



## **Flexible Working Procedure**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In the interests of fairness and consistency and in the spirit of Hanover's values, this procedure outlines how flexible working requests shall be handled once received.
- 1.2 Our Flexible Working Procedure covers employee rights and entitlements in respect of applying for flexible working as well as where and when our employees can work. In addition, the procedure will detail the reasons why an application may be accepted or refused and how we shall support in either of those circumstances.
- 1.3 Accompanying both the policy and this procedure is a flexible working application form and a process flowchart.

### **2. Eligibility for Flexible Working**

- 2.1 Employees at Hanover now have the right to request flexible working from day one. There is no longer a requirement to have at least 26 weeks' continuous service in order to make a statutory request for flexible working.
- 2.2 Employees now have permission to make two statutory requests in any 12-month period. As a result, employees are no longer restricted to making one flexible working request within 12 months of a previous application.
- 2.3 In line with all other policies, employees in all areas and levels of Hanover will be considered for flexible working regardless of their age, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, disability, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, or gender reassignment.

### **3. Flexible Working Request**

- 3.1 We understand that taking the decision to submit a flexible working request sometimes requires much thought and deliberation. At Hanover, we will always encourage employees to be open in their collaboration with others and to discuss work matters with their manager and colleagues where appropriate. Dealing with a flexible working request is no different as often sharing your plans with others can help reinforce your thinking.
- 3.2 *Application*
  - 3.2.1 Should employees be eligible (for example, having not already made two statutory requests in the previous 12-month period) and in a position where you wish to submit a flexible working request, an employee can follow a simplified process, as explained below.

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3.2.2 All requests are required to be submitted in writing and as a result, employees can do this by completing the 'Flexible Working Application Form' found in Appendix B.

3.2.3 All we ask is that the employee submit the application at least 8 weeks prior to the preferred start day to provide all parties with sufficient time to consider the request and potentially put arrangements in place. Once the employee has completed the form, this should be submitted to the manager.

### 3.3 *Consideration of Request*

3.3.1 Following submission, the manager will aim to hold a meeting with the employee to discuss the nature of the request and to obtain further details prior to making a decision. This meeting will be held within 14 days of the application being submitted unless there is either an agreement from both parties to extend the timescale or the manager is absent from work across that period. The employee is entitled to be accompanied by an employee or trade union representative at this meeting.

3.3.2 Any decision to amend an employee's contractual terms and conditions requires a significant degree of consideration. Although Hanover is committed to providing the widest possible range of working patterns, both managers and employees need to be realistic and recognise that the full range of flexible working options may not be appropriate for all jobs across all areas of the business.

3.3.3 Each request for flexible working will be considered on its own merits based on current business requirements against the following statutory criteria:

- There are no additional costs incurred as a result of this change in working pattern
- All work can be covered by existing employees at times when the postholder will not be working as a result of this change to working pattern
- There will be no detrimental impact on the quality or performance of services
- There will be no detrimental impact on our ability to meet customer needs
- There are no planned structural changes within the teams impacted by this change in working pattern
- It is possible to recruit additional employees to cover the remainder of the hours as a result of this change to working pattern

## 4. **Outcomes**

4.1 Once a decision has been reached regarding the application, the employee will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible and receive written confirmation within 14 days of the initial meeting with the manager.

### 4.2 *Approval of an Application*

- 4.2.1 Should the manager be in a position to approve the request, the employee will be notified of the specified contractual variation agreed and the date in which this will come into effect.
- 4.2.2 There may also be occasions where Hanover agrees to the request on a trial basis for a set period of time, to provide the employee and the organisation with the opportunity to assess how the new arrangement is working in practice. In this instance, the employee will meet with the manager towards the end of the trial period to review whether both parties wish to continue under a permanent arrangement or revert back to the original working pattern. Any trial period will be agreed prior to the flexible working request taking effect and the duration will be outlined in writing.

### 4.3 *Refusal of an Application*

- 4.3.1 Hanover will endeavour to explore all possible options in a bid to accommodate all flexible working requests. Sometimes, however, it may not be possible to approve the application.
- 4.3.2 Similar to the approval process, we will always look to exhaust consultation before looking to reject an application for flexible working. Managers have a duty to discuss alternatives to the request, meaning Hanover must consider whether there are alternative forms of flexible working available if there is potential for the employee's request to be refused.
- 4.3.3 For that reason, managers must arrange a follow-up meeting to assess whether there are any further options. Reasons for a potential refusal can only be explained once it is determined that there are no alternatives. Should this be the case, the reason for refusal will be confirmed in writing after consultation.
- 4.3.4 The application may be refused on only one or more of the following statutory grounds:
- a burden of additional cost on the Company
  - a detrimental effect on the Company's ability to meet customer demand
  - an inability to re-organise work among existing employees
  - an inability to recruit additional employees
  - a detrimental effect on quality
  - a detrimental effect on performance
  - insufficient levels of work during the periods of proposed work
  - a planned structural change

## 5. **Appeal**

- 5.1 In the event that the flexible working application is refused for one of the reasons specified in Section 4.3, an employee may appeal the decision within 7 days of receiving notification of the refusal.

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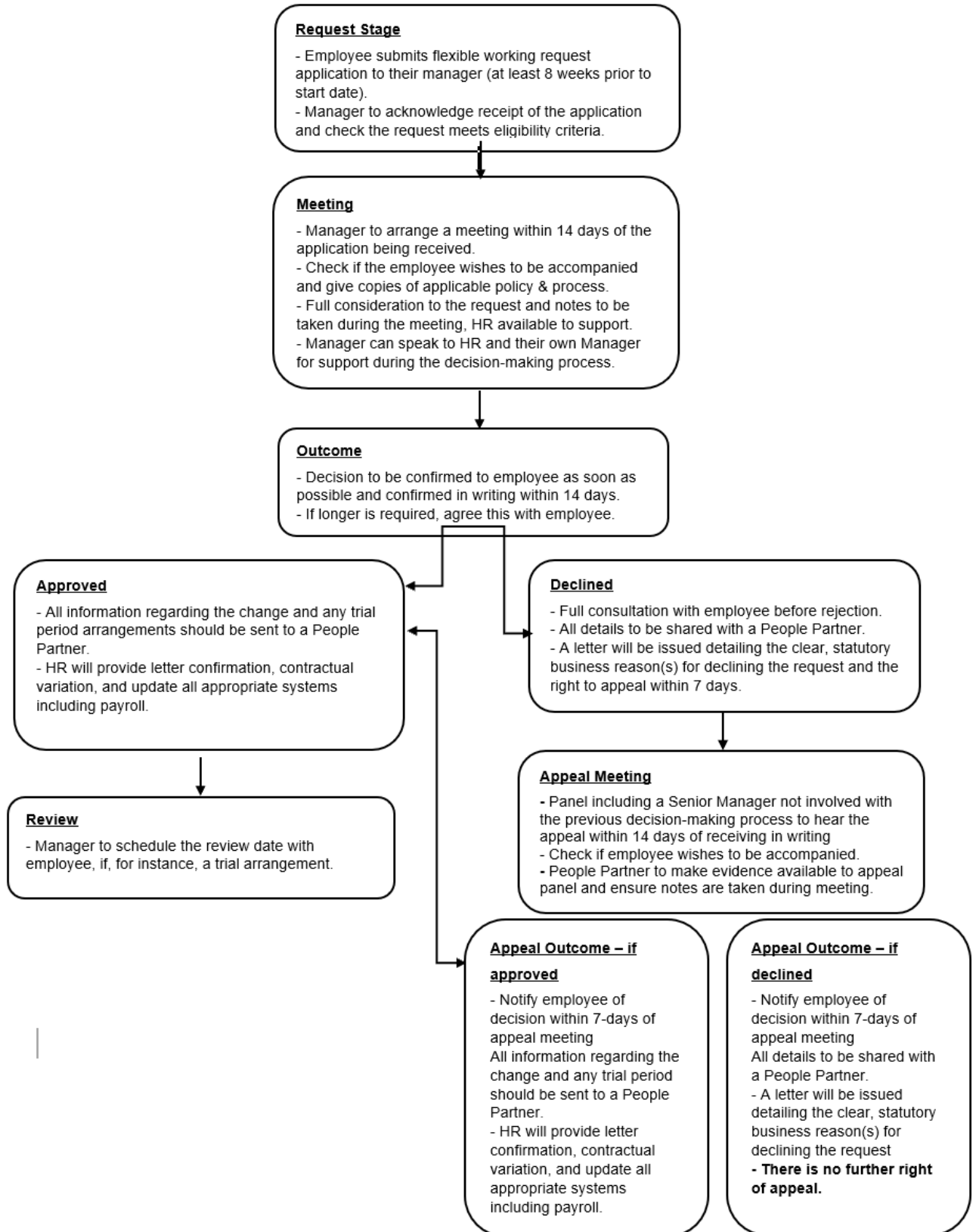
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- 5.2 The notice of appeal is required to be submitted in writing to the employee's Head of Service (or equivalent) where they should clearly state the grounds of appeal, i.e. the basis on which the employee believes the decision to be unfair.
- 5.3 After submission, the appeal manager will schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss the appeal within 14 days of receipt of the appeal notice. The employee should take all reasonable steps to attend and is entitled to be accompanied by an employee or trade union representative at this meeting.
- 5.4 Following the appeal meeting, the appeal manager will consider all the information gathered and advise the employee of their decision within 7 days of the meeting taking place. The employee will also receive written notification of the decision within this timeframe.
- 5.5 Where the appeal manager upholds the appeal, the notice will specify the contract variation agreed to and state the date on which it is to take effect. Where the decision is to dismiss the appeal, the notice will state the grounds for the decision and contain an explanation as to why those grounds apply. The notice will also state that there is no further right of appeal.
- 5.6 As detailed in Section 2, an employee can only make up to a maximum of two statutory requests for flexible working in any 12-month period. In the event that the flexible working application is refused and where the employee has exhausted entitlement, the employee is required to wait 12 months from the date of the second unsuccessful application before submitting another flexible working request.
- 6. Appendices**
- 6.1 Please refer to pages 5-7 of this procedure which provides copies of our flexible working flowchart (Appendix A) and flexible working application form (Appendix B) for employee reference.

<b>Department</b>	Business Support and Transformation
<b>Author</b>	HR Partner
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# FLEXIBLE WORKING PROCEDURE

## Appendix A – Flexible Working Flowchart



## FLEXIBLE WORKING PROCEDURE

### Appendix B – Flexible Working Request Form

Employee Details	
Name:	Job Title:
Department:	Manager:

Flexible Working Details
<p><u>Current working pattern:</u></p> <p><u>Desired working pattern:</u></p> <p><u>Select the option(s) you are requesting:</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Annualised hours <input type="checkbox"/> Compressed hours <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible shift working <input type="checkbox"/> Flexitime <input type="checkbox"/> Job-sharing <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time working <input type="checkbox"/> Swapping hours <input type="checkbox"/> Term-time working <input type="checkbox"/> Working from a 'satellite office' <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:</p> <p><u>Desired start date of requested change(s) (requests should be made at least 8 weeks in advance):</u></p>

Equality Act 2010	
Please confirm if you are making this flexible working request under the Equality Act (2010) and whether you believe it to be a reasonable adjustment for a disability or disabilities:	

Acknowledgement	
I confirm that I am making a statutory request for flexible working. I also confirm that I have read the Flexible Working Policy and Procedure and that I have not already submitted two Flexible Working Requests within the last 12-months of making this request.	
Signature:	Date: