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**PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE**

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**Alternate Work Schedules  
(AWS)**

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**CONTENTS**

**PURPOSE  
BACKGROUND  
REFERENCES  
DEFINITIONS  
POLICY  
RESPONSIBILITIES  
EFFECTIVE DATE**

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**PURPOSE** This MAPP describes policies and procedures governing the Alternate Work Schedules program for the Office of Pharmaceutical Science.

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**BACKGROUND**

- The AWS program provides individuals with the flexibility to schedule their work time to accommodate their needs so long as it does not materially disrupt the conduct of the Center's business.
- FDA has revised its policies regarding core hours and flexible bands. CDER's AWS program is described under MAPP 4657.1. This MAPP provides the policies and guidelines for the implementation of AWS within all components of the Office of Pharmaceutical Science (OPS), as required under MAPP 4657.1.
- Implementing AWS within OPS requires balancing the need to work as a team with the individual needs of employees. The work of the divisions is highly demanding under tight deadlines. To meet these deadlines, individuals must work well as a team, with opportunities for frequent and direct (often face-to-

face) communication. For this reason, CDER has made provisions to locate all members of the review team together in contiguous space, to include reviewers from other offices. The implementation of AWS must not undermine the effectiveness and efficiency of this team effort. At the same time, it would allow employees and supervisors to use the AWS program to accommodate the employee's needs as much as possible without compromising our work and mission. OPS's AWS plan represents an effort to achieve this balance.

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## REFERENCES

- CDER's Plan for Alternative Work Schedules (MAPP 4657.1)
  - CDER's Flexible Workplace Arrangements Program (MAPP 4657.2)
  - CDER's Policy on Overtime Approval (MAPP 4657.3)
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## DEFINITIONS

- **Alternative Work Schedule.** Any work schedule other than a designated fixed work schedule.
- **Basic Work Requirement.** The number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work: full-time employees, 8 ½ hours per day, 40 hours per week or 80 hours per biweekly pay period; for part-time employees, fewer than 40 hours (but not fewer than 16 hours or more than 32 hours) per week or fewer than 80 hours per biweekly pay period.
- **Core Hours.** The time during the workday during which an employee covered by a flexible (not compressed) work schedule is required to be present for work.
- **Compressed Work Schedule.** Employees fulfill the requirement of working 80 hours in a biweekly pay period over a span of eight or nine work days: 5-4/9 (work 9 hours for 5 days of the first week and 4 days the next week with 1 day off) or 4/10 (work 4 days for 10 hours each week with 1 day off a week). This is a fixed schedule with a predetermined starting and ending time for each

workday in the pay period, and the same day off each pay period. No credit hours may be earned by employees on a compressed work schedule.

- **Credit Hours.** Hours worked in a day in excess of the basic work requirement.
- **Flexible Bands.** The time band during the workday during which an employee may choose to vary the times of arrival to and departure from the work site. These time frames also provide the time bands in which credit hours may be earned. Flexible bands also define the times on weekends during which credit hours can be earned.
- **Maxiflex (a.k.a. flexitime).** Work is performed within the designated flexible band of hours and employees must be present for work or on approved leave during core hours. Employees are allowed, with supervisory approval, to earn credit hours during the flexible bands.
- **Overtime and Compensatory Time Work.** Work that is officially ordered for a specifically defined project and performed outside the employee's official work schedule and that may result in financial remuneration.

**POLICY**

1. The maximum flexible bands that can be permitted in OPS are as follows:  
  
 Maxiflex Schedule:  
  

Monday through Friday	5:00 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.
Sat & Sun	5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
2. Core hours for OPS are 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
3. Normal business hours in CDER are 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. At a minimum, live phone coverage is to be provided during these hours as much as possible.
4. Employees are expected to be available for meetings during normal business hours even if their attendance would interfere with their normal work schedule.

Meeting times, training times, etc., are not limited to the core hours but can be scheduled to accommodate Center/office or division needs.

Center/office/division management are required to ensure adequate staffing of all Center functions during normal business hours.

5. All OPS employees are eligible to participate in a maxiflex work schedule. In all cases, the maxiflex schedule options available to employees will depend on coordinating employee schedules so that adequate office coverage is maintained and work operations are unhindered. Requests to participate in an alternate work schedule may be approved only by the employee's office director.
6. Under certain circumstances employees may substitute weekend work hours between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. for regular (Monday through Friday) work hours. A maximum of 8 hours per day of credit time may be earned on Saturday and Sunday. This request must be **pre-approved** by the Office Director. For those who would perform this work away from their official duty station, a flexible workplace agreement must be approved in advance in writing, and employees must account for the time claimed as work.
7. Credit hours may not be earned by Commissioned Corps Officers, SES employees, or Title 38 employees.
8. Employees may work in excess of the basic work requirement (8 ½ hours per day) to earn credit hours, which may then be used to shorten other work days or work weeks. OPS employees are considered generally approved to work up to 4.0 hours in excess of the basic work requirement on a normal work day, if the hours are worked between 5:00 a.m. and 12:30 a.m. (Supervisors may rescind this general approval if circumstances in an individual case make it necessary.) No more than 4.0 credit hours may be earned in a regular work day. Employees must have specific approval in advance to work credit hours: before 5:00 a.m.; after 12:30 a.m., or on weekends or holidays. A maximum of 24 credit hours may be accumulated and carried forward from one pay period to the next for full-time employees only. Part-time employees may carry forward up to 1/4 of their official tour of duty hours as recorded on their SF-50. Credit hours must be earned in advance and used in increments of 1/4 hour. A full fifteen minutes (1/4 hour) must be worked before an employee earns credit time. Credit time may not be earned minute by minute to accumulate up to 1/4 hour. ***Any credit hours in excess of the amount allowed to be carried forward to the next pay period are forfeited. Credit hours do not convert to pay even if unused after 8 pay periods except as allowed by DHHS.*** Credit hours must be earned in advance and may be used as annual or sick leave; credit hours may not be taken in anticipation of earning them.

9. Generally, up to 2.0 hours of credit time or annual leave a day may be taken without leave authorization; a notation will need to be made by the employee on his/her time work sheet. ***Employees are still expected to notify supervisors/team leaders in advance for leave usage regardless of whether the time taken is less than or greater than 2.0 hours. Prior approval for greater than 2.0 must be documented.***
10. An employee may ***not*** earn credit time while working at home under a Flexible Workplace Arrangement Program (FWAP) agreement, except in extenuating circumstances approved in advance by the office director. However, on the day(s) a full-time employee is scheduled to work offsite, the employee is permitted with supervisory approval to vary the beginning of the workday within the 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. time band.
11. Attendance at professional meetings during the evenings and weekends may not substitute for a normal workday, and cannot be claimed as credit time, compensatory time, or overtime. This includes the time spent traveling to and from the meeting site.
12. In all cases, the AWS options available to employees will depend on coordinating employee schedules so that adequate office coverage is maintained and work operations are unhindered. An employee's participation in AWS may temporarily be withdrawn or modified by a supervisor for a specified period of time based on anticipated or emergency workloads. Advance notice of at least one week should be given to the employees if circumstances permit.
13. Overtime and compensatory time work must be ***approved in advance***, and must be in excess of the employee's scheduled tour of duty. SES, Commissioned Corps, and Title 38 employees are ineligible to earn overtime.
14. Earning credit time and maxiflex work schedule are a privilege, ***not*** a right. These may be rescinded by management for disciplinary reasons.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **The Deputy Center Director (Pharmaceutical Science):**
  1. Review the Office of Pharmaceutical Science's AWS plan at least annually and decide whether to continue, modify, or terminate it. Any changes should be filed with the Director, OM.
  2. Approve or disapprove employee requests for exceptions to OPS core hours.
  3. Approve or disapprove employee requests for credit hours, (a) outside the flexible bands, and (b) in excess of 16 hours during weekends.
  
- **Office Directors:**
  1. Determine to what extent AWS should be implemented in the office.
  2. Adopt OPS's plan and distribute to all employees in the office, or develop a supplemental plan with office-specific additions. Additions may make the plan more restrictive, but may not make the plan less restrictive than the OPS plan.
  3. Review the office's AWS supplemental plan (if there is such) at least annually and decide whether to continue, modify, or terminate it. Any changes should be filed with the Director, OM, through the Deputy Center Director (OPS).
  4. Consider each employee's preference and determine the appropriate schedule for each employee, based on the needs of the work unit, workload requirements, and requests of other employees.
  5. Determine on a continuing basis when the work requirement of certain positions preclude employees in those positions from participating in the maxiflex work schedules.
  6. Approve weekend work hours as a substitute for regular work hours.

7. Approve credit time in excess of 4 hours (2 hours if employee is part-time) on a normal work day.

- **Division Directors/Supervisors:**

1. Determine on a continuing basis when the work requirement of certain positions preclude employees in those positions from participating in the maxiflex work schedules.
2. Consider each employee's preference and determine the appropriate schedule for each employee, based on the needs of the work unit, workload requirements, and the requests of other employees.
3. Review and, if concur, forward employee requests for exceptions to OPS core hours through Office Director to the Deputy Center Director for Pharmaceutical Science.

- **Employees:**

1. In advance, request of their supervisor permission to participate in a maxiflex work schedule.
2. Submit to their supervisor written requests for ongoing exceptions to OPS core hours for approval through the office director to the Deputy Center Director for OPS. Employees may not participate in maxiflex work schedules that contain exceptions to OPS's core hours until they have received approval of their request.

- **Division of Management Services, Office of Management:**

1. Provide information and guidance to Center employees on AWS policies and procedures.
2. Review Office supplemental plans for adherence to Center policies before submitting to Director, OM, for clearance.
3. Maintain a record of all Office supplemental plans.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

This MAPP is effective upon date of publication.