

Diocese of Elphin – HR Policy Handbook

Document Name: Work-Life Balance Policy
Document No: 10.1.5 (original)
Effective Date: 15th February 2019
Written By: Frank Mitchell, HR Advisor
Approved By: +Kevin Doran, Bishop of Elphin



Operating under the patronage of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the Diocese of Elphin aims to provide staff members with a safe, caring and supportive Christian environment in which to carry out their work. Work objectives are to be advanced with due regard to the needs and dignity of each staff member and with due regard for the individuals and communities the diocese serves.

This document outlines the Diocesan policy on Work-Life Balance. It is applicable to parishes, offices, agencies and any entity operating under the governance of the Diocese of Elphin (hereafter referred to as "the employer"). Line Managers (Bishop, Priests, Deacons, Religious, Lay Personnel who supervise staff members) are responsible for communicating this policy and having it signed off by their staff member(s).

"The employer" is fully committed to providing work-life balance initiatives to support staff members in achieving a balance between work and personal life.

Work-life balance arrangements are in addition to statutory leave entitlements and are voluntarily introduced by "the employer" to help staff members respond to individual circumstances. We understand that people work best when they can balance their work responsibilities with their personal life. "The employer" will make every reasonable effort to try to accommodate work-life balance requests, taking into account the needs of "the employer" and the individual.

This policy is available to all staff members who have a minimum of 2 years continuous service. This policy sets out a planned and systematic approach to managing work-life balance initiatives and enables requests to be dealt with in a consistent and fair manner.

Arrangements available to you include:

- part-time work;
- job-sharing;
- flexitime;
- personalised hours;
- e-working;
- career breaks;
- time off in lieu;

Arrangements will be kept under review to ensure that they continue to benefit the individual, their work area and "the employer". "The employer" will review this policy regularly to evaluate the viability of work-life balance initiatives from a diocesan and local perspective.

Application procedure

You may discuss any proposed flexible working arrangement with your Line Manager. All applications will be considered, taking into account the needs of the 'diocese' and needs of the individual.

If you wish to proceed with a request for flexible working arrangements, you are required to put your request in writing, outlining the arrangement you request, the reason for the request and the duration of the request.

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Each request will be considered on the basis of operation requirements at the time and the feasibility of implementing the working arrangement in your job location. Consideration will also be given to the individual's situation and whether they request a permanent or temporary arrangement. All arrangements will be introduced on a pilot basis and subject to regular review.

The manager will review your request and communicate his/her decision in writing within 2 weeks. The manager and staff member will discuss any issues and impacts arising from the arrangement. In situations where it is not possible to grant the request for a flexible working arrangement, a compromise may be reached between the manager and the staff member. Reasons whereby a request may be refused include (although this is not an exhaustive list):

- burden of extra costs and budget implications;
- inability to rearrange work among existing staff members;
- detrimental effect on ability to meet the needs of "the employer";
- existing flexible working arrangements;
- lack of skills balance and inability to recruit additional staff.

All such arrangements will have a trial period. Where a request is approved, the staff member will be asked to sign an amended contract of employment to reflect changes in their terms and condition of employment, for example, working hours, salary etc.

A staff member may appeal the decision not to provide such arrangements in respect of their particular role within one week. The decision made on appeal is final.

For further information please contact:

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