

Statement of Professional Work Scheduling
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Cooperative Extension Program – Prairie View A&M University
September 2019

The purpose of this statement is to clarify expectations of the work hours of professional, salaried, exempt employees (Extension Agents, Specialists, and Administrators) and whether these professionals are expected to work during normal business hours in addition to hours outside of the normal workday.

Extension employees' work schedules are often partially controlled by the availability of clientele and the nature of educational programs. Although the 40-hour work week is a minimum expectation, Extension Agents, Specialists and Administrators typically have responsibilities that require more than 40 hours per week to fulfill work objectives, some of which are scheduled during the lunch hour, evenings and weekends.

Exempt employees of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Cooperative Extension Program do not qualify for compensatory time. However, both agencies support an appropriate balance of work and personal life for all employees and fully supports the application of professional scheduling. For example, if exempt employees are working evenings or weekends to conduct meetings, it is acceptable for them to flex some time during the normal workday.

Maintaining schedules to best meet the needs of clientele, while achieving balance in work and personal time, is not only healthy for the individual but also for the organization. The application of professional scheduling is a matter of judgement on the part of the professional employee and should be reviewed with the respective supervisor. Some key points about professional scheduling include:

- Professional work scheduling is not designed to equitably compensate (hour for hour) for work outside normal office hours (i.e. it is **not** compensatory time).
- Employees must make certain there is adequate coverage in the office, and they are responsive to returning phone calls, visits and other contacts in a very timely manner.
- Extension professionals should always keep their supervisors, co-workers and office staff apprised of their schedules and locations. Professional courtesy requires that everyone communicate with their office team in advance when they will be away from the office or on leave during normal business hours.
- Professional work scheduling absences are typically one to three hours and occur on an occasional basis. Extended or lengthy absences should be requested and scheduled as official leave.

Supervisors (DEAs, CEDs, Associate Heads and Unit Leaders) should support professional work scheduling by discussing expectations regarding office hours, work hours, communication plans, and leave requests to support a balance of work and personal time while also ensuring accountability for all employees.