

JEWISH BOARD OF FAMILY AND  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES, INC.

# A Guide to Workplace Flexibility at JBFCs



JEWISH BOARD OF FAMILY AND  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES, INC.

**120 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
Phone: (212) 582-9100**

**Tel: (212) 582-9100**

## Introduction

The Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Inc. is pleased to offer a Workplace Flexibility Initiative. This initiative has its roots in the Advancing Women Professionals Pilot Project, the results of which rated workplace flexibility as an important but missing component of staff longevity and long-term professional advancement at JBFCs.

To assist JBFCs in designing a flexibility program, the Advancing Women Professionals team partnered with Catalyst, the premier non-profit research firm devoted to issues affecting women in business. With support from these two organizations, an internal Workplace Flexibility Task Force was formed, and together, the flex initiative unfolded.

Throughout the process, directors and staff came forward to offer examples of existing, creative flexibility practices that meet the needs of both employees and the organization. The comprehensive initiative described here is designed to build on those successes and to make flexibility options more widely available and more openly shared throughout the agency.

JBFCs is a network of diverse programs. From community-based services to residential treatment to administrative support, we have staff who work at all times of the day, on all days of the week, every day of the year. By their nature, some programs can offer more flexibility than others. The guidelines below describe what types of flexible work arrangements are available at JBFCs, and how employees can take advantage of this opportunity.

## Flexibility Goals

- To enable staff to work effectively, together;
- To “work smart” by maximizing current systems and resources;
- To recruit and retain talented employees;
- To support the integration of work life and professional development with personal life.

## Principles

1. JBFCS’ greatest resource is its staff. One of the ways the organization supports its staff is through its Workplace Flexibility Program.
2. The agency’s primary need is for programs to be staffed fully and regularly in order to meet obligations to clients, colleagues, funders, and the community. As long as this need is met, and as long as arrangements are cost-neutral and fall within the parameters of agency guidelines, collective bargaining agreements, and the law, staff and supervisors may devise flexible work schedules both formally and informally, on a long-term, short-term, or ad-hoc basis.
3. Flexible scheduling is successful when it is planned, consistently applied, and achieved through teamwork, negotiation, and consensus.
4. Some of the common reasons flexible arrangements are initiated include parenting, elder care, religious observance (for any faith), and a return to school. These are not the only reasons, however, and the important part of any flexibility discussion is not the reason for the need, but rather how the work will get done.

## Options

JBFCS already has flexibility built into its operations through time off programs, flexible work schedules, and vacation time that can accrue.\* Additional types of flexibility are described below.

### Formal Flexible Arrangements

Formal flexibility is a way of structuring a job that is different from traditional arrangements in terms of when and how work gets done. Because formal flexibility can affect a program or department’s daily operations, and because it is often applied on a long-term basis, employees applying for formal flexible arrangements must submit a written request (see outline) and receive approval from their supervisor. A PAF must be filed with the Human Resources Department to document the flexible schedule.

There are four formal flexibility options available to JBFCS employees:

- Flextime—employees request alternative starting and ending hours (that include a core period when all staff are present) that meet their flex time needs.
- Compressed workweek—staff work fewer but longer days to meet regular work-week requirements.
- Part-time—reduced weekly hours.\*\*

## Options, cont’d.

### Informal Flexible Arrangements

Unlike formal flexibility, informal flex arrangements occur on an occasional basis and are designed to meet short-term needs. Informal arrangements are made within a program or department, in coordination with the supervisor and with colleagues. The employee must accurately record work time on his/her timesheet.

- Ad-hoc flexibility—on an occasional basis, staff come in late, leave early, or go out mid-day to attend to outside obligations.



HR Staff can guide you through the process. Call (212) 582-9100, x1400.

\* Emergency situations do not fall under the flexibility guidelines. Personal days may be available for employees facing a short-term family crisis. Other situations that do not require flex scheduling are those covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act. Call Human Resources for more information.

\*\*Employees working less than full-time will have their benefits adjusted accordingly.

## Procedure

1. The first step in initiating any kind of flexible arrangement is to meet with your supervisor. Discuss whether a flexible work arrangement is right for your program and your job.
2. If your supervisor agrees with your assessment, begin to create your proposal. Using the form entitled “Flexible Work Arrangements: Proposal Outline,” describe the type of arrangement you would like, how you intend to get your work done, and what kind of planning needs to take place with colleagues, clients, and supervisees.
3. Your program director may review your plan with Human Resources. Make changes as appropriate. Give your plan to your supervisor for review.
4. When you, your supervisor, and your director agree to the proposal, have your supervisor fill out a PAF. Submit the plan and PAF to Human Resources.
5. Directors must always balance the needs of the program/department with staff needs; therefore, everyone’s request may not be able to be accommodated at any given time. If your plan is not approved, try again in the future, as circumstances may have changed.

**JEWISH BOARD OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, INC.**

**120 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019**

**Phone: (212) 582-9100**