

<b>MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY</b>					
Policy #:	02-0018				
Name of Policy:	Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) Policy				
Date of Last Revision:	July 2024	Initial Date of Approval:	July 2024	Initial Effective Date:	August 2024
Policy Owner	Human Resources				
Policy/Chapter Sections	Policy Statement Expectations for those working an alternative work schedule Employee responsibilities Alternative Work Schedule Options Compress work schedule Flexible work schedule Hybrid work schedule Summer Schedule Hours Holiday Schedule Hours Modification Revocation				
Date of Next Review:	July 2025				

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of the alternative work schedule (AWS) policy is to promote employee well-being, enhance organizational effectiveness, and support a culture of flexibility and inclusivity. By offering options such as flextime, compressed workweeks, and telecommuting, we aim to empower our staff to achieve a better work-life balance, increase productivity, and contribute to our shared goals while accommodating diverse needs and preferences. This policy aligns with our commitment to fostering a positive work environment, attracting, and retaining top talent, and driving innovation and efficiency across the organization.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

This policy applies to all university administration and staff, and all such parties are expected to abide by the procedural guidelines outlined herein.

## **3.0 POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

MSSU recognizes that providing workplace flexibility supports the well-being of our employees and facilitates the opportunity for the goals of the university to be achieved. An alternative work schedule is a non-traditional working arrangement that considers an individual's personal needs, while effectively addressing and satisfying the university's business needs.

The alternative work schedule policy emphasizes the paramount importance of maintaining high-

quality service to our students and internal/external constituencies while effectively managing workloads. Offices are required to maintain coverage Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. unless directed otherwise by administration (i.e., summer schedule). Approval for participation in such schedules is contingent upon meeting student service, office responsibilities, and workload needs, and must be obtained from the supervisor reporting directly to a President Cabinet member, in conjunction with the respective Cabinet member. Departments may permit multiple alternative schedules among employees, provided that office coverage, student needs, and work responsibilities are adequately addressed. Consistency in scheduling is encouraged to ensure reliability and continuous coverage, discouraging frequent changes in schedules. Exceptions to selected schedules are permitted for committee-related work and required meeting participation, facilitating flexibility within the framework of our operational requirements.

The university is an organization with work environments that vary widely and require specific staffing to function effectively. AWSs are not appropriate for all positions (including leadership), times of year, or campus settings. Additionally, health, safety, privacy/security, technology concerns and limitations, and other relevant considerations may preclude an alternative work schedule arrangement. It is not required that an AWS be uniformly available to all positions or individuals in an operating unit.

#### **Expectations for those working an alternative work schedule:**

- If you are continuing or starting a new alternative work schedule, you will be required to fill out a new AWS request form annually to be submitted to your supervisor by August 1<sup>st</sup> for participation to begin September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Any employee participating in an alternative work schedule must have their schedule posted at their office location, in the signature of their MSSU email, and on their voicemail greeting if possible.
- Employees utilizing a compressed work schedule (e.g., 4-day work week) must use an “out of office” reply function in Outlook for the day or times they are unavailable during normal operating hours.
- Employees are expected to be able to fulfill the primary duties of their job as if they were on campus.
- There is a maximum of one day per week that you can work remotely.
- Employees should be accessible via phone and email communication when working remotely as if they were on campus. Employees who do not wish to disclose their personal cell phone in work communication should utilize the “Go To” app [Go To \(Apple\)](#) or [Go To \(Android\)](#) for communication through their office phone number. Contact Human Resources at 417-625-4201 if you need instructions.
- Virtual meetings are considered an extension of face-to-face interaction, fostering a connection between attendees, promoting participation and engagement, and allowing the availability to witness non-verbal cues that are essential to effective work meetings. As such, having cameras on during meetings is strongly encouraged.
- Employees must be able to participate in the required occasional in-person on-campus meetings during remote work.
- Any employee working an alternative schedule may be required to deviate from that schedule by their supervisor or respective PC member to attend meetings or ensure that essential functions are adequately performed during certain times of the year.

- There may be weeks where the scheduled flexible work schedule may be temporarily suspended when the nature of the workload requires it. It will be the employee's responsibility to come into the office as requested during these times.
- For employees utilizing a compressed or flexible work schedule, all requests for time off (vacation, sick leave, etc.) should reflect the actual numbers of hours off work per the individual employee's approved schedule in order to reflect a 40-hour work week.
- Alternative work schedules can be rescinded at the discretion of the supervisor.
- A waiting period of 90 days will be required before new employees are eligible to request an alternative work schedule.

### **Employee responsibilities:**

- Maintain a mobile phone plan to enable university applications and communications designated to assist with accessibility during business hours.
- Request any office supplies needed to complete your job assignments. No out-of-pocket expenses will be approved without prior approval of the employee's supervisor. Individuals will not be reimbursed by MSSU for any overhead expenses related to their alternate worksite (e.g., utilities, repairs, etc.) or travel to the university.
- Assume the cost of installation and maintenance of telephone service, Internet service with a minimum connection speed of 50 Mbps, and any similar communication linkage fees at the alternate worksite.
- Keep all MSSU materials and equipment in a safe and secure area at the alternate worksite.
- Agree to use university-owned equipment, records, and materials for purposes of university business only, and to protect them against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, loss, theft, or disclosure. Supervisors must determine equipment standards.
- Understand that if personal equipment is used, MSSU is not responsible for maintenance or upgrade.
- Employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of any information created or accessed via telecommuting arrangements and for adhering to university rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding security and confidentiality for the computer, its data and information including data such as FERPA, HIPAA, PCI, etc. and any other information handled in the course of work. Employees will promptly notify their supervisor if a computer containing university information is stolen and/or lost. Employees shall not maintain hard copies of sensitive data at their Alternate Work Site in filing cabinets or other storage devices unless they are actively working with that information and have received their manager's written approval. Once the employee completes a task involving sensitive data, that sensitive data must be retained or properly destroyed in accordance with university policies and procedures.

### **Alternative Work Schedule Options**

In adherence to our alternative work schedule policy, overlapping of benefits, or selecting multiple options concurrently, is not permissible. Employees are expected to commit to a single alternative schedule to ensure equitable distribution of workload coverage and resource allocation. For instance, an employee cannot opt for both telecommuting and compressed workweeks simultaneously, as this may disrupt workflow continuity and compromise service delivery. The policy encourages employees to request the most suitable alternative schedule

option based on their role's requirements and personal circumstances, fostering efficiency and accountability within our organizational framework.

### **Compressed work schedule:**

- Offices would remain open during normal business hours; however, employees would have the option to work four 10-hour days with a one-hour lunch; or four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day.

*Example:* Employee works Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with one-hour lunch and has Wednesdays off.

*Example:* Employee works Monday to Thursday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with one-hour lunch and works Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### **Flexible work schedule:**

- Offices adjust employees schedule to start before 8:00 a.m. and work their eight hours with one-hour lunch or adjust employees schedule to start after 8:00 a.m. and work their eight hours with one-hour lunch.

*Example:* Employee works 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

*Example:* Employee works 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **Hybrid work schedule:**

- If the responsibilities of the office and the employee can be performed remotely, allow a maximum of one day a week as remote work to be determined by the department head. Remote hours will be normal business hours to accommodate the needs of students, staff, and faculty. Normal business hours for the university are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

*Example:* Employee works Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday in the office 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and works remotely on Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **Summer Schedule Hours**

During the summer months, the university implements a modified schedule from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with campus closure on Fridays. As a result, all alternative work schedule options are suspended during this period. Employees are expected to adhere to the standard summer schedule, ensuring consistent coverage and operational continuity. It is important to note that the summer hours are subject to change based on organizational needs, and employees are encouraged to stay updated on any adjustments to the schedule communicated by management.

### **Holiday Schedule Hours**

There will be no change in the holiday schedule. Only eight hours per day of holiday pay will be provided to the employee. During weeks when paid holidays occur, the AWS will be suspended to revert participant back to a traditional in-office eight-hour schedule so that holiday pay does not reduce or increase the total hours scheduled in the workweek. Advance notice of the change in the work schedule is not required under this situation.

*Example:* Thanksgiving week. Employee reverts back to regular in-office 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday schedule. The employee will work (or utilize vacation time) Monday and Tuesday in-person eight hours each day. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are eight hours holiday pay each day.

### **Modification**

As circumstances, business needs, and job requirements evolve over time, adjustments and modifications to an AWS may become necessary. As with any other work arrangement, AWS should not be considered permanent and should be evaluated on an annual basis to ensure that the arrangements continue to meet the needs of the university. In some situations, it may be necessary to discontinue the original plan or seek an alternative. The process used in revising or ending an AWS should be just as deliberative as when initiating one.

The appointing authority or their designee may modify an employee's AWS, up to and including returning to the unit's usual and customary working hours and/or location, without the employee's consent. The reason for the modification should be communicated in writing and in advance to the employee with appropriate revisions made to modify or end the AWS Agreement.

### **Revocation**

At any time, if an employee's AWS becomes inconsistent with the needs of the university or unit, the employee's AWS may, upon appropriate notice and at the sole discretion of the employee's supervisor or the appropriate President Cabinet member, be revoked. The university's modification or revocation of the arrangement, up to and including defaulting back to the unit's normal working hours and/or location, is not considered discipline. Revocation shall not be a valid basis for any grievance, appeal, hearing, or any other cause of action.

If the authorization for a flexible work schedule is withdrawn, the employee will be required to report/return to the office. If an employee chooses not to return on the expected date, this will be considered to be a voluntary resignation and will be treated as such.

Written notice pursuant to this section may be hand-delivered to the Employee in person or by email to the Employee's work email address. Because employees working remotely or on a different flexible work schedule are expected to check their work email regularly, notice delivered by email shall be considered delivered when sent.

The university reserves the right to suspend, cancel, or amend this policy at any time.

## **4.0 HISTORY**

No known history of policy can be found in the Policy Library. This policy may be revised, edited, changed, or removed at any time with or without notice to applicable individuals.

## **5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[Alternative Work Schedule Request Form](#)