



# Definition of Workplace Flexibility

Workplace Flexibility 2010 defines workplace flexibility as:

- The ability to have flexibility in the scheduling of full-time hours (e.g., a range of flexible work arrangements, including flextime and compressed work weeks);
- The ability to have flexibility in the number of hours worked (e.g., reduced hours, such as part-time or part-year);
- The ability to have career flexibility with multiple points for entry, exit and re-entry into the workforce (e.g., extended time off and career on- and off-ramps); and
- The ability to address unexpected and ongoing personal and family needs (e.g., short-term time off and episodic time off).

Workplace Flexibility 2010 believes that workplace flexibility is best achieved through a combination of voluntary employer efforts and public policy. In real life, when we talk about achieving a more flexible workplace, we are talking about a workplace that effectively addresses the following categories of worker needs – in a manner that recognizes and respects the need of employers to get the work done:

- ▶ **Short-term time off:** A worker who needs time off because the worker is sick, the worker's child is sick, a school conference is scheduled, there is a death in the family, there is an emergency home repair to be addressed, etc.
- ▶ **Flexible work arrangements:** A worker who wants to work full-time (40 hours/week and full-year), but on a non-traditional schedule or in a different location.
- ▶ **Episodic time off:** A worker who needs time off on a sporadic or periodic basis, to address, for example, a chronic health condition or education and training.
- ▶ **Reduced hours:** A worker who, because of life circumstances (e.g., the need to care for a young child, because of a chronic health condition, or the desire to phase retire), needs to/wants to work less than 40 hours per week or less than full-year."
- ▶ **Extended time off:** A worker who needs to take an extended period of time off to, for example, take care of a newborn or newly adopted child, a family member with a serious health condition, or his or her own serious health condition.
- ▶ **Career Exit and Re-Entry Ramps:** A worker who needs to/chooses to take time off from the workforce completely, but who hopes to re-enter the workforce at a later point in time.