



# How to: START A VARIABLE WORK HOURS PROGRAM

A Variable Work Hours Program is an alternative to the traditional 8 hours a day, 5 days a week work schedule. It is a program that gives employees more flexibility and control over both their work and personal time.

When used in combination with other 511 Rideshare components, a Variable Work Hours Program can be a cost effective commute alternative. It could also serve as an effective method of reducing commute trips to the work site thus decreasing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

Variable Work Hours can be implemented in three ways:

## Flextime

With a flextime schedule, employees work five 8-hour days per week and have the option to choose what time their days start and end, as well as the length of their lunch break. However, it is usually required that employees remain available during what are considered “core hours” in order to attend meetings and company-wide events.

## Compressed Work Week

In a compressed work week employees work more hours per day, but fewer days per week. The most typical arrangements are the 4/40 and the 9/80 schedules. In the 4/40 schedule, employees work four 10-hour days a week and then take the fifth day off. In the 9/80 schedule, employees work 9-hour days but are off an alternate weekday.

## Staggered Work Hours

When using the staggered work hours schedule, employers stagger the employees’ arrival and departure times from 15 minutes to two hours, thus resulting in reduced congestion in the parking lots, building entrances, elevators, and streets adjacent to the work site.



## Employer Program Benefits

- Increased productivity
- Improved employee morale and lower staff turnover
- Reduced tardiness and absenteeism
- Extended customer service hours
- Recruitment incentives
- Reduced parking demand and work site congestion

## Employee Program Benefits

- Improved job satisfaction
- Flexibility in managing personal and professional schedules
- Reduced commute times and stress
- More transportation options including public transit, bicycling and ridesharing
- Fewer logistical problems with child-care pick-up and drop-off arrangements
- Reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality

## Implementation Steps

- Appoint a project coordinator
- Determine the departments or positions for consideration
- Draft written policies and procedures

- Consult with union representatives, if appropriate
- Provide information to management and employees
- Announce and market the program to employees

During the implementation process, be sure to address any concerns regarding:

- Scheduling
- Holidays
- Management issues
- Employee issues
- Staffing coverage
- Consideration of federal and California specific labor laws<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Labor legislation generally supports variable work hours programs. However, prior to implementation, your legal counsel should review the labor laws that affect California Labor Codes and the Federal Labor Standards ACT. For further information refer to California Labor Codes, Labor Code Section 500-558.

#### 511 OFFERS FREE SERVICES AND TOOLS FOR EMPLOYERS

Want to help your employees find more efficient and economical ways to get to work? 511 offers a variety of services and tools to help you assemble a successful Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program at your worksite. This service is provided at no cost to your organization by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Services include:

#### ONLINE RIDEMATCHING

With just a few clicks on 511.org, the RideMatch Service instantly matches your employees with other people making a similar commute.

#### VANPOOL FORMATION AND SUPPORT

Vanpooling may be an option at your worksite, and we can help you set up vanpools from start to finish.

#### COMMUTE INCENTIVES

Employees who use commute alternatives to driving alone can benefit from a variety of incentives, including commuter tax breaks, free bridge tolls, carpool lanes and other financial incentives.

#### WORK SITE EVENTS

511's representatives will participate in select events to promote carpooling and vanpooling at your worksite.