



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Great Plains Region

P.O. Box 36900

Billings, Montana 59107-6900

IN REPLY REFER TO:

GP-1250

PER-1.00

May 9, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

GP Policy Memorandum PER-09

MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Regional Directors
Attention: GP-1100, GP-1150, GP-1200, GP-1500
Managers, Great Plains Regional Office
Attention: GP-1230 (DDavis), GP-1240 (TJohnson), GP-1250 (SMcCannel),
GP-1260 (MWambeke), GP-1270 (SMarquez), GP-1280 (RAnthony),
GP-2000 (CPeterson), GP-3000 (SRuff), GP-4000 (DFritz), GP-5000 (CWorley)
Area Managers
Attention: DK-1000 (DBreitzman), DK-3000 (BSherwood-Widman),
EC-1000 (MCollins), EC-1100 (CHuelker), MT-100, MT-500,
NK-100 (AThompson), NK-200 (TSalter), TX-Trevino, TX-Parish,
WY-1000, WY-5000

From: Michael J. Ryan /s/
Regional Director

Subject: Alternative Work Schedules

Policy: This memorandum describes the Great Plains (GP) Region's policy and procedures in the establishment of hours of work and use of alternative work schedules (AWS). It is to be used in conjunction with the Reclamation Manual Policy, *Alternative Work Schedules* (HRM PO2), dated December 19, 2005. Regional Directors are therein delegated the authority to establish and modify AWS for their respective regions.

Standard work schedules consist of 40-hour workweeks with five 8-hour days per week. Alternative work schedules are authorized work schedules which deviate from these traditional work schedules as authorized in 5 U.S.C. 6101. AWS programs include both flexible and compressed work schedules. GP Region supports the use of AWS. AWS provides managers and supervisors the opportunity to maximize their options in accomplishing the workload and provide high quality customer service. They can also provide employees with work schedule options that better match personal and family needs, thereby improving employee morale.

GP Regional and area office managers are hereby redelegated the authority given to the Regional Director in HRM P02, to approve any valid AWS. The authority may be further delegated to the first line supervisory level at the discretion of the above-mentioned officials. The use of the term

“management” in this policy may include both managers and supervisors depending on the degree these authorities have been redelegated. Specific plans must be developed for individual office AWS programs in accordance with authorities as listed in 370 DM 610 and HRM P02. Copies of the proposed plans will be forwarded to the Regional Human Resources Office, GP-1250, for technical review and guidance prior to implementation. This will ensure payroll and Federal Personnel Payroll System time keeping records are properly coded and employees are paid correctly.

1. Basic Principles Applicable to all Plans:
 - a. Customer service will not be diminished or compromised as a result of work scheduling.
 - b. Cooperation and trust are necessary between employees and supervisors in determining schedules and providing office coverage.
 - c. Supervisors may restrict schedules due to operating requirements or to address individual abuses. This must be done in writing and, where appropriate, with proper union notification.
2. General Parameters for Hours of Work: The Regional Director has established the official business hours for customer service purposes in the GP Region as 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with an administrative workweek of Sunday through Saturday. Full-time employees must account for 80 hours each biweekly pay period either through work performed and/or by taking approved leave, credit hours, or compensatory time. The use of AWS does not negate the requirement for established tours of duty for each employee.

The basic workday (plus a minimum 30-minute lunch break) is between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. A minimum 30-minute lunch break must be scheduled anytime the workday exceeds 6 hours. It is not an acceptable practice to schedule a required lunch break as the final 30 minutes of an established tour of duty.

Break times may be granted by management for brief rest periods when such periods are determined by management to be beneficial or essential to the efficiency of the federal service. Such periods are considered to be part of the employee’s basic workday, and, as such, an employee may not forgo a break in order to extend a lunch break, adjust quitting or starting times, or extend a period of annual leave. Since break periods are considered part of the basic workday, it is not appropriate to leave a government facility during these break periods. Smoking should not be used to create additional break periods. Break periods are not employee entitlements and supervisors should use judgment and consistency in making determinations on break periods.

Employees will be responsible for requesting and receiving appropriate approval from their supervisor for leave, etc., when their schedule will be different than their approved tour of duty with the exception of the 30-minute rule as described in 4a below.

3. **Compressed Work Schedules.** Employees on compressed work schedules have fixed tours of 8 or more regular hours some days and no hours on other days. The basic requirement is to have 80 regularly scheduled hours of work per pay period. Given the service nature of most positions, there are limited opportunities for most employees to use compressed work schedules.

Currently, there are two primary types of compressed work schedules approved for use by GP Region employees.

4-10's	5/4-9
	9 hours a day for 8 days
10 hours a day	8 hours a day for one day
4 days a week	1 day a pay period no work
80 hours a pay period	80 hours a pay period

A third type of compressed work schedule, 12-hour shifts, is approved on a limited basis for specific work groups in the GP Region. Currently, the only groups authorized to use this work schedule are the operators at the control center and the powerplant operators at Mt. Elbert. Individual Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and the applicable negotiated labor agreements define the procedures and practices to follow in utilizing these unique work schedules. Employees on a compressed tour of duty receive holiday pay for the number of hours scheduled for that day. Likewise, leave must also be coded for the number of hours scheduled to work.

NOTE: These employees do not earn overtime for hours worked over 8 a day that are part of their tour.

4. **Flexible Work Schedules.** Flexible work schedules with flexible time bands and credit hours, within the overall parameters established by HRM P02 may be approved in the GP Region.
- a. **Flexible Time Bands.** Tours of duty (8 hours per day for full time employees) will occur between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Management may allow employees to begin their workday between the hours of 6 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and end their tour between 2:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. Employees who are on flex time may intermittently vary their daily arrival and departure times by 30 minutes within the starting and ending flexible time bands without prior notification or approval of their supervisors.
 - b. **Credit Hours** are a unique facet of flexible tours. They are hours an employee elects to work, with management approval, in excess of the employee's basic work requirement under AWS. How they may be earned and used is discussed below.

General Rules Governing Credit Hours:

- Work must be available and circumstances must support working credit hours.
- Credit hours must be earned before they are used.
- Credit hours are requested and worked voluntarily by employees.
- Use of credit hours requires management approval except in emergencies. Generally, credit hours cannot be claimed that were not approved in advance by management. However, under emergency or other extenuating circumstances, management may approve such credit hours at its sole discretion.
- A maximum of 2 credit hours per day may be earned Monday through Friday for full- and part-time employees after they have completed their tour of duty. Also, part-time employees may earn up to 8 credit hours for a non-workday Monday through Friday.
- A maximum of 8 credit hours may be earned on Saturday and on Sunday.
- All credit hours earned and used must be entered on timesheets in quarter-hour increments for those earned.
- Credit hours may occasionally be earned and used to make/simulate special work schedules such as 5/4-9 and 4-10s with prior agreement between employee and supervisor, but the 8-hour workday, 40-hour workweek, and 80-hour pay period must be observed.
- Credit hours should be used before separation/departure from Reclamation; however, employees will be paid at their basic rate of pay for unused credit hours up to their maximum carryover (24 hours).
- Employees will be paid for unused credit hours up to the maximum carryover if they move to an organization that does not have provisions for credit hours.
- Full-time employees may carry over 24 hours to the next pay period.
- Part-time employees may carry over one-fourth of their biweekly hours scheduled to work to the next pay period.
- Credit hours earned in excess of the maximum carryover are lost if not used before the end of the pay period.

Prohibitions on Earning Credit Hours:

- Credit hours may not be earned on a holiday.
 - Credit hours may not be earned during travel time, i.e., during actual travel using one of the authorized modes of travel as distinguished from being in a travel status at a temporary duty location.
 - Credit hours may not be earned for training hours.
 - Credit hours may not be earned under a compressed work schedule.
 - Credit hours may not be earned by any of our negotiated rate positions (BB & BL) in the GP Region.
 - Credit hours may not be advanced.
5. Excused Absence (Administrative Leave). In situations where absences may be administratively authorized without charge to leave or loss of pay, employees on a flexible work schedule are granted excused absence based on the established flexi tour in effect for the period covered by the excused absence. Since compressed work schedules are fixed schedules, the amount of excused absence which may be granted is based on the established work schedule.
 6. Holidays. Full-time employees on flexible work schedules who are prevented from working on a day designated as a holiday (or an “in lieu of” holiday) are entitled to 8 hours pay for that day. Employees on compressed work schedules who are prevented from working on a holiday are entitled to be paid for the number of hours they would have been scheduled to work for that day. “In lieu of” holidays will be granted for those employees on compressed work schedules when holidays fall on non-workdays.
 7. Accounting for Time. Only hours worked before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m. need to be recorded. Supervisors do have the authority to request that employees complete arrival and departure times and other exceptions to the normal workday. Check with your supervisor or timekeeper for the appropriate process for documentation of your work hours.

All other time and attendance tracking, recording, verifying, and approval processes in effect before this revised policy will continue without change. The completed and approved documentation of work hours will be maintained with the appropriate Time and Attendance Reports.

8. Union Involvement. Union participation in alternative work schedules must be negotiated with the Regional Director or appropriate designee as outlined in applicable negotiated labor agreements.

