

# Flexible Working Request Changes



## Introduction

With effect from 6 April 2009, the statutory right to request flexible working is being extended to all parents with children aged 16 or under. As a result, you may receive an increase in flexible working requests that will need to be handled in strict accordance with the statutory procedures.

## Who is eligible to request flexible working?

All employees who have 26 weeks of continuous employment and who are the official parent or guardian of a child aged 16 or under, or under 18 years of age if the child is disabled, are eligible to request flexible working from their employer. Carers for sick or disabled adult relatives or 'near relatives' are also eligible to make a request.

## How do my employees request Flexible Working?

Qualifying employees must apply in writing for a variation to their employment contract. The request must be made in writing and must detail the following information:

- What the working arrangement entails, i.e. days and hours of work
- The proposed date for the change
- Their relationship with the child or the adult relative.
- The anticipated effect that their request will have on the Company

Employees have the right to make one request in any 12-month period.

## How should I handle any request received?

There is a legal duty to fully consider any request and you must follow a strict process for the handling of these. This includes meeting with the employee, responding within the specified timeframes in writing and giving the employee the right of appeal if you refuse their request. Refusals should only be made where there are clear business reasons for doing so.

Any changes that are agreed will be on a permanent basis and you are under no future obligation to agree to reverting the terms to their original contract.

## What needs to be done now?

Your policy and procedures will need to be updated. All retained clients of HR Insight will automatically receive an updated policy during March 2009. If you would like to receive a copy too, please contact us on the number below and we will happily get this to you.

## Can we help?

If you would like to receive the updated flexible working policy and procedure, have had a request for flexible working, or have some other employment issue that you would like to discuss, please do call us. Simply telephone us on **01708 758958** or visit us at [www.hrinsight.co.uk](http://www.hrinsight.co.uk).

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