

Sample Policy: Job Sharing

The following sample policy was excerpted from [The Book of Company Policies](#), published by HR Specialist, © 2007. Edit for your organization's purposes.

"The Organization is committed to develop, maintain and support a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities in employment within the Organization. To assist in this, the Organization will actively support job sharing where it is reasonable and practical to do so and where operational needs will not be adversely affected.

"Job Share Arrangements:

a. two people voluntarily share the duties and responsibilities of one full-time position, dividing the hours between them. The full-time salary and holiday/leave time are allocated on a pro rata basis to each of the job sharers. Guidance on job-share arrangements can be sought from the Human Resource Office when a position becomes vacant, or when a request to job-share is received from an existing full-time employee.

All full-time positions are deemed to be potentially open to job sharing. However, the Organization, in accordance with managerial interests, reserves the right to ensure that operational needs will not be adversely affected. Agreement to a job being shared should not be unreasonably withheld.

b. The way in which the actual hours of a job-share position are divided between the job-share partners should be decided by the manager/supervisor in consultation with the partners . . .

c. The overall duties and responsibilities of the whole position will be shared between the job-share partners. The exact agreed-upon working arrangements of the job-share partners will be decided by the manager.

"Recruitment and Selection: When recruiting for a position, the normal approach of selecting the candidate (or job-share partners) whose skills profile is the closest match to job requirements will be adhered to. When a joint résumé is received from job-share partners, it must be assessed in the same manner as applications from other candidates. The normal practice will be to interview and test the job-share partners separately to assess each one against the job requirements. It may also be appropriate to interview the job-share candidates together to discuss their joint application. An offer made to job-share partners is dependent upon both partners accepting the offer of employment . . .

"Resignation: If one job-share partner leaves and the remaining partner does not want to work full time, the following procedure should be followed:

a. An assessment of the needs of the organization should be carried out to ascertain whether full-time coverage is required.

- b. The vacant half of the job-share position should be advertised.
- c. The remaining job-share partner should use any available contacts to assist in finding a partner.
- d. If a suitable job partner cannot be found, an organization-wide search for alternative work should be implemented for the remaining job-share partner.

“If all the above has been carried out and it is still not possible to either find a replacement job-share partner or find the remaining partner a suitable alternative position, the remaining partner will voluntarily terminate.”

WHAT'S AT ISSUE:

Suppose a talented employee in a position of responsibility wants to reduce her hours to spend more time with her family. You don't want to lose her skills, but your company really needs someone working the position 40 hours a week. The solution may be job sharing.

Find or hire another employee with similar or complementary skills who likewise wants to work part time and share the single position. Allocate the schedule, responsibilities, full-time salary, benefits and vacation time between the two. Both employees will get more compensation than they probably would working part time elsewhere, and your company can still reap the benefit of their skills.

There are several issues you'll need to think through about job sharing, including:

Scheduling. You can divide the hours in various ways to meet the company's operational needs. Typically, the schedule is worked out between the job-sharing partners and the manager. Ideally, the job-share partners each should work half time. Among the options:

- Half or split days—one partner working in the morning and the other one in the afternoon.
- Half or split weeks—one partner working the first 2.5 days (Monday through Wednesday morning) and the other one the remaining 2.5 days (Wednesday afternoon through Friday).
- Two days one week and three days the next—with the job sharers alternating on the extra day.
- Alternate weeks—each working one week on, one week off (normally done on a Wednesday p.m. through Wednesday a.m. basis).
- Splitting the hours unequally—one partner working two days; the other, three days.

Communication. How will the partners communicate about what needs to be done if they're not in the office at the same time? Some job-sharing teams communicate primarily through notes and occasional phone calls. Some companies insist that their schedules overlap, say for an hour a day or a half day per week. That raises questions, though, about how two people can work at the same desk at the same time. If the partners use that time to coordinate efforts, though, they could use a nearby conference room.

Overtime. Be sure to check exempt and nonexempt status to determine when nonexempt employees will be due overtime.

Union questions. If your workers are unionized, review your contract to see if union members are allowed to participate in job-sharing programs.

Workers' comp and Medicare. Both are calculated on a per-employee basis, so you will increase your costs in these areas. The same goes for unemployment insurance premiums. (The chances of an unemployment claim increase with the number of employees.)

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Before entering into a job-sharing arrangement, establish a policy that you can apply to other potential job-sharing teams to ensure consistency.

As with any new policy, check to make sure it meets organizational needs, is consistent with all internal policy and complies with applicable laws. The general policy statement should put job sharing in the context of equal employment opportunity. The company might commit to support job sharing when it is reasonable and practical and does not disrupt operations.

Ask yourself the following:

- Are all full-time positions potentially open to job sharing? If not, address which job categories are suitable and which are not.
- Are all full-time employees eligible? State guidelines the company will use to determine eligibility, such as receiving satisfactory or above-average job evaluations.
- How will the company handle joint résumés received from would-be job sharers? For instance, you might state that joint candidates will be treated the same as any other candidate, and that the partners will be interviewed both separately and together to discuss plans for cooperation. Is an offer made to two candidates contingent on both accepting the offer?
- How will job-sharing employees be compensated? You might state that the new job-sharing partners will negotiate with each other and with the HR department on who receives which of the benefits due to a single full-time employee, and how vacation time is divided. For instance, one partner might already be covered by a spouse's health insurance but have a need for a different benefit.
- What will you do when one job-share partner leaves and the other one doesn't want to work full time? Typically, the remaining partner uses her own contacts to search for a replacement, or the company advertises the position. If one can't be found, you may have to transfer the remaining partner to a different position that only needs half-time coverage or else accept that person's resignation too.