

**Department of Veterans Affairs VA DIRECTIVE 5610.3**

**Washington, DC 20420 Transmittal Sheet**

**November 7, 1995**

**COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES (CWS)  
FOR CENTRAL OFFICE EMPLOYEES**

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To establish Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO) policy and procedures for implementing and administering Compressed Work Schedules (CWS).

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This directive makes permanent the policy and procedures of the CWS Test in VACO. Compressed work schedules will consist of:

- a. Eight 9-hour days, one 8-hour day and 1 day off per biweekly period, or
- b. Eight 10-hour days per pay period.

Individual organizations may exercise their discretion in determining if they want to participate in CWS or not, and, if they choose to do so, the extent to which they want to use 9- and/or 10-hour day work schedules.

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Central Office Human Resources Management Service (055), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management.

**4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** MP-5, Part I, Chapter 610, Section B, Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules.

**5. RESCISSION:** OI-1, Part V, Chapter 23, Compressed Work Schedule Test in VACO, dated September 9, 1993.

**CERTIFIED BY: BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

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**COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES (CWS)  
FOR CENTRAL OFFICE EMPLOYEES**

**1. PURPOSE.** To establish policy and procedures for the implementation and administration of Compressed Work Schedules (CWS) for full-time Central Office employees.

**2. POLICY**

a. The policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs is to provide quality public service by maximizing efficiency and productivity and ensuring adequate coverage in all areas at all times. Consistent with the family friendly workplace concept, managers should consider the option of offering employees flexibility in arranging convenient work schedules that are also supportive of meeting the Department's goals.

b. Employees in a work unit who are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement shall not be required to participate in any compressed workweek unless a majority of such employees in the work unit who would be included in the compressed workweek have voted to be included.

c. An employee who declares to his or her supervisor that he/she has a personal hardship will be excused from participating in the CWS, e.g., day care or carpool scheduling problems.

d. CWS will consist of eight 9-hour days, one 8-hour day and 1 day off per biweekly period or eight 10-hour days per pay period.

e. In accordance with VA policy, an employee who is on CWS may not also be on a flexible work schedule.

f. Core work hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The earliest an employee may begin duty is 6:00 a.m. on 9- or 10-hour days and 7:00 a.m. on 8-hour days.

**3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

a. **Administration Heads, Assistant Secretaries, Other Key Officials, and Deputy Assistant Secretaries.**

(1) These officials, or their designees, will determine if their respective organizations will participate in CWS or not, and, if they choose to do so, the extent to which they want to use 9-and/or 10-hour day work schedules.

(2) These officials, or their designees, are responsible for providing overall guidance and ensuring that sufficient internal procedures are in effect to allow for the smooth operation of the program.

(3) These officials, or their designees, are responsible for ensuring labor/management relations responsibilities are met *prior* to making any changes affecting bargaining unit employees.

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**b. Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration.** The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration has the authority to approve or discontinue CWS for VACO.

#### **c. Supervisors**

(1) The supervisor will establish the participant's work schedule, taking into consideration workload and staffing requirements and ensuring adequate coverage during official hours of operation. The employee will be afforded the opportunity to indicate a preference that will also be considered by the supervisor in determining the work schedule. The supervisor will decide requests by individual employees for exclusion from the program due to personal hardship.

(2) In addition, supervisors are authorized, with the approval of the next level supervisor, to approve, disapprove, change, or discontinue compressed work schedules based on documented operational needs which impact on the accomplishment of the organization's mission (see Appendix A).

(3) The program may also be discontinued for individual employees if it is determined that performance, tardiness, or attendance are adversely affected by the employee's participation. The supervisor is responsible for documenting the reasons for terminating each individual employee's participation and meeting labor/management relations responsibilities prior to making any changes.

**d. Director, Central Office Human Resources Management Service.** The Director, Central Office Human Resources Management Service, or designee, is responsible for assisting managers and supervisors at all levels by providing advice and guidance, interpreting regulations and procedures, and assisting VACO organizations in meeting its labor/management relations responsibilities.

#### 4. REFERENCES

- a. 5 U.S.C., Chapter 61, Hours of Work
- b. 5 CFR, Part 610, Hours of Work
- c. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 610, Section B, Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules

#### 5. DEFINITIONS

a. **Basic Work Requirements.** The number of hours during a biweekly pay period, excluding overtime hours, which an employee is required to work or is required to account for by leave or otherwise.

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b. **Compressed Work Schedule (CWS).** Any schedule under which a full-time employee fulfills an 80-hour biweekly basic work requirement in less than 10 workdays.

c. **Core Work Hours.** A fixed portion of the workday when all employees must be present for work unless accounted for by leave or other excused absence.

d. **Regular Day Off.** The calendar day during the CWS that the employee is not scheduled to work. (NOTE: CWS non-duty days must be used during the pay period in which they are scheduled. The scheduled off day may be changed to another day within that pay period, with supervisory approval, but cannot be carried over into subsequent pay periods. Full-time employees who are officially ordered and approved to work in excess of 80 hours in a pay period are entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay, as appropriate [5 U.S.C. 6128].) It should be further noted that some categories of employees are not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time off in lieu of overtime, e.g., employees in the Senior Executive Service and employees whose pay is fixed under Chapter 73 of Title 38, United State Code (5 CFR 550.101(b)).

e. **Work Unit.** An entity located in one place with a specific mission and with similar procedures or technology headed by a supervisor or manager authorized to certify a group of employees' time and attendance.

f. **Overtime.** Hours of work officially ordered or approved and performed outside of, and in addition to, the basic work requirement.

g. **CWS Procedures for VACO.** Additional guidance pertaining to holidays, leave, temporary duty, and travel is contained in Appendix B.

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**APPENDIX A**

**EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS CRITERIA**

**1. General.** Compressed work schedules require careful advance planning and good employee communications. In deciding whether to participate in a compressed work schedule program, supervisors need to carefully consider its positive and negative effects. An analysis of the work requirements in the work unit and an evaluation of the potential impact of compressed work schedules on the functions of the work unit should be made. This evaluation and analysis should include special attention to the areas discussed below.

**2. Workload Characteristics**

- a. Tasks which must be performed within a specific time period or according to a predetermined schedule;
- b. The degree to which work flow can be adjusted to accommodate a system of compressed work schedules;
- c. The interdependency between work units or functions, required coordination between work units and functions, as well as employee scheduling;
- d. The period of daily or weekly peak workloads where all or most of the employees in the work unit must be present;

- e. The employee coverage required during public service hours;
- f. The general effect of such a schedule on efficiency and productivity.

### **3. Other Considerations**

- a. Work unit costs (staff, premium pay, space and equipment, etc.);
- b. Effects on recruitment and retention;
- c. Potential adverse impact on morale of employees, who for operational reasons, may not be placed on compressed work schedules, or the adverse impact on employees not desiring such placement.

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **CWS Procedures for VACO**

1. **Holidays.** When a holiday falls on an employee's regular day off, employees shall be granted the following regularly scheduled workday off. However, when a holiday falls on a Saturday and the employee is scheduled for Friday off, then Thursday will be that employee's holiday.
2. **Leave.** Time off from an employee's basic work requirement shall be charged to the appropriate leave category for the appropriate amount of time based on the employee's established work schedule in effect for the period of absence, e.g., the employee will be charged leave for 9 hours for a full day of leave unless the leave is taken on a day that is regularly scheduled as an 8-hour day or 10 hours for a full day of leave if the employee is working a 10-hour CWS.
3. **Temporary Duty.** When an employee is temporarily detailed or promoted for a period in excess of 30 days to a position subject to another schedule, the approving official or designee may allow the employee to continue to use his or her previous schedule or require use of the work schedule in place at the new organization. Issues involving the

work schedule in the temporary position should be fully resolved and understood prior to the assignment.

4. **Travel.** Time spent by an employee in a travel status away from his or her official duty station is considered as hours of employment for overtime pay or compensatory time purpose only when:

a. Travel is performed within the days and hours of his or her regularly scheduled administrative work week, including regular overtime work, or

b. The travel involves the performance of actual work while traveling, is incidental to travel that involves the performance of work while traveling, is carried out under arduous conditions, or results from an event that could not be scheduled or controlled administratively. In this situation, "regularly scheduled administrative workweek" means the compressed work schedule under which an employee is covered.