

## EMPLOYERS

# Things to consider when responding to a request for flexible working arrangements

**AS AN EMPLOYER YOU MAY RECEIVE REQUESTS FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS – EITHER UNDER THE STATUTORY “RIGHT TO REQUEST” FOR CARERS OR MORE GENERALLY. IN ALL CASES, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS YOU’LL NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN RESPONDING TO THESE REQUESTS.**

To help the process along, we’ve developed a short procedural checklist.

### Checklist of Procedural tips

If the request is being made under the statutory right to request (Part 6AA), you’ll need to:

- Check that the employee is eligible.
- Make sure the request is in writing.
- Check that all the required information is provided.
- Make sure you deal with the request as soon as possible and within 3 months of receiving it.
- Make sure you are up to date with possible options for flexible working.
- Consider the effects of the requested working arrangement on your business.
- Discuss the request with the employee and, if desirable, other members of the team.

When **evaluating** a request for flexible working arrangements, you might like to think about the following things:

- Do you already have a policy on the flexible work options being discussed?

- Are there any other employees already working this arrangement, formally or informally?
- Do you know anyone who is managing/has managed this arrangement and can give you advice?
- What is the likely impact on other staff?
- How will you manage any impact?
- Does the employee work as part of a team?
- If so, do they understand their commitment to the team under the new arrangement?
- What are the likely business effects of this change to working arrangements?
- What arrangements will be needed for staff supervision and performance management?
- Will the likely benefits outweigh any potential adverse effects for clients/customers?
- Are there peaks and troughs of demand in the business that this new arrangement could meet?

If **declining** a request, you’ll need to provide your employee with a clear explanation of your reasons. And you may like to give them the opportunity to discuss this with you and consider other options

Use these tips alongside the Guide for employers and employees

For more comprehensive advice about how work-life balance and flexible work can work for you and your staff, visit [www.dol.govt.nz/worklife](http://www.dol.govt.nz/worklife).

Please note: As a summary, this fact sheet covers common problems. It will not answer every question and should not be used as a substitute for legislation or legal advice. The Department of Labour takes no responsibility for the results of any action taken on the basis of information on this leaflet nor for any errors or omissions.

