

BRIDGES HULL
FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Employers have a duty to consider requests from parents of young children for flexible working, which could include part-time work, working from home or job-sharing. To be eligible to make such a request an employee must be the parent, adoptive parent, foster parent or guardian (or the partner of such a person) of a child under the age of 6 or under the age of 18 in the case of a disabled child. The employee must also have been continuously employed for 26 weeks.

The employee must specify in their written application the change that they seek and the date on which they would like the change to be implemented. The employee must also specify the effect that they think the change will have on the employer and suggest how these effects could be dealt with. Each employee may only make one application per year. The purpose of requesting the change must be to enable the employee to care for someone who is, at the time of the application, a child in respect of whom the employee has childcare obligations.

The employer must meet with the employee to discuss the request within 28 days. The employee may bring a fellow employee/worker to the meeting, though that companion would not normally be allowed to answer any questions on the employee's behalf. The application must be considered carefully but may be refused only on specified grounds, namely the burden of additional costs, inability to reorganise work among existing staff, inability to recruit additional staff, detrimental impact on quality, detrimental impact on performance, insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work and planned structural changes.

The employer must give their decision to the employee within 14 days of the date of the meeting. Where the decision is to refuse the application, the employer must state which of the grounds for refusal are considered to apply, explain why those grounds apply in relation to the application, and advise the employee of their right to appeal. An employee has fourteen days in which to submit an appeal and the appeal meeting must take place within a further fourteen days. The employee must be informed of the outcome of the appeal within fourteen days.

If a flexible pattern of working is agreed this will need to be confirmed formally. Once a flexible arrangement is agreed, the employee does not have a right to revert to the previous arrangement, even when their children are older.