

Term Time Working

Guide for managers and employees

Royal Mail Group is committed to supporting employees in balancing their work and home life. This guide outlines the term time working provisions available to eligible employees

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Getting help

Contact your manager if you have any queries about this guide.

Managers can obtain advice by:

Calling the HR Services Advice Centre on 0345 6060603 / 5456 7100

Managers working for Parcelforce Worldwide should call 0345 6042787 / 5456 4747

For web access go to:

<https://www.psp.royalmailgroup.com>



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Overview

Term Time Working (TTW) is a part-time contract. It is designed to give employees the flexibility to have more time off during the school holidays by opting not to work between 4 and 13 weeks each year (employees in multichannel customer experience (MCE) may opt not to work between 2 weeks and 13 weeks). Pay will be reduced to reflect the number of weeks the employee has opted not to work. To qualify for TTW the employee must have school-aged child/children, attending a school in the UK.

The following contains information and guidance on TTW, including steps that employees need to take to apply for TTW and how this will impact them.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Flexible Working Policy and Guide as TTW is considered to be a flexible working arrangement.

Eligibility criteria

To be considered for term time working the employee will need to demonstrate that:

- They have worked for Royal Mail for at least 26 weeks at the date on which the application is made
- They have not made a formal application for flexible working within the previous 12 months, whether for a permanent or temporary contractual change
- They are the parent or legal guardian responsible for a child/children under the age of 18 and attending school in the UK
- They are a Royal Mail employee (this does not include agency staff, casuals, contractors or self-employed workers)
- Requests for additional time away from work must be for between 4 and 13 full weeks (from 2 weeks for employees in MCE), starting from a Monday in accordance with the school holiday periods

Request process

As TTW is considered to be a flexible working arrangement, eligible employees must direct their requests to their manager using a Flexible Working Request Form (non-PSP users) or through Me at Work on PSP and fully complete all the required sections (see the Flexible Working policy and guide for details). Managers have the right to reject any applications where the employee has not provided the required information.

In addition to the flexible working form, employees must have completed the TTW1 form. Both forms are available on the Policy and Information site on PSP.

In most units up to eight weeks' notice is needed to consider a request and arrange new pay and contract terms. A further 13 weeks is required before taking the first TTW absence to ensure that the employee has worked sufficient hours before taking any holiday. The extra 13 weeks' notice only applies to the first year that the employee works term-time, unless there has been an increase in the number of weeks requested to take off in any subsequent years.

Pay and benefits

Pay rates for the year will be calculated using the formula below by reducing the number of weeks the employee has requested not to work, (4-13 weeks or 2-13 weeks for employees in MCE). This will then be converted into hours per week, so that each week the employee will receive the same amount of pay:

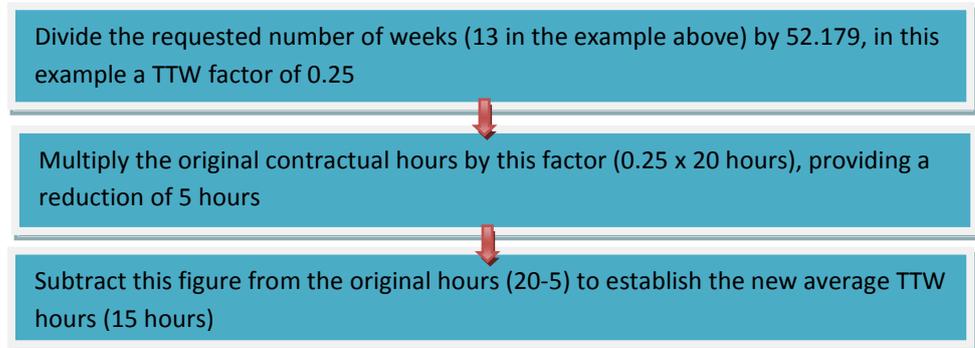
Requested no. of weeks / 52.179 (weeks in the year) = TTW factor

TTW factor x original contractual hours = reduction in hours

Original contractual hours – reduction in hours = average TTW hours

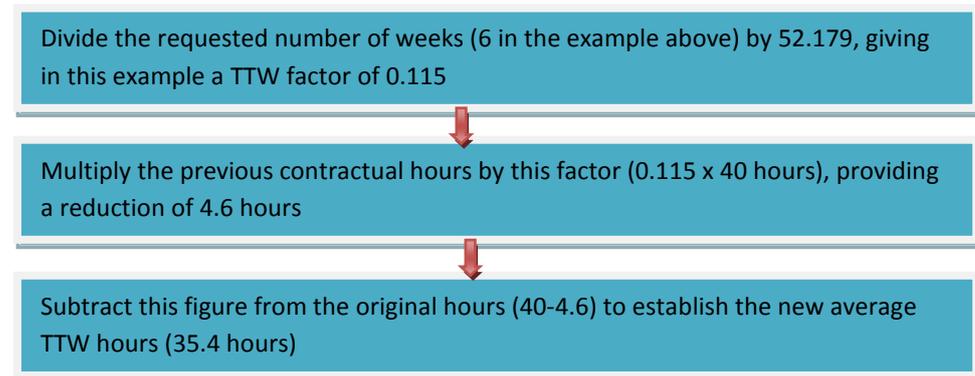
Example 1

The following is an example of how a TTW arrangement would work for an existing **part-timer** who works **20 hours/week** wishing to take an additional **13 weeks off**.



Example 2

If a full time employee requests TTW for 6 weeks, the following example shows the calculations:



The employee's pay will be reduced proportionate to the number of weeks that they have opted not to work and averaged out over the year, so each weekly or monthly payment will be the same. This means that the employee will work more hours than they are paid for when they are at work and will be paid the same amount when absent due to TTW school holidays.

Contractual benefits

The employee will be classed as a part-time employee and any relevant contractual benefits / entitlements will be pro-rated by the number of weeks they are due to work e.g. annual holiday, Bank/Public Holiday entitlement and bonus payments.

Promotion or a reduction in hours during a term time working year

By agreeing to a Term Time Working arrangement, you are committing to the same percentage deduction of pay across all pay periods in the 12 month Term Time Working contract period, irrespective of any subsequent change to pay, grade or contractual hours and irrespective of when in the year you actually take your

additional term time leave.

Annual holiday

National and local leave agreements apply as usual when allocating annual holiday weeks but the employee cannot take holiday during weeks that they have requested not work.

Bank holidays will also be calculated on a pro-rata basis. This means bank holiday entitlements will be calculated locally once the employee has signed their new terms and conditions of employment and will be notified by their manager.

Sick absence

If the employee is unable to attend work through sickness or injury, they must notify their manager as soon as possible, before the beginning of their shift or usual work start time and in accordance with the local arrangements set out for their office or work location. This applies to weeks that the employee is scheduled to be working or on annual holiday. The employee does not need to notify their manager if they are sick during school holiday weeks that they are not working. However, if during school holidays weeks the employee has an accident or illness that may affect them in the workplace, they must notify their manager.

Pensions

Pension benefits are subject to the Rules of the Royal Mail Defined Contribution Plan or the Royal Mail Pension Plan (whichever plan you are a member of). Details of how pension benefits are affected for part-time members can be found in the relevant member's guides or by contacting the pension administrator of your plan.

If you are a member of one of the Royal Mail pension plans, your contributions will be deducted from pay as normal, i.e. as a percentage of contributory or pensionable pay.

Consideration of requests

The Flexible Working Policy and Guide set out the process for considering requests for TTW, so employees and managers should also read these documents.

From the date of receipt of a request for a permanent or temporary contractual change, managers have 3 months in total to deal with it, including conclusion of any appeal period, unless an extension is agreed with the employee.

The manager will seriously and objectively consider the application. Individual requests will be reviewed on their own merits and agreement will depend on assessment of whether or not the employee's work can be done on a term-time basis without any detriment to the business. The request will only be refused if it has a negative impact on one or more of the business reasons set out below. For example, the default will be that TTW school holiday absence during the Christmas period will not be agreed due to the specific operational challenges of that period:

- Cost
- Effect on ability to meet customer demand
- Ability to re-organise work amongst existing staff
- Ability to recruit additional employees
- Ability to manage impact on quality and performance
- Ability to allocate an appropriate level of work during the period the employee proposes to work

- Request does not fit with planned structural changes

Right to appeal

Employees can appeal against a decision to refuse their request. This must be made within five working days of the decision not to grant their request for flexible working. The appeal will be heard by an independent manager who will review the request. The appeals manager's decision is final. The employee may be represented by a work colleague or Trade Union representative at the appeal meeting. If the application is unsuccessful, the employee must wait 12 months before submitting a new one.

How to request changes

Royal Mail employees (excluding customer experience)

Once the employee has signed and returned their contract, this is a permanent change; there is no right to return to their previous hours if they wish to cease TTW and there is no right to return to a previous role/shift/work area unless previously agreed.

If the employee wants to change the number of weeks they have requested not to work, they must put this request in writing to their manager (there is no guarantee that any changes requested to increase, decrease or cease term time working arrangements will be agreed). The manager will need to check resource requirements as resource decisions will have been made on the assumption that the employee was not working certain weeks. Employees should note that only one request to work flexibly (including any changes to existing arrangements) can be made in any 12 month period.

Each year you must complete a new TTW1 form to request absence during the new school holidays. The employee must complete a new request 8 weeks before the current TTW year ends. All forms will be retained locally.

Customer experience employees

Once the employee has signed and returned their contract variation, this is a temporary change; however there is no right to return to their previous hours if they wish to cease TTW and there is no right to return to a previous role/shift/work area.

If the employee wants to change the number of weeks they have requested not to work, they must put this request in writing to their manager (there is no guarantee that any changes requested to increase, decrease or cease term time working arrangements will be agreed). The manager will need to check resource requirements as resource decisions will have been made on the assumption that the employee was not working certain weeks.

Each year you must complete a new TTW1 form to request absence during the new school holidays. The employee must complete a new request 8 weeks before the current TTW year ends. All forms will be retained locally.

The process

Step 1 Employee makes a request for TTW via a Flexible Working Application & Registration form and TTW1 form, the forms must be submitted electronically or by post by the date expressed on the TTW1 application

Step 2 If the employee's request is successful, the employee will receive a new part-time contract and pay is reduced based on the number of weeks they will work. Each weekly or monthly payment will be the same and averaged out over the year

Step 3 If TTW working is approved, the employee will receive new terms and conditions of employment. It is important to note that acceptance of a TTW

contract may be a permanent change of conditions (see section how to request for details) and there is no right to return to previous hours/role/shift/work area (although the employee can request a subsequent change). The manager will need to consider the resourcing requirements of the office when considering any request to terminate a TTW arrangement.

Step 4 Once the employee has moved onto the new TTW terms and conditions a further 13 week period needs to elapse before they can take TTW absence within school holiday periods, to ensure they have worked sufficient hours. This 13 week period only applies in the first year that they work term-time, unless they increase the number of weeks requested to take off in future years.

Step 5 If the employee decides to withdraw their TTW application, this must be in writing to their manager.

Employee FAQs **1. If I apply to work term-time only, will my request automatically be agreed?**

No. All requests will be subject to local approval. Your manager will discuss with you and let you know of their decision

2. What will I discuss with my manager following my request to work TTW?

The purpose of the discussion is to allow your manager to fully understand your application and for you to understand the implications of changing to a TTW contract. The discussion will focus upon what adjustments are possible to accommodate your request and it is important that you and your manager approach the discussion with a flexible outlook. Both you and your manager need to be innovative when considering future working patterns and attendances.

3. Why do I have to apply so far in advance before I can take my first school holiday week off?

Once your arrangement has been agreed, 13 weeks is required before taking your first TTW absence to ensure that you have worked sufficient hours before taking any holiday. This should only apply to the first year that you work term-time, unless you increase the number of weeks you request to take off in any subsequent years.

4. I work 40 hours a week but actually get paid only 35.4 hours per week as I take 6 weeks school holidays off per year – this week I want to work 10 hours overtime. When does the enhanced overtime rate begin?

You will be paid single rate overtime until you have worked 40 hours, then the enhanced rate will start. So in this example you will get paid just over 4 hours at single rate, then just under 6 hours at the enhanced OT rate.

5. Can I purchase additional annual holiday as well as applying to work term-time only?

Yes

6. Can I work overtime and carry out scheduled attendance in school holiday weeks when I am absent through TTW?

No.

7. My child's school holiday starts on a Wednesday can I request to not work half of the week?

No, the weeks you request not to work during school holidays must be full weeks starting from a Monday. You could use your own annual holiday for half a week, subject to agreement with your line manager.

8. Why will I be issued with a variation to my contract?

You will receive a contract variation as your terms and conditions will have changed.

9. Why do I have to fill in a new TTW1 form each year?

School holiday dates change every year, so a new form needs to be completed and the dates agreed with your manager.

10. I have been working term-time for 6 months but want to revert back to normal 52 weeks working. What do I do?

There is no right to return to previous hours and no right to return to a previous role/shift/work area (although you can request a subsequent change). Your manager will need to consider the resourcing requirements of the office when considering your request.

11. How will my pay be reduced?

Your pay for the year will be worked out proportionate to the number of weeks you have requested not to work. This will then be converted into hours per week, so that each week/month you will receive the same amount of pay.

12. Under TTW arrangements, how do I calculate my holiday?

As a term time worker your annual holiday entitlement will be pro-rata, as you will be a part-time employee.

For example – in Customer Services, a full-timers annual holiday entitlement after 5 years is 5 weeks 1 day (26 days).

If under a TTW agreement you do not work for 13 weeks due to school holidays, your annual holiday will be reduced by 25%, in this example providing a new holiday entitlement of 19.5 days.

If you don't work for 6 weeks due to school holidays, your annual holiday will be reduced by 11.5%, in this example providing a new holiday entitlement of 23 days.

As the TTW year is different to the annual holiday year (April – March), when calculating your holiday for part of the leave year, your holiday entitlement will be pro-rated proportionate to the period spent on the TTW contract and your previous contractual arrangement. When taking holiday, your holiday pay will be in line with your contractual hours in force at that time.

13. If I am a Term Time Worker, how do I calculate my entitlement to Bank/Public Holidays?

You will need to calculate the number of days you actually work in the calendar year

and divide this by the number of weeks worked, to establish the actual number of days worked per week. Bank Holidays will then be calculated according to the Part Time Harmonisation Agreement and if you work at least 4 weekly attendances you will be entitled to the same bank holiday entitlement as a full time employee. If you have 3 or fewer weekly attendances then your Bank Holiday entitlement should be reduced accordingly.

14. Can I be accompanied when I meet my manager to discuss my application?

Yes, you can be accompanied by a work colleague who should be from the same work location. You can be accompanied by a Trade Union representative at any appeal meeting.

15. Will my pension be impacted by a change to TTW?

Yes, as you will be moving to a part-time contract which will reduce your pensionable pay. You should contact the pension administrator of your Royal Mail pension plan for further information.

16. What happens if you are promoted or reduce working hours during a term time working year?

By agreeing to a Term Time Working arrangement, you are committing to the same percentage deduction of pay across all pay periods in the 12 month Term Time Working contract period, irrespective of any subsequent change to pay, grade or contractual hours and irrespective of when in the year you actually take your term time leave.

Where to go for further information

Please refer to the 'Getting help' box on the front page of this guide for details of where to go for further information.

Please also refer to the *Policy and Information Site* on PSP or HR pages of the intranet (non-PSP users) for further guidance relating to this policy.