer hours per day;

3.2.1.1.2 as fewer days per week;

3.2.1.1.3 as fewer weeks per year;

### **3.3 Job-sharing**

3.3.1 A regular, continuing arrangement between two employees and the Municipality in which the individuals agree to share the responsibilities and entitlements of a full-time position.

### **3.4 Annualized Hours**

3.4.1 A specified number of hours are worked in a year. The employee has the ability to choose within certain boundaries, their days and hours of work, with the proviso that they work the specified number of hours per year.

## **4.0 Eligibility**

4.1 All staff in any area of operations may submit a proposal for a flexible work arrangement realizing that some positions will not lend themselves to some of the above options.

4.2 A proposed arrangement that can be made without undue hardship to the Town, (considering the work of the organization, its service to the public and its obligations to all its ratepayers and other staff) will be approved. Where the flexible arrangement involves reduced work hours, and/or working at a location other than within the Town's offices, the arrangement will be subject to the following overriding conditions:

4.2.1 The employee will remain available to the Town and to the public in busy times or in emergencies.

4.2.2 The employee will provide a list of hours during which he or she can easily be contacted.

4.2.3 A contact person at the Town office will be kept aware of how to contact the individual as required at other times.

4.3 An employee on an approved alternate work arrangement may continue the schedule as long as it is necessary or desired. In the event of a demand for alternate work arrangements so unusually high as to create undue hardship for the Town, new applicants and employees whose alternate work arrangements have already been approved will be expected to come to a cooperative arrangement concerning their schedules.

4.4 If the Town finds that the arrangement is not proving satisfactory, the Town reserves the right to end a flexible work arrangement and to return the individual to regular scheduling.

## **5.0 Implementation and scheduling**

### **5.1 Flexible Scheduling**

5.1.1 To facilitate the drafting and implementation of flexible work arrangements, the CAO shall be consulted before any arrangement is finalized.

5.1.2 The CAO and the employee will work towards facilitating cooperation in the implementation of a flexible work arrangement.

**5.2 Submitting a proposal**

5.2.1 A written proposal for a flexible work arrangement should be submitted to the Clerk/CAO at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed starting date for a new arrangement.

5.2.2 The proposal should outline the desired arrangement, the proposed starting date, the ending date (if it is to be for a limited period) and all other information that is relevant

**5.3 Detailed agreement**

5.3.1 Before a flexible work arrangement takes effect, the terms of the arrangement (including the total hours to be worked and compensation to be paid) will be clearly established in writing and agreed to by the employee concerned and the CAO (or Council in the case of the CAO).

5.3.2 The written agreement will specify hours to be spent at the office and work hours to be spent at locations other than the office.

**5.4 Returning to regular schedule**

5.4.1 An individual wishing to resume full-time (in the event of an employee with a disability) or return to regular schedule work must submit a written request to the CAO.

5.4.2 A request to resume full-time (in the event of an employee with a disability) or return to regular schedule work will be honoured as soon as possible and not later than three (3) months from the date of the request. (The 3-month period is intended to allow the Municipality some flexibility in accommodating the needs of all parties involved.)

**5.5 Urgent matters**

5.5.1 When an urgent matter arises at a time when the employee on an alternate work schedule is not in the office, the matter will be handled in the same way as it would be if the individual concerned were on a regular schedule but not in the office.

**6.0 Compensation**

**6.1 Full-time hours**

6.1.1 Any work arrangement under which the employee works the equivalent of full-time hours (flex-time, compressed time, work from home) will be compensated in the same way as any other full-time position without reduction in salary or benefits.

**6.2 Reduced schedule employees: salary**

6.2.1 The Town will compensate an employee on a reduced schedule by making a realistic assessment of the compensation that would be received by a comparable employee working on a regular basis. In calculating the salary of the comparable regular schedule employee, the Town will consider all factors that are normally relevant to compensation decisions. These factors will include qualifications, abilities, length of tenure and productivity and will be reflected in an hourly rate applied per hour of time worked.

**6.3 Reduced schedule employees: benefits**

6.3.1 Reduced schedule employees are entitled to participate in the full range of benefits that are provided as part of the overall compensation package for employees assuming that they meet the criteria as outlined in the current benefits plan.

6.3.2 Town-supported opportunities for professional enrichment (such as conferences and courses) are awarded on the basis of the relevance of the program to the employee's position. The fact that an employee is on a flexible work arrangement will not affect that person's eligibility for such opportunities.

**6.4** Vacation and leave

6.4.1 Eligibility for leave (paid and unpaid) will not be affected by the fact that an employee is on a flexible work schedule.

6.4.2 Vacation and leave time will accrue for the reduced schedule employee in the same manner as they would for a regular schedule employee except that the rate of accrual will be proportionate to the reduced work schedule.

**7.0 Regular Reviews**

7.1 An initial meeting will be arranged to review every new flexible work arrangement three (3) months after its implementation. Regular meetings will be held every six (6) months thereafter or as required

7.2 The meetings will be held between the employee on alternate work arrangement and the CAO.

7.3 Where the individual is being frequently called upon to work hours outside of, or in excess of, those specified in the flexible work agreement, the problems will be resolved at the review meeting.

7.4 Regular review meetings are in addition to routine performance reviews.

**8.0 Municipal Meetings**

8.1 As vacation and leave time are directly related to time worked, the entitlement should be on a pro rata basis.

8.2 Periodic meetings, will be arranged to discuss and address common issues arising from flexible work arrangements if and as required.

**9.0 Appeals**

9.1 Any decision of the CAO may be appealed in writing to Council as per the Town's grievance and complaint policy as with any other employee challenge.

9.2 A response to an appeal will be given as per the Town's grievance/complaint policy.

**10.0 Conclusion**

10.1 The Town of Kentville affirms its commitment to supporting its employees in meeting needs occasioned by disability, in fulfilling their responsibilities to their families, and meeting the increasing costs of commuting.

10.2 This flexible work arrangement policy is intended to benefit the Town and all its members. The Town expects all members of the workforce to use their best efforts, in good faith, to ensure that those mutual benefits are realized.

**11.0 Policy Revision History**

Date Created: June 10, 2022



Chief Administrative Officer, Dan Troke