

Outline of the 2015 NPA Working Hours Recommendation

o Main points of the Working Hours Recommendation

Expanding the flextime system to all employees in principle, with appropriate considerations

to maintain proper operation of public duties. (To be enforced on Apr. 2016)

- When a request by an employee to receive the application of the flextime system is submitted, his/her working hours for each day shall be assigned, taking into consideration his/her report on the starting and ending times of working hours and as far as it would cause no hindrance to the operation of public duties.
- To maintain proper operation of public duties, appropriate considerations shall be taken, such as setting a period during which all employees have to be at work each day (core time) that is long enough for systematic operation.
- The flextime system for employees who take care of their children or other family members provides a more flexible work pattern.

1. Necessity of Expanding the Flextime System

- Awareness of the importance of work-life balance has been growing all over Japan recently, and needs for employees' working patterns have been varying with diversification of employees' values and lifestyles.
- "The Guidelines for the Initiative to Promote Women's Activity and Work-life Balance of National Public Employees (Oct. 2014)" requested the NPA to consider the introduction of a flextime system that will enable employees of various job types to work more flexibly while maintaining proper operation of public duties in the Cabinet Office and each ministry.
- Providing employees several options of flexible and diverse working patterns will lead to a working environment that enables them to demonstrate their ability fully as well as work efficiently with high morale, and will be effective for a further increase of

efficiency in the public sector. Moreover, it will promote the balancing of employees' work and their childcare/nursing care, and it also will contribute to securing human resources.

2. Outline of Expanding the Flextime System

(1) Outline

- Targeting all employees in principle, and when a request by an employee to receive the application of the flextime system is submitted, the heads of ministries and agencies may assign the employee's working hours for each day, setting a weekly average of 38 hours and 45 minutes during the term of four weeks, taking into consideration the employee's report, and as far as it would cause no hindrance to the operation of public duties. Core time shall be set as 5 hours every day from Monday to Friday.
- Regarding employees who take care of their children or other family members, the term of working pattern assignment may be set from one week to four weeks, and days off in addition to Sundays and Saturdays may be set. Core time shall be set as 2 to 4.5 hours every work day.
- Regarding those employees to whom the current flextime system is applied, the heads of ministries and agencies may apply the new flextime system to them according to their report.

Employees who should perform shift work or work with a specific working pattern owing to the nature of their duties pursuant to NPA Rules shall not be covered by the new flextime system.

(2) Principles of Application of the Flextime System

- In principle, the heads of ministries and agencies shall endeavor as much as possible to apply the flextime system to employees who request the application. It should be noted, however, that the flextime system cannot be applied to employees when it hinders the operation of public duties, such as when the nature of their duties is not compatible with the flextime system and when the application of the flextime system

makes it impossible to maintain the necessary staff allocation.

- When the flextime system is applied, the heads of ministries and agencies shall assign their employees' working hours for each day, taking into consideration the employee's reports as far as it does not hinder the operation of public duties.

Regarding employees who take care of their children or other family members, the heads of ministries and agencies shall endeavor as much as possible to assign their working hours for each day and set days off as they request.

3. Points of Attention in Utilizing the Flextime System

- Every employee shall perform his/her duties with a sense of responsibility and autonomy, which will promote a more effective style of carrying out duties and a more flexible way of working than ever, and also lead to the provision of more effective administrative service.
- It is necessary to ensure that the application of the flextime system does not lead to an increase in overtime work and also it is important to promote a way of working that enables the reduction of overtime work.

4. Timing of enforcement of expanding the Flextime System

The expansion of the flextime system is to be enforced on April 1, 2016.