

Suggested policy format and content. RTPA specific policies should be developed in consultation with RTPA Legal Counsel, Board of Directors and appropriate regulatory agencies.

15. Travel and Timesheet Documentation

The purpose of this policy is to assist all employees in determining what hours they should write on their timesheets when working irregular schedules, whether for travel or other reasons. This policy is not, however, all-inclusive. Employees with questions that are not answered by this policy should request assistance from the Director of Finance and Administrative Services.

Introduction

Specific pre-approval is required when an employee wishes to work outside of his/her standard work schedule if it will result in the employee earning overtime. Some employees are called “exempt” because they are deemed exempt from the overtime laws. Overtime is earned by non-exempt employees. The rules for what hours “count” when filling out a timesheet vary, depending upon whether an employee is exempt or non-exempt. Therefore, this policy is broken up into two main sections. Section I concerns non-exempt employees and Section II concerns exempt employees.

Section I – Non-Exempt Employees

Generally, non-exempt employees are paid for all hours during which they are carrying out duties at the request of RTPA and are not free from RTPA obligations.

Teleworking

Since non-exempt employees are paid only for time spent working, every time the employee is distracted by activities at home or carries out any personal tasks, the time must be deducted from the time worked. The employee must be diligent and fair about taking credit only for those hours the employee is focused solely on work for RTPA and must ensure that he/she takes their required breaks and does not work overtime without permission. Just as when working at the RTPA offices, a teleworking, non-exempt employee must have permission to work flexible hours during a workweek using a pre-approved make-up work request.

Teleworking must be approved by the Executive Director in writing in the form of a Telework Agreement. Supervisors should carefully analyze the ability of the employee to stay focused on work at home and the reduced ability to supervise and communicate with the employee. Written permission for teleworking should contain the justification for teleworking, the dates teleworking will be allowed, and an end date. The Telework Agreement permitting teleworking should be placed in the employee’s personnel file. Permission to telework may be revoked by RTPA at any time.

Breaks

Every workday, a non-exempt employee should be allowed a 15 minute break for every four hours worked. Additionally, if a non-exempt employee works more than five hours, the employee also must be given at least half an hour for a meal break. The meal break must be taken, even if the employee would rather skip it in order to leave work earlier.

In order for a meal break to count as a break, the non-exempt employee must be free from all duties to RTPA. For example, if an employee eats his/her meal at his/her desk and answers the phone for RTPA while he/she is eating, this does not count as a meal break. Or, if the employee must attend a work-related meeting during the lunch hour, this will not count as a meal break.

If a non-exempt employee does not take their meal break during the workday, and works a full eight hours, the employee must be paid overtime for the break(s) he/she missed. RTPA will provide the opportunity for the break and meal periods, but it is up to the employee to actually take the breaks allocated. It is important that non-exempt employees take their required breaks in order to avoid unapproved or unnecessary overtime.

Section II – Exempt Employees

Under federal and state law, RTPA is not required to pay exempt employees for any hours worked over 40 in a workweek. The law recognizes that exempt employees are expected to work more than 40 hours on an as-needed basis due to their higher level of responsibility and pay compared to non-exempt employees. Exempt employees should keep in mind that comp time is a benefit, not a right.

Teleworking

Teleworking can be more convenient for employees and can reduce congestion on the roads, however, it is easy for employees to be distracted by activities at home and personal tasks when not in an office environment. Teleworking employees must be diligent and fair about taking credit only for those hours the employee is focused solely on work for RTPA.

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