



August 31, 2023

OFFICE ORDER
NO. 13
Series of 2023

SUBJECT : POLICIES ON FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDE AUTHORITY (FPA)

Pursuant to CSC Resolution No. 2200209 promulgated on 18 May 2022 and in view of the continuing transformation of the work procedure, the FPA adopts the following **Policies on Flexible Work Arrangements in the FPA (Policies)**:

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The FPA is mandated to assure the agricultural sector of adequate supplies of fertilizer and pesticide at reasonable prices; rationalize the manufacture and marketing of fertilizer; protect the public from the risks inherent in the use of pesticides; and educate the agricultural sector in the use of these inputs.

To effectively equip the FPA in addressing challenges driven by the evolving needs and circumstances of the workforce, the rapid integration of innovative information communication technologies, the unprecedented impact of the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and other infectious outbreaks, persistent challenges posed by traffic congestion, and the ever-present threat of natural and human-induced disasters, there is an imperative for the FPA to undertake a comprehensive reevaluation of the current work scheme. This reevaluation should be aligned with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 06, s. 2022. Additionally, this evaluation should encompass a meticulous assessment of the viability and suitability of alternative work arrangements that have been successfully implemented within the private sector. The ultimate goal is to ensure the seamless, effective, and highly efficient delivery of public services in these complex and demanding times. These policies will not only establish secure work environments for FPA officials and employees, prioritizing their well-being and health, but will also harmonize with the essential obligations of public service.

By implementing adaptable work arrangements, these policies will furnish FPA officials and employees with the necessary tools to effectively navigate various circumstances, whether they be the result of natural disasters, human-made crises, or any other disruptive event that could potentially hinder the continuous provision of public services.

In essence, the policies centered around flexible work arrangements will proactively cater to the dynamic needs of the FPA operations. This approach ensures that both the workforce and the public service delivery remain resilient, irrespective of prevailing challenges.



Compressed Workweek and WFH	<p>A minimum of six (6) hours to be spent in the office/field and the remaining hours in WFH for four (4) days; or</p> <p>Two (2) days spent in the office/ field and two (2) days in WFH at ten (10) hours per day</p> <p>Provided that the required forty (40)-hour workweek shall be complied with.</p>
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C. Entitlement to Support Mechanisms/Employee Benefits/ICT Resources

The agency head shall ensure that all FPA officials and employees are provided with the following support mechanisms, employee benefits, and ICT resources:

1. Support Mechanisms

- 1.1 The FPA shall provide appropriate personal protective equipment to frontline service providers, FPA officials, and employees who are required to physically report to work during the pandemic or other calamities;
- 1.2 During a pandemic or occurrence of calamities, the FPA shall provide service vehicle or transportation facilities to transport FPA officials and employees required to physically report to work, whenever practicable, subject to budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations;
- 1.3 The FPA shall shoulder the reimbursement of laboratory and medical expenses incurred by FPA officials and employees in compliance with protocols, as issued by proper authorities, who are on official travel during the period of pandemic or emergence of any infectious disease;
- 1.4 The FPA shall ensure that the FPA officials and employees are afforded health/psychosocial interventions (e.g., free counselling sessions, online webinars, etc.) to support FPA officials and employees in addressing problems related to mental well-being;
- 1.5 Reasonable expenses incurred by the FPA officials and employees (e.g., electricity bills, internet connection cost, etc.) may be defrayed by the FPA only when there is imposition of WFH arrangement due to emergence of national or local outbreak of a severe infectious disease and/or the occurrence of natural or man-made calamities subject to budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations; and
- 1.6 Other monetary and forms of incentives as may be allowed by the Office of the President or other authorized agencies or upon approval by the head of agency subject to budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

2. Employee Benefits

- 2.1 FPA officials and employees shall be provided equal opportunities in terms of awards, promotions, training, and career development (e.g., Information



Saturday and Sunday are regular workdays and not cases of overtime.⁷

4.4 Flexitime may be adopted in case the Daylight-Saving Time is declared by the proper authorities, subject to the provisions of Items V.B.4.1 to V.B.4.3 of these policies.

5. Combination of Flexible Work Arrangements

5.1 The FPA may adopt a combination of any of the following flexible work arrangements that are appropriate/applicable to the FPA's mandate/functions as well as the location of the workplace:

- a. Skeleton Workforce and WFH;
- b. Compressed Workweek and WFH;
- c. Combination of the three (3) types of flexiplace; or
- d. Other combination of work arrangements.

Examples:

Combination of Flexible Work Arrangements	Working Hours
Skeleton Workforce and WFH	Three (3) days in the office and two (2) days WFH at eight (8) hours per day;

	A minimum of four (4) hours to be spent in the office/field and the remaining hours in WFH per day; provided the forty (40)-hour workweek requirement shall be complied with.
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Combination of Flexible Work Arrangements	Working Hours
Work Shifting and WFH	Three (3) days Work Shifting in the office and two (2) days WFH at eight (8) hours per day; Agencies may adopt two (2) work shifts in a day, e.g., 7:00 AM -1:00 PM and 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM exclusive of lunch/dinner, provided that it shall be in combination with WFH work arrangement to comply with the required forty (40)-hour workweek.

⁷ CSC MC 25, s. 2019, Revised Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement in the Government, 20 November 2019.

2. Compressed Workweek

- 2.1 Compressed workweek may be allowed for FPA officials and employees whose task/s or portions thereof cannot be accomplished outside the office, particularly those on skeleton workforce observing the four (4)-day workweek, and those identified by the agency head necessary for the continued operation of the office in order not to prejudice public service delivery.
- 2.2 The FPA may adopt the following workweek options: Monday to Thursday, Tuesday to Friday, Monday to Tuesday, and Thursday to Friday, or a combination of workdays less than the prescribed five (5)-day workweek provided that public service delivery shall not be prejudiced during the whole workweek (Monday to Friday).

3. Skeleton Workforce

- 3.1 Skeleton workforce shall be adopted only when full staffing is not possible.
- 3.2 FPA officials and employees assigned as skeleton workforce shall comply with the normal working hours of not less than eight hours a day for five days a week or a total of forty (40) hours a week exclusive of time for lunch. However, if this work arrangement is adopted in combination with other flexible work arrangements, the required working hours thereof shall be complied with.
- 3.3 The total number of the FPA officials and employees to make up the skeleton workforce shall be determined by the head of agency based on the services it provides and subject to existing guidelines such as health protocols issued by the proper authorities.
- 3.4 FPA officials and employees who failed to report to office onsite on their assigned working days shall be considered absent either as authorized or unauthorized vacation leave unless a medical certificate is presented to avail of sick leave of absence.

4. Flexitime

- 4.1 The FPA shall also adopt flexible time for the FPA officials and employees provided that they shall render not less than a total of forty (40) hours a week for five (5) days a week, exclusive of time for lunch.
- 4.2 The FPA working hours shall start not earlier than 7:00 AM and end not later than 7:00 PM. Under this work arrangement, FPA officials and employees may choose their time to report for work (time-in) in the morning and time to leave the office (time-out) daily for the duration of the period subject to the approval of the agency head.

The head of the FPA shall, however, ensure that the public is assured of their frontline services from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, including lunch break.

- 4.3 In the exigency of the service, working days may also be altered to include Saturdays and Sundays; Provided that employees who work on such days may choose a compensatory days-off during weekdays, provided further that the



- E. **Combination of Flexible Work Arrangements** – refers to a work arrangement whereby the agency may adopt a combination of any of the above-mentioned flexible work arrangements appropriate or applicable to the mandate/functions of the agency.

V. POLICIES

A. General Requirements for Flexible Work Arrangements

1. As a general rule, FPA officials and employees shall render work from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM on all days except Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays.
2. The FPA shall ensure that all stakeholders are assured of continuous delivery of services from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, including lunch break, throughout the workweek. However, the implementation of such arrangements shall not prejudice the participation or involvement of FPA officials and employees in official activities of the FPA.
3. The FPA flexible work arrangement/s shall be appropriate/applicable to FPA's mandate and functions and shall comply with the provisions of CSC-DOLE-DOH JMC No. 1, s. 2020,¹ to be submitted to CSC Regional Offices for records and reference purposes. It must be proposed by the respective Division or Unit Head and approved by the Agency Head. It may be revoked or altered at any time upon the recommendation of the same Division or Unit Head, in alignment with what is applicable and appropriate for the mandate of each Division or Unit.

Tasks which may be allowed to be accomplished outside the office and other protocols such as health emergency plans to prevent the spread of infectious diseases are attached to **Annex 'A'**.

4. The FPA shall incorporate the Public Service Continuity Plan pursuant to National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Memorandum No. 33, s. 2018,² and the adoption of flexible work , as well as the Memorandum Circular No. 9, s. 2022, regarding FPA's New Normal Workforce Plan Revised Guidelines on Service Continuity.
5. FPA officials and employees under flexible work arrangement shall be entitled to Compensatory Overtime Credit/Overtime Pay if they physically reported for work and rendered services beyond the normal eight (8) hours on scheduled workdays or forty (40) hours a week, and those rendered on rest days or scheduled days off, holidays, and special non- working days, both exclusive of time for lunch and rest, subject to the provisions of CSC-DBM Joint Circular No. 2, s. 2015,³ as amended, and other related civil service, budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

¹ Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Standards for the Public Sector.

² Public Service Continuity Plan (PSCP) Template for Government Agencies.

³ Policies and Guidelines on Overtime Services and Overtime Pay for Government Employees.

6. The FPA shall adopt performance standards and timelines in accordance with RA No. 11032,⁴ in consonance with the approved Office/ Division/ Individual Performance Commitment and Review (OPCR/DPCR/IPCR) to guide FPA officials and employees in the performance of their assigned task/s.

Failure to accomplish the assigned task/s within the timeliness set by the FPA may be a ground to deny subsequent requests for flexiplace work arrangement.

7. The FPA shall monitor the employees' output such as submission of daily/ weekly/ monthly accomplishment report/s, etc. in consonance with the performance standards the FPA adopted.
8. In conducting meetings/ assemblies and other official activities, the FPA may adopt the use of videoconferencing/teleconferencing, whenever applicable.
9. The FPA Data Privacy Officer shall establish reasonable and appropriate organizational, technical, and physical security measures to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and availability of official documents and other relevant information. Personal data shall be processed by the employees pursuant to RA No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

FPA shall use the Philippine National Public Key Infrastructure (PNPKI), which secures communications among individuals and government agencies, of the Department of Information, Communications and Technology. As such, FPA officials and employees should register their respective signatures on the PNPKI and use it for official government transactions in compliance with EO No. 810, s. 2009.⁵

Online FPA transactions must be implemented in accordance with COA Circular No. 2021-006⁶ and the DA Memorandum Order No. 10, series of 2022.⁵

B. Parameters in the Implementation of Flexible Work Arrangement/s

1. Flexiplace

1.1 WFH

1.1.1 WFH may be adopted anytime, subject to mutually agreed arrangements between the officials or employees and their supervisors. It shall apply to FPA officials and employees whose assigned task/s can be accomplished outside the office.

1.1.2 WFH may likewise be extended to FPA officials and employees whose task/s cannot be accomplished at the office, satellite office, or another fixed place under the following situations:

⁴ An Act Promoting Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services, amending for the purpose Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, and for other purposes.

⁵ Guidelines on the use of digital signature in the Department of Agriculture.

- a. During the emergence of a national or local outbreak of a severe infectious disease and/or the occurrence of natural or man-made calamities; and
- b. Their place of assignment is located within one (1)- kilometer radius from:
 1. Facilities and installations where infected/ suspected patients and public health workers and other frontline workers who, while in the performance of their respective public duties, are regularly exposed to infectious diseases, are located; and

⁵ Institutionalizing the Certification Scheme for Digital Signatures and Directing the Application of Digital Signatures in e-Government Services

⁶ Guidelines on the Use of Electronic Documents, Electronic Signatures, and Digital Signatures in Government Transactions.

2. A calamity-stricken area.

For this purpose, the FPA shall determine and assign alternative task/s subject to the performance standards and timelines for its completion in consonance with the approved OPCR/DPCR/IPCR.

When the FPA has not assigned any other task/s, the concerned officials and employees who were not able to produce outputs during the emergence of national or local outbreak of a severe infectious disease and/or the occurrence of natural or man-made calamities shall be considered on excused absence.

1.1.3 Task/s assigned to FPA officials or employees should be performed to the full extent possible in terms of workhours and workdays per workweek.

1.1.4 Employees under WFH arrangement are not entitled to Compensatory Overtime Credit/Overtime Pay.

1.2 Work from Satellite Office

1.2.1 Work from satellite office shall apply to FPA officials or employees whose task/s can be accomplished outside the office but may need equipment/facilities that are available in the nearest satellite office.

For this purpose, the concerned FPA officials or employees shall request approval from their immediate supervisor or next higher officer in order that workload arrangement costs incurred by the satellite office may be properly coordinated.

1.2.2 Work at satellite office may be allowed when the FPA officials or employees cannot report for work due to typhoons/floods and other natural or man-made calamities, upon approval of the head of agency, except when the work arrangement is limited to WFH as declared by the Office of the President or proper authorities.

1.2.3 FPA officials or employees who are stranded due to quarantine protocols, unavailability of transportation or inaccessible road may also be allowed to work at FPA satellite offices.

1.2.4 FPA officials or employees who are allowed to report for work at the FPA satellite office shall comply with the prescribed working hours of forty (40) hours per workweek pursuant to RA No. 1880.⁶

1.3 Work from Another Fixed Place

1.3.1 Work from another fixed place shall apply to FPA officials or employees whose task/s can be accomplished outside the office, at a place conducive for productive and efficient performance of official duties and responsibilities, other than their home, residence, or satellite office.

For this purpose, the concerned FPA officials or employees shall request approval from the immediate supervisor or next higher officer in order that task/s may be properly assigned.

1.3.2 FPA officials and employees whose task/s cannot be accomplished outside the office and are stranded at a place away from their home or satellite office may be allowed under work from another fixed place arrangement provided that the FPA has assigned alternative task/s subject to the performance standards and timelines for its completion in consonance with the approved OPCR/DPCR/IPCR and existing CSC rules.

1.3.3 FPA officials or employees who are stranded due to quarantine protocols, unavailability of transportation or inaccessible road may also be allowed to work from another fixed place subject to existing CSC rules.

1.3.4 Task/s assigned to FPA officials or employees should be performed to the full extent possible in terms of workhours and workdays per workweek.

1.3.5 The FPA shall take full responsibility of the grant of work from another fixed place and verification of the employees' entitlement to be granted thereof. Said verification shall include the validation of the location of the government officials or employees, and the verification that their location is covered in the declaration of state of calamity by the proper government agency and such other evidence as may be necessary, e.g., bus ticket.

1.3.6 Employees under work from another fixed place arrangement are not entitled to Compensatory Overtime Credit/Overtime Pay.

⁶ An Act to Amend the Second Paragraph of Section Five Hundred and Sixty-Two and Section Five Hundred and Sixty-Four of the Revised Administrative Code. (Re legal hours of labor-minimum requirement), 22 June 1957.

or another fixed place, on a temporary basis duly approved by the head of office/agency.

Flexiplace work arrangement has three (3) types, namely:

1. **Work from home (WFH)** – is a work arrangement where the government officials or employees work at home or their residence;
2. **Work from satellite office** – is a work arrangement where the government officials or employees, instead of reporting to their office, report for work at their agency satellite office near their place of residence (e.g., central/other regional office/field office); and
3. **Work from another fixed place** – is a work arrangement where the government officials and employees render service within the Philippines, at a place conducive for productive work and efficient performance of official duties and responsibilities, other than their home or residence and satellite office.

The adoption of the flexiplace work arrangement may be allowed under any of the following conditions:

1. **Regular** – under this work arrangement, the government officials or employees may request to work at an alternative worksite on a regular and recurring basis. Said government officials or employees may be allowed to work off-site for a period agreed upon with the supervisor and duly approved by the head of agency/office.
 2. **Situational** - this work arrangement is appropriate for ad-hoc task/s or assignment/s that require/s short period of time or project-based, e.g., project proposal preparation, reports preparation, research, case adjudication, and other analogous circumstances.
 3. **Medical** - this work arrangement may be allowed for government officials or employees who are recuperating from a medical condition, e.g., Osteogenesis Imperfecta, cancer, diabetes mellitus, chronic kidney disease, and other analogous diseases, which does not affect his/her ability to perform regular work assignment at an alternate worksite as certified by the attending physician. The duration of the flexiplace work arrangement shall be based on the recommendation of the attending physician. Request for flexiplace due to medical conditions shall be supported by the medical records of the government official or employee concerned.
- B. **Compressed Workweek** – refers to a work arrangement whereby the forty (40) hours workweek for five (5) days of the government officials or employees is compressed to four (4) days or less, as may be applicable.
- C. **Skeleton Workforce** – refers to a work arrangement where a minimum number of government officials or employees is required to man the office to render service when full staffing is not possible.
- D. **Flexitime** – refers to a work arrangement where the agency is allowed to adopt flexible time for its government officials and employees from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM on a daily basis, provided that the required forty (40) hours workweek is complied with.



II. OBJECTIVES

The adoption of the flexible work arrangements in the FPA aims to achieve the following:

A. General Objective

These policies aim to institutionalize relevant and appropriate work arrangements for FPA officials and employees to ensure efficient and effective performance of governmental functions and delivery of public services, and to ensure protection of their health, safety, and welfare always.

B. Specific Objectives

1. To ensure protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the FPA officials at all times;
2. To ensure that FPA officials and employees achieve the objectives set by the organization, and, in the same way, the FPA achieves the objectives that it has set itself in its strategic plan under any circumstance;
3. To boost the morale and enhance the welfare of FPA officials and employees by giving them the opportunity to accomplish their task/s through appropriate work arrangement/s thereby increasing employee productivity and performance, and allowing work-life balance;
4. To encourage FPA to adopt Information and Communications Technology (ICT)-enabled work and relevant tasks that can be performed remotely; and
5. To provide reasonable work arrangement/s to senior citizens, persons with disability (PWDs), pregnant and nursing mothers, immunocompromised individuals, or persons with chronic conditions, and those who suffered from accidents affecting mobility but can physically and mentally work.

III. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

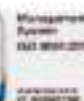
These policies shall apply to all appointive government officials and employees in the FPA, regardless of status of appointment (permanent, temporary, coterminous, casual, or contractual).

The FPA will formulate a separate policy for the Contract of Service (COS) and Job Order (JO) workers, in alignment with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and Commission on Audit (COA) Joint Circular No. 1, dated September 13, 2022.

IV. CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The FPA hereby adopts the following flexible work arrangements:

- A. Flexiplace – refers to an output-oriented work arrangement that authorizes government officials or employees to render service at a location away from their office, either in the home/residence of the official or employee, agency satellite office,



Technology-literacy programs and other related employment considerations), regardless of the work arrangement that they have adopted, in consonance with the existing civil service law, rules, and regulations; and

- 2.2 Medical benefits shall be granted to FPA officials and employees, who sustained wounds and/or injuries while in the performance of their official duties, regardless of their work arrangement subject to the conditions under CSC-DBM Joint Circular No. 1, s. 2006, as amended by CSC-DBM Joint Circular No. 1, s. 2015, and the FPA's Collective Negotiation Agreement with the FPA Employees Association (FPAEA).

3. ICT resources while on flexible work arrangement

- 3.1. The FPA is enjoined to invest on annual subscriptions to software that enables secure and more efficient management of task/s and remote collaboration for all officials and employees.

The FPA shall provide its FPA officials and employees appropriate ICT resources, such as but not limited to computers/laptops, phones, authorized software, including reimbursement of internet and mobile data subscription expenses, subject to budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations to adequately perform their duties;

- 3.2. Personal devices and equipment of FPA officials and employees may be used if the provision of FPA-owned ICT resources is not feasible. Such personal devices and equipment to be used by FPA officials and employees on flexible work arrangement must be properly recorded (e.g., device model and serial number) by the FPA; and
- 3.3. The FPA shall adopt measures to ensure protection of FPA properties (e.g., office equipment) and provide necessary support (e.g., troubleshooting and maintenance of mobile office equipment) for FPA officials and employees under the flexible work arrangements.

VI. REPEALING CLAUSE

Any provision of existing FPA rules, policies, and guidelines inconsistent with these Policies and to the Civil Service rules, policies, and guidelines is deemed repealed accordingly.

VII. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of these Policies or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance is declared invalid, the remainder of the Policies or the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected by such declaration.



VIII. EFFECTIVITY

These Policies under CSC Resolution No. 2200209 dated 18 May 2022 shall take effect immediately.


JULIETA B. LANANGAN
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