



Equality Beyond
Gender Roles



Drafting a Work-Life Balance Policy



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Introduction

The Work-Life Balance Policy outlines the family-friendly measures offered by this company, establishes a request and evaluation procedure and assigns responsibilities for its proper implementation. The company wants to support its employees to achieve a better balance between work and family life and is committed to provide flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employees can be met.

For the scope of this policy, family-friendly measures are non-statutory flexible working arrangements aimed at facilitating the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities such as caring for children and dependent adult family members.

The measures outlined in this policy are available to both women and men and the company will process all requests without any discrimination based on gender or other characteristics. The company is also committed to ensuring that both employees availing themselves of family-friendly measures, as well as those who do not, are treated fairly.

This policy is applicable to all employees of the company. However, the options available to an individual or category of staff will depend largely on the nature of their work and the overall exigencies of the company.

Why Do We Offer Family-Friendly Measures?

This policy has the aim of benefiting both staff and the company as an employer. We recognise that flexible working arrangements can help improve the well-being of employees and, by extension, reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, and enhance employee engagement and loyalty. It will help the company retain its best employees and attract a wider talent pool by becoming an employer of choice.

Flexible workplaces also have a positive social impact since they encourage women and men to participate in the labour market and advance in their career.

List of Family-Friendly Measures

[List and explain the family-friendly measures offered by the company. Some examples are given below.]

Flexitime: Allowing employees to have an element of flexibility over their working hours. Employees are still expected to be at work during core-hours [*indicate your company's core hours (ex. 10:00am to 4:00pm)*]

Telework: Working a specific number of hours per week from home.

Reduced Hours: Employees with a full-time contract working less hours than those worked by a comparable full-timer.

Job Sharing: Two employees on reduced schedules and workloads sharing the overlapping responsibilities of one full-time position, with benefits and compensation reflected accordingly.

Parental Leave: Employees are entitled to the statutory 4 months parental leave until the child has attained the age of eight. This company offers an additional [*indicate number of months given in addition to the statutory 4 months*] of parental leave.

Procedure

Employees who wish to avail themselves of family-friendly measures shall inform management....

[Indicate:

- ***Who should be informed (ex. Supervisor, Head of Section, HR Manager, CEO,)***
- ***How request is to be made (ex. email, completing an application form,)]***

Individuals making a request for a family-friendly measure shall set out:

- the reason/s for the request
- the change in working pattern requested
- the required start date
- the envisaged duration
- what effect the requested change would have on his/her work and the organisation
- declaration of flexibility in line with work exigencies.

Upon receiving a written request for availing of a family-friendly measure, management will usually seek to arrange a meeting with the employee to:

- discuss the request
- find out more about the proposed working arrangements
- discuss how it could be of benefit to both the employee and organisation.

Management shall evaluate all requests fairly and within a reasonable timeframe ***[you can opt to indicate number of days/weeks]***. The following is to be taken into account:

- Feasibility of change and possible impact on the work of other employees
- The needs/reasons of the employee
- Impact on the individual's productivity following the implementation of changes
- The potential benefits of the proposal which may include improved productivity, morale and commitment, retention of key staff and/or other cost savings
- Any additional administration required to implement the proposed arrangement and whether this is practicable and cost effective
- The ability to manage the change effectively
- Impact on the achievement of individual, team and company objectives
- How this measure will influence the working environment and productivity at the workplace and if redistribution of responsibilities should be considered to ensure that all employees are treated fairly.

Following evaluation of the request, management will notify the employee of the decision and confirm this in writing. If a request is rejected, the notification shall state the ground/s for refusing the application. The manager must keep a copy of both the request and the notification informing the employee of the decision taken. Where the arrangement proposed cannot be accepted for operational reasons, possible alternatives should be considered and discussed with the individual before a final decision is reached.

Management must ensure that any changes to the work arrangements of the employee are in line with Maltese law.

Formal Agreement

If a request is accepted, the notification must include a description of:

- the new working arrangement
- state the date from when the new working arrangement is to take effect
- its duration.

Where applicable, an agreement setting the terms and conditions of the new work arrangement is to be drafted and signed by both the employer/manager and the employee.

An employee is expected to abide by the terms and conditions of the agreement and failure to do so will result in the termination of the new working arrangement. All parties should be aware of the need to monitor performance levels to ensure that they are effectively maintained.

The manager or the employee availing him/herself of the family-friendly measure may propose a trial period in which to assess the new working arrangements and, in this case, the length of the trial period and the method for evaluating its success shall be indicated.

Review

This policy shall be periodically reviewed by ***[title of position of person responsible]*** and updated to reflect new legislation, changing circumstances and the experience of the company with managing family-friendly measures.

Companies are encouraged to contact NCPE for assistance with developing a work-life balance policy.

Email: equality@gov.mt Tel.: 2590 3850