Michigan Tech and the Michigan Tech Fund recognize the importance of flexibility in the workplace for staff. Flexible work options (FWO) can provide a way to provide excellent customer service while managing people, time, space, and workload in an effective and efficient manner.

**Potential Benefits of Flexible Work**

- Increased employee initiative
- Increased productivity
- Increased loyalty and morale
- Increased employee satisfaction
- Expanded number of hours office is open for customers
- Uninterrupted time for getting work done
- Reduced absenteeism
- Reduced turnover
- Reduced overtime
- Decreased workplace stress because of better balance in work and personal responsibilities

**Eligibility**

Full-time, regular exempt and non-exempt staff are eligible if they meet or exceed performance standards. Considerations include

- Job needs (for both the employee and the customer) as assessed by the supervisor
- Appropriateness and availability of flexible work for a particular position or situation

NOTE: Employees are not required to participate unless flexible work arrangements are part of the conditions of employment.

**Guidelines for Success**

1. Flexible work options should support the department/unit goals, as well as those of the Tech Fund.
2. Understand that not every job is appropriate for a flexible work arrangement nor is every employee.
3. Talk with your supervisor.

**Your Flexible Work Proposal Should Address:**

- How flexible work can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organization and/or the flow of work
- Why flexible work options make sense for your position
- Challenges that you could foresee from a flexible work arrangement and suggestions you have to deal with those challenges
- Concerns your supervisor might have with your proposal and suggestions you have to deal with those concerns
- How your key responsibilities and tasks lend themselves to a flexible work arrangement
- How your customers would be impacted by a change in your schedule and how you will make sure that customer service needs are met
- If you are a supervisor–describe how you will take care of those duties if you have a flexible work arrangement
- What are your work/life needs?
- Could your work/life balance be improved through flexible work? How will a flexible work arrangement enhance your ability to get your work done?
- What type of flexible work arrangement would meet these needs? Why?
Additional Questions to Discuss with Your Supervisor

☐ How will a flexible work arrangement impact others in your area, including your supervisor?
☐ Are there busy times or projects in your area that may be impacted by your arrangement? What changes would you make during busy times to help with workflow?
☐ Will there be an impact on coverage when others are out of the office for sickness, leaves, or vacation? How are you willing to help?
☐ What arrangements will need to be made if questions arise in your absence?
☐ Are there core hours where everyone needs to be in the office?
☐ Are you part of a team that would require matching schedules for all involved?
☐ How can you be sure that you are reachable when you are not scheduled to work or if you are working from home?
☐ Are you able to work without direct supervision as needed?
☐ How will you communicate with your supervisor?
☐ How will you talk with your supervisor about issues that arise about your work or the flexible work arrangement?
☐ How should others in your area be involved in determining out how the workflow might need to change?
☐ Are you comfortable working by yourself or non-traditional hours?
☐ Are you organized, self-motivated and flexible enough to work by yourself or during non-traditional hours?
☐ Do you understand that Tech Fund needs may require you to be in the office on your “normal day off” or when you are scheduled to work from home?
☐ Do you understand that dependent care responsibilities are not to interfere with regular work duties?
FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

Flextime
Start time and end time of an employee’s work day vary or the days of the week an employee works are varied.
- Employee works 8 hours per day.
- Need to make sure that FLSA implications (break times and lunch time) are addressed for non-exempt (hourly) employees.

Considerations for Flextime
- Working outside of normal business hours
- Communication with employee
- Ability to supervise employee
- Ability to evaluate work of employee
- Application of Tech Fund policies (holiday, vacation, and sick leave)
- Overtime obligations for non-exempt employees (working more than 40 hours in a work week)
- How often will there be a review of the flexplace arrangement?

Compressed Workweek
Work is completed in fewer than five full work days per week
- Regular hours worked are extended to allow the employee to have a half-day or full day off
- For a non-exempt employee, a 15-minute break (paid) is allowed every half-day of work, along with 30-60 minutes off (unpaid) for a lunch break
- Non-exempt employees may work more than 8 hours per day as long as they do not work more than 40 hours a week.
- Examples include: four (4) 10-hour work days per week and four (4) 9-hour days with one 4-hour day per week.
- Some variations may occur due to established Tech Fund holidays.

Considerations for Compressed Workweek
- Working outside of normal business hours
- Communication with employee
- Ability to supervise employee
- Ability to evaluate work of employee
- Application of Tech Fund policies (holiday, vacation, and sick leave)
- Overtime obligations for non-exempt employees (working more than 40 hours in a work week)
- Coverage of office/customers when person is out of the office
- How often will there be a review of the flexplace arrangement?
Flexplace/Telework

Work arrangement that allows an employee to work from home or another designated site for all or some portion of his or her scheduled work hours

NOTE: This does not apply to situations where an employee may work at home on an occasional basis. These arrangements should be approved on a case-by-case basis and do not require formal authorization.

Questions/Considerations for Flexwork/Telework

☐ Are you able to work effectively without direct supervision?
☐ How will communication with co-workers and supervisors be handled?
☐ Is the proposed telecommuting agreement in the best interests of the Tech Fund or is it only being proposed for your convenience?
☐ Where will you be working?
☐ Does the setting encourage a safe and effective situation?
☐ What is the anticipated duration of the arrangement?
☐ What is the proposed work schedule at the flexplace site?
☐ How often will you be expected to return to the regular work location?
☐ What agreement will need to be made between you and your supervisor regarding work to be done, assessment, and monitoring of work results and employee performance?
☐ What equipment is required for you to effectively perform your job?
☐ What equipment will you supply?
☐ What office supplies will you need?
☐ What additional services will be required – internet, phone, fax, copier? Who will be responsible for providing additional services?
☐ What arrangements need to be made for maintenance and service of any Tech Fund-owned equipment used at the site?
☐ Do you have remote access to your workplace computer?
☐ If you work with sensitive or confidential information, how will you ensure the security of the data?
☐ What provisions need to be in place to prevent unauthorized access to confidential or sensitive information or data?
☐ Do you understand that care-giving responsibilities are not to be part of the flexplace agreement?
☐ Are you hourly or exempt? If hourly, are there issues that need to be considered about overtime?
☐ Are you familiar with use of vacation, sick leave, and holiday policies and how they will be applied to the agreement?
☐ How often will there be a review of the flexplace arrangement?
☐ What cost savings might there be for you or the Tech Fund as a result of your flexible work arrangement?

All Michigan Tech Fund flexible work options forms and guidelines have been adapted from the forms developed by Michigan Technological University, with thanks to Cleveland State University, George Washington University, Cornell University, Lehigh University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Kentucky, University of Arizona, and MIT whose WorkLife websites were especially helpful and are quoted in these forms and guidelines.