



State of Colorado

Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)

Tips to Managing Employees on FWA

- *Educate yourself about FWA.* Be familiar with the guidance provided by the Department of Personnel & Administration (DPA) and your department's policy and protocols. Know the benefits and pitfalls of FWA. Without proper planning and selection processes, FWA are likely to exacerbate pre-existing employee productivity or time management issues. Talk to others who manage employees on FWA and discuss best practices.
- *Choose participants wisely.* FWA are not for everyone. Some jobs are not suitable and some employees are not the best candidates for FWA. It is best to select employees that want FWA to succeed and also have the personal traits needed for success. See Gil Gordon's article on *Selecting Telecommuters*, which offers further insight and tips.
- *Start small.* If starting a new FWA program in your department, it may be more effective to start with a few employees or work units and build from there. This can also help with program evaluation and identifying improvements.
- *Complete an FWA agreement for each employee.* It is best for all parties when an agreement is used, as there is a common set of expectations from which to work.
- *Schedule and complete check-ins.* This is a great tool for any employee, but especially for employees on FWA. Make sure everyone understands project schedules, deadlines, and communication expectations.
- *Utilize part-time or informal FWA where applicable.* For example, it should be relatively rare for an employee to telecommute full-time. In most cases one to two days per week are recommended for Flexplace arrangements. Of course the key is flexibility, which means informal arrangements can be very effective as well. It is acceptable to have formal arrangements detailed in an agreement and still utilize informal arrangements in special circumstances.
- *Invest in and take advantage of technology wherever possible.* The Governor's Office of Information Technology should be used as an ally and consulted whenever possible and wherever required. With the rise and prevalence in available technology, there is not much that cannot be done in regards to FWA and technology.

- *Keep communication free flowing and regular.* Possibly the biggest key to successful FWA is effective and regular communication. Schedule check-in times and communicate regularly through email, telephone, or other mediums. Don't forget about others in the work unit and keep them involved in the communication flow as well.
- *Promptly address issues that arise.* If some part of FWA is not working, address it. Putting it off will only make the situation worse. Also, always keep the option open of suspending or ending FWA for any business reason. Forcing FWA or ignoring problems will affect everyone in the work unit and jeopardize effective use of FWA for you and your employees.
- *Evaluation.* Evaluation of the FWA and individual performance is key. Good performance goals and standards are critical for all employees, especially those on FWA.