



# Bargaining Unit Blotter

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Policing Region 6 Management since 1997

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August 13, 2014

The AFGE Local 1003 Executive Board has identified several aspects of the negotiated Flexiplace Agreement (dated 11/25/98) that are being inconsistently applied across the Region. The information below clarifies the proper procedures for implementation of the Agreement.

## **General**

Employees are our greatest asset and they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. The Agency is not allowed to surreptitiously monitor employees through laptop cameras, microphones, or other means while in the office or working remotely. In addition, unannounced or surprise visits to an employee's alternate work location are prohibited by the Flexiplace Agreement.

## **Processing Timeframe**

When an employee submits an application for Regular, Episodic, or Medical Flexiplace, Management has 15 calendar days to approve or deny it. The deciding official is the Division/Office Director, not the immediate supervisor nor Branch Chief.

## **Restrictions**

There are no restrictions in the Flexiplace Agreement regarding which day of the week Flexiplace can be used (e.g., Mondays and Fridays, back to back, etc.). Currently, employees in Region 6 may work a maximum of two Regular days per week. The number of days per week is unlimited for Episodic and Medical Flexiplace. Regular, Episodic, and Medical Flexiplace may be combined within the same week or pay period. In addition, Regular Flexiplace days are not forfeited if the employee misses another day of work for any reason (e.g., inclement weather, sick leave, annual leave, etc.).

## **Daily Reporting of Accomplishments**

When using Episodic Flexiplace, the application form contains a space where employees may describe their planned work activities. The Flexiplace Agreement does not require any additional reporting and supervisors shall not mandate that Regular and Medical Flexiplace users prepare routine reports to describe planned or completed work activities on a daily basis.

## **Sign In/Out Requirements**

Only those employees on the Daily Flexible Schedule (DFS) must sign in and out when on Flexiplace. Sign-in may be accomplished via email, phone call, or text to the supervisor. Employees on other work schedules (e.g., Compressed or a regular 8-hour day) work their regular hours and do not have to sign in or out when on Flexiplace.

## **Use of Medical Flexiplace**

Medical Flexiplace should only be used for temporary medical conditions; generally no longer than six months. If a longer time period is needed due to a long-term and chronic condition, the employee should pursue reasonable accommodation under the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disability Act, as amended. Contact Irma Womack at (214) 665-7231 or a Union representative for further information.

## **Use of Episodic Flexiplace**

Episodic Flexiplace should only be used for work or assignments of specific limited duration that can be performed at an alternate work location. This includes ordinary projects, special projects, and also work performed outside the office due to exceptional or unusual events. Employees working at home on a regular and recurring basis should be using Regular, not Episodic, Flexiplace. Region 6 Senior Management embraces the use of Regular Flexiplace and employees are encouraged to apply.

### **Telework During Office Closure**

Employees should follow the instructions in management communications (All Employee Memos) for information regarding use of telework during weather events of limited duration.

If the office is closed or closes early or opens late due to inclement weather, employees working on Flexiplace are expected to continue working their normal schedule. If the office closes early due to administrative reasons (i.e., early dismissal), such as an upcoming holiday, employees working on Flexiplace are expected to stop working and take administrative leave for the remainder of the work day.

### **Procedures for Moving a Regular Flexiplace Day**

Supervisors have the discretion to allow employees to move their Regular Flexiplace day if it falls on a holiday or if it would be otherwise beneficial to the agency or the employee. If the Regular Flexiplace day is moved to another day, it should be documented by emails between the supervisor and employee. No additional paperwork is needed and the supervisor shall respond within a reasonable time period to enable the employee to make necessary arrangements. Reporting requirements in People Plus are unchanged; the day should be reported as "TREGW Telework Regular Hours Telewk Reg," just on a different date. Episodic Flexiplace cannot be used for the purpose of moving a Regular Flexiplace day.

### **Modification of Flexiplace Circumstances**

Changes to an approved Flexiplace Agreement may be accomplished via email between the supervisor and employee. The employee **does not** need to submit a new application. A copy of the email should be attached to the original application. Modifications may include, but are not limited to, an employee moving to a new home address, a different alternate work location, a new phone number, permanently moving a Regular day to a different day, a change in regular work hours, etc.

### **Change in Supervisor**

If an employee's supervisor changes, the new supervisor has the option to require that all Flexiplace applicants resubmit their applications.

### **Annual Renewal**

Although the original negotiated Flexiplace Agreement stipulated that employees renew their Flexiplace agreements on an annual basis, this requirement is no longer in effect. Once a signed agreement is in place, it is not necessary to re-apply.

The negotiated Flexiplace Agreement and other documentation is located at: <http://region6.epa.gov/intranet/flexiplace/default.html>.

If you have questions or need further clarification, please contact your supervisor or Union representative.