

Job Share Policy

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Job Share Policy

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1. JOB-SHARING POLICY

1.1 Policy Statement

Newham Healthcare (NHS) Trust (the ‘Trust’) is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment. To this end, it has introduced a job-sharing policy for its workforce, which it believes will benefit both staff and the Trust, whilst assisting in the recruitment and retention of skilled and experienced staff. This policy applies equally to both women and men.

All jobs are open to job-sharing unless a manager can clearly identify, in consultation with the Human Resources Directorate, exceptional reasons why a post is unsuitable for job-share and applies to all existing and newly advertised posts. Consequently, very few posts, if any, will be designated as unsuitable for job-share, but where it is agreed between the Manager and Human Resources Directorate that a post is unsuitable, serious consideration must be given to the creation of part-time as an alternative.

All women returning from maternity leave have the right to seek work on a job-share basis, either temporarily or permanently. If a temporary arrangement is being sought, the length of this arrangement should be agreed by mutual consent between the manager and the woman concerned.

Furthermore, no member of staff will be discriminated against with regard to access to training, career development opportunities, redundancy or other circumstances because they work as a job-sharer.

2. JOB-SHARING IMPLEMENTATION DOCUMENT

2.1 Definition

Job-sharing involves the division of all duties and responsibilities for a full-time post between two people, with the full-time salary and accompanying conditions of service being divided equally and/or proportionately between the two individuals (according to the split of hours).

2.2 Hours Of Work For Job-Sharers

Any post designated for job-sharing will remain on the establishment as a whole time post. Jobs do not have to be split equally in half (eg one person could work two days and the other three), but the hours of the split must be mutually agreed between the employee(s) and their manager, to fit in with both an employee's outside responsibilities and the operational needs of the service.

There are various ways in which the time may be divided for job-sharing, and different posts are suited to being shared in different ways. The options are as follow:

- (i) Morning and afternoon split
- (ii) Divided week (eg 2.5 days each)
- (iii) Week on/week off basis
- (iv) Arrangements which include a good degree of overlap to cover peak periods
- (v) Alternative methods agreed between the job-sharers and the manager

One of the most important issues in implementing job-sharing successfully is flexibility in arranging the hours, overlap periods etc. Any changes to the job-sharing arrangements, for example hours of work, must be by mutual agreement between all parties.

For individuals who work a 'week on/week off' split, they may not be treated as working continuously for the purpose of some aspects of their statutory rights. Employees should seek advice from the Human Resources Directorate on this issue.

2.3 Partners

There is no requirement for people to apply with a partner, whether applying internally or externally (see paras 3.5 and 3.6 below for further details).

2.4 Advertisements

All jobs will be advertised as being open to job-sharing (unless agreement has been reached that a particular post is unsuitable). The Human Resources Directorate will ensure that a standard statement is placed on all advertisements, for example: "As part of our Equal Opportunities Policy, Newham Healthcare Trust welcomes applications from people wishing to job-share". All advertisements for any unfilled portion of a job-shared post must specify of the hours of work and pro-rata salary.

2.5 Procedure For Requests To Job-Share From An Existing Employee

- (i) Existing employees may formally apply to their manager for a job-share arrangement to be agreed in respect of their job. This application should be in writing, with a copy to the Human Resources Directorate.
- (ii) The manager should agree to the request unless s/he can show that there are exceptional reasons why the post cannot be shared. It is not sufficient to provide generalised reasons as to why the post cannot be shared, such as the manager believing that management posts cannot be job-shared or because the manager does not wish to supervise job-sharers.

There need to be clearly specified reasons relating to the post itself. If the manager considers that the post cannot be shared, they **must** contact the Human Resources Directorate; without agreement from the Human Resource Directorate, no post should be deemed as unsuitable for job-sharing.

- The manager and post holder should discuss hours of work, and check that the job description and person specification are current. The manager should also ensure that the agreed split does not leave a number of hours likely to be difficult to fill, for example, if the employee wished to work four days a week, consideration should be given to reducing the post holder's hours, without filling the remaining hours.

- The post holder should be advised of the possible effects on their pension and any other benefits accruing to them, including statutory provision, which may relate to hours worked.
- The other part of the post should then be advertised in the usual way, with the advertisement, specifying that it is a job shared post, detail the hours to be worked and the pro-rate salary.
- Individuals should be short listed, and interviewed in the usual way.

(vii) Short listed candidates would be given a copy of the job-sharing policy and/or procedure.

- The existing employee should not be involved in the recruitment and selection process. Following appointment but before the starting date, the job-sharers should meet to discuss working arrangements.
- The manager can also consult various job-sharing registers (see 3.1), particularly where it may be difficult to fill a post.
- Women Returning from Maternity Leave

All women have an option of returning from maternity leave as a job-sharer or working reduced hours, where practical. Any women wishing to reduce their hours or job-share should request this option when they inform their manager or their date of return to work. If any agreed reduction of hours are minimal or for a relatively short period, the remaining hours of the post may not need to be filled, unless necessary, whereupon, they should be advertised following the procedure in section 3.3.

- Procedure for Dealing with New Vacancies

When a full-time post falls vacant, the following procedure will apply:

- The post will be advertised automatically as open to job-sharing, unless the manager has reached agreement with Human Resources that it is unsuitable.
- Candidates will be asked on the application form whether they wish to job-share and if so, with or without a specific job-share partner.
- All short listed candidates who wish to job-share will receive details of the job-share scheme and of any specific requirements for working arrangements, although these will normally be outlined after appointment.
- All candidates who wish to job-share and are short listed must separately meet the selection criteria for the post and be able to work to the job description.
- All candidates will be interviewed separately, whether or not they applied with a partner.
- All candidates whether applying full-time or job-sharing, will be asked the same interview questions, allocated the same amount of time for the interview and given identical tests, if any are used.
- Where job-sharers apply with a partner, each applicant must be treated individually and equally. In this situation interviewers are not obliged to appoint both candidates, if one or both are clearly unsuitable.
- At the final stage of selection, interviewers must make their decision to appoint on the basis of an

individual's suitability and assessed ability to fulfil the requirements of the post.

- Procedure When a Job-Share Leaves

When a job-sharer leaves a post, the following procedures will apply:

- Where there is no substantial difference in the remaining post holder's role (for example the remaining post holder undertakes all the duties), the remaining job-sharer will be offered an automatic slotting-in interview for the total hours of the job-share. Subject to the Line Manager being satisfied as to the suitability of the remaining job-sharer for the total hours, the job-sharer will then formally be offered the full-post.
- If s/he does not wish to do so, there may be a review of the hours of work, but any changes to these hours must be mutually agreed between the post holder and the manager.
- The remaining part of the post will then be advertised in the usual way, as per the recruitment and selection procedure.
- Should no suitable applicant be appointed within a suitable period (normally three months) then the remaining job-sharer will be subject to the provisions of the Trust Redeployment and Redundancy Policy.
- Job Description, Person Specification and Splitting of Duties

Both job-sharers will work to the same job description and person specification and be able to individually fulfil all of the specified responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the post will need to be analysed by the job-sharers and their manager and an agreement reached about how these will be split.

For example, division may be into tasks, projects, clients, or merely time depending on the nature of the particular post and what best ensures efficiency. One particular sharer may wish to develop experience in a certain area and this, along with other issues, will need to be discussed at the outset. However, it is important that one partner does not monopolise the most interesting or prestigious areas of the job.

The partners should always be in a position to claim that at some time each had fulfilled the duties and responsibilities of the whole post, wherever possible, and job-sharers should rotate duties in order to facilitate this and ensure they both gain experience in all aspects of the post. Finally, any amendments to the Job Description and/or Person Specification and must be discussed with both post holders.

- Overlap Period

Job-sharers should arrange their hours so that there is a period where they can hand over any work-related issues. This will normally be within the equivalent of the full-time hours for the post, but could in certain circumstances be an additional one hour each (for example) for which the sharers should be paid at their normal rate.

- Contract of Employment

Each post holder must have an individual contract of employment, covering the following: hours of work, overlap periods, salary, increments, entitlement to additional payments, leave, long service leave, public and statutory holidays, sick pay entitlements, superannuation, cover arrangements and the procedure to be applied when one partner leaves.

- Salary

Job-sharers will receive a pro-rata salary related to the number of hours worked. In some cases, the overlap period may be an additional period of work (e.g. 1 hour per week) and this extra amount will be paid at the normal rate.

Incremental points will be calculated, on an individual basis in the usual way, hence job-sharers may have different take home pay, if they have been appointed on different incremental points.

- Performance Related Pay (PRP)

Where the post attracts PRP, each job-sharer will have separate goals and objectives as part of their IPR, and will receive separate assessments and ratings. The manager may also set overall objectives for the post, which shouldn't form part of the IPR process. Therefore, job-sharers are jointly responsible for the duties for the attached post and they are individually responsible for their own performance.

- Unsocial Hours and Shift Payments

Where these are payable under the relevant Whitley Council and Trust conditions of service, they will be calculated as if the post was occupied on a full-time basis and divided between job-share partners on a pro-rata basis.

- Overtime

Job-sharers working in excess of their contracted hours, will be paid at their normal hourly rate, or offered time off in lieu. However, where the job-sharer works before the normal starting time, or after the normal finishing time, that would apply if the post were filled by a full-time employee, providing that the full-time equivalent hours associated with the post have been, or will be, completed in that week, then overtime will be in accordance with Trust arrangements.

- Flexi-Time

Job-sharers will be entitled to use the flexi-time scheme where it is normally in operation.

- Annual Leave

Entitlement to annual leave shall be proportionate to the number of hours worked in relation to the normal working week. There will be no restriction on job-sharers taking annual leave at the same time, subject to the normal arrangements which apply when requesting leave (i.e. exigencies of services).

- Long-Service Leave

Each job-sharer is entitled to long service leave based on their individual length of service, proportionate to the number of hours worked in the normal working week.

- Public Holidays

The total number of public holidays, and any other locally agreed additional days will be divided **equally** between both job-sharers regardless of which days they actually work.

- Sick-Pay

Job-sharers will qualify and be paid occupational sick pay in accordance with their relevant Whitley Council conditions of service, proportionate to the number of hours worked. Entitlement to sick leave will be based on reckonable length of service, calculated on an individual basis. Sickness absence spanning non-working days will be dealt with in the same way as for full-time employees.

- Maternity Leave

This will be calculated according to reckonable length of service, on an individual basis, and payment will be made in proportion to the number of hours worked.

- Training

Job-sharers will qualify and be paid occupational sick pay in accordance with their relevant Whitley Council conditions of service, proportionate to the number of hours worked. Entitlement to sick leave will be based on reckonable length of service, calculated on an individual basis. Sickness absence spanning non-working days will be dealt with in the same way as for full-time employees.

- Maternity Leave

This will be calculated according to reckonable length of service, on an individual basis, and payment will be made in proportion to the number of hours worked.

- Training

Job-sharers' training arrangements and educational opportunities will be no less favourable than those for full-time employees. Training needs will be assessed on an individual basis for each sharer, for both in-house and qualification training.

In-house training should normally be undertaken as far as possible on days normally worked, but if this cannot be done, sharers will be paid for all extra hours while they are training outside of their agreed work pattern.

For qualification training, job-sharers will be given time off during normal working hours to attend colleges as for full-time staff. Where the hours fall outside the sharer's normal working pattern, then s/he should be reimbursed for a proportion of the time according to the hours worked. No time will be reimbursed for attendance at qualification courses, which fall outside of the post's normal full-time working hours.

- Pensions

All job-sharers will remain eligible to join the NHS Superannuation Scheme, including those applying for a job-sharing post from outside of the Trust. All candidates should be advised of the implications on their pension arrangements of working reduced hours i.e. working fewer hours normally means a reduced pension. Hence, it is advisable to discuss any job-sharing arrangements and implications with the NHS Pensions Adviser.

- Statutory Rights

Before committing themselves to a job-sharing post, the employee should receive advice about the effects on their statutory rights of working reduced hours (see 3.2 'Hours of Work').

- Car Allowance

Entitlements for car allowances will be based on the full-time salary of the post. Job-sharers will be jointly assessed to qualify for car allowance.

- Interview and Removal Expenses

These will be calculated and paid on an individual basis.

- Cover Arrangements

There is no requirement for a job-sharer to cover in the absence of their partner.

- Notice Period

Job-share partners will be required to give the same period of notice as full-time employees. Likewise, they will receive the same period of notice as full-time employees.

- Redundancy

In the event of redundancy, no job-share partner will be selected for redundancy on the grounds of their employment status as a job-sharer.

- Promotion

Job-sharers can apply either singularly or collectively for promotion to more senior/alternative posts, with the same recruitment and selection procedure applying as outlined in paragraph 3.7.

- Grievances Complaints

Where any disputes arise over the operation of this agreement, they should be dealt with under the grievance procedure where appropriate.

- Variations in the Job-Share Agreement

Variations in the job-share agreement, must be agreed, by the relevant manager and both job-share partners.

- **IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

The Trust will set up its own Job-Sharing Register, which can be consulted when a job-sharing vacancy arises. This register will be monitored in consultation with the Human Resources Directorate, who will update the register when managers or a current employee inform the Human Resource Directorate that they wish to job-share.

- Job-Sharing Registers

Any existing employee applying to have their name added to the register if they are currently working full-time and wish to job-share, or if they have left the Trust's employment but wish to be considered for a job-sharing post. Once a vacancy arises, any appropriate people on the register would be contacted and

invited to apply for the job-sharing post. However, job-sharing candidates will not receive preferential treatment, whilst the usual recruitment and selection procedure will apply.

Some professional organisations run their own job-share registers. Employees who are members of professional bodies are, therefore, advised to contact the relevant one for further details.

- Implementation of Policy

The Human Resource Directorate will review the job sharing policy and its implementation on a yearly basis, in light of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

- Awareness of Policy

The Human Resources Directorate will attempt to raise awareness through appropriate training of Managers and Staff, including Equal Opportunities and Recruitment and Selection training.