

## FAQ

### Revision of working hours in relation to the Haddington Road Agreement Hours and Updated flexible Working Arrangements for Civil Servants.

#### 1. What are the HRA Hours?

Under the Haddington Road agreement (HRA) on 1 July 2013, the hours of civil servants and public servants were increased as follows:

- Those with a pre-HRA working week of 35 hours or less (net of rest breaks) had their weekly hours increased to a minimum of 37
- Those with a pre-HRA working week greater than 35 hours, but less than 39 hours (net of rest breaks), had their weekly hours increased to 39
- The hours of those working 39 hours or more per week remained the same.

In most cases, the additional hours were added to the length of each working day. For example, a civil service working day of 6 hours and 57 minutes (net of rest breaks) increased to 7 hours and 24 minutes.

#### 2. Why were the Haddington Road Hours subject to a review?

Under the terms of the Building Momentum public service agreement, an Independent Body chaired by Kieran Mulvey, former chief executive of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), was established to consider the additional working hours arising from the Haddington Road Agreement and to make appropriate recommendations.

#### 3. What did the Independent Body recommend?

The Independent Body has recommended that working time is restored to pre-Haddington Road agreement (HRA) levels for the majority of civil and public servants where working hours were increased in 2013. However, the Body has also recommended that there should be a standardised minimum full-time working week of 35 hours across the public service

#### 4. With the implementation of the Independent Hours Body recommendations, what hours do civil servants have to work from 1 July 2022?

In general, from 1 July 2022, civil service staff will move to the new working week of 35 hours net.

#### 5. What happens on 1 July 2022?

- The working week will be restored to pre-Haddington Road Agreement levels with effect from July 1 2022.
- A standardised minimum full-time working week of 35 hours net will apply across the public service.
- Working hours for any grade will not be less than the level that applied prior to HRA.

#### 6. What hours will I work if I do not work full-time?

Those who do not work full-time will have their working time reduced on a pro-rata basis.

**7. Can individuals who are currently working pre-HRA hours with a commensurate pay reduction remain on pre-HRA hours or will they all need to move to the new hours?**

Where an individual opted to remain on their pre-HRA hours under the terms of previous public service agreements, they may opt to remain on those working hours or opt to move to the new 35 hour working week with an appropriate adjustment in pay in both scenarios.

For example on implementation of the reduced working hours, individuals who remain on pre-HRA hours (less than 35 hours a week, 34.75 hours in the case of a civil servant) a pro rata adjustment should be applied resulting in a smaller pay reduction than that which applies at present i.e. the current reduction in pay for staff with these arrangements should decrease to reflect the fact that pre-HRA hours for affected staff have been restored.

**8. I started working in the Civil Service after the introduction of the HRA hours, does the restoration of hours apply to me?**

Yes this applies to all civil servants including those who commenced work after July 2013.

**9. Can I now opt to work the pre-HRA hours?**

No, if you are not currently working the pre-HRA hours, you will not have the option to work these hours. This option has been ring-fenced to those who availed of this arrangement under previous public service agreements.

**10. Will there be a change to the overtime divisor?**

In the civil service the overtime divisor is currently 43.25, however the Independent Body expressed the view that it should be a matter for further discussions between the parties. In the meantime there is no change to the overtime divisor.

**11. Will there be any changes to annual leave arising from the restoration of the hours?**

No, the restoration of hours will not impact on annual leave entitlements.

**12. What are the revised hours of attendance?**

The normal attendance period for the majority of civil servants will be 35 hours (net) per week. For these civil servants, the normal attendance period will be:

Monday to Thursday - 9.12 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Friday - 9.12 a.m. to 5.15 p.m.

Lunch-break is one hour and 15 minutes daily

**13. I am an Assistant Principal (AP) in the Civil Service will I have access to flexitime?**

Assistant Principals (APs) and their equivalents who were appointed on or before 30 June 2013 will still have access to this arrangement on a personal-to-holder basis as long as they

remain at AP or an equivalent grade and employed in an organisation that allows APs/ equivalents access to flexitime.

**14. Is there any change being made to existing core time bands?**

Not centrally. Any changes to core time bands would be subject to consultation at workplace level.

**Note regarding blended working flexitime accrual in the Civil Service**

Currently, flexitime accrual arrangements apply only in circumstances where employees are attending the employer's work premises for the full complement of their normal, pre-COVID work attendance patterns and rostered hours.

For those working in a blended pattern, it has been agreed that a pilot will be conducted, during the latter half of 2022 to test the operation of flexitime accrual in a blended working environment. Further details on the pilot for flexitime accrual will be available from your HR unit in the context of the launch of your department's Blended Working Policy.