

Using Employees on Intermittent Work Schedules



**Defense Commissary Agency
Headquarters
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Fort Lee, Virginia 23801-1800**



**A handbook to guide
commissary management
personnel in the responsible
and proper use of employees
on intermittent work schedules**



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change of work schedule from intermittent to part-time or full-time. A remark should be included on the *Request for Personnel Action* to state that this is a temporary work schedule change and the work schedule will return to intermittent not later than (date).

Advantages to using intermittent work schedules responsibly and properly

- You get someone to do the job.
- There are no limits on the number of hours within a week that an employee may work on the intermittent schedule.
- Your workforce is used in a more cost-effective manner.
- Employee (intermittent) complaints are reduced/eliminated.

Summary of Key Points

- Intermittents perform work which cannot be scheduled in advance on a regular, planned basis.
- There are no restrictions on the number of hours intermittents can work.
- Intermittents can be scheduled within the administrative workweek with no limitation on the number of weeks as long as their work schedules vary from week to week and the reason for performing the work justifies their use.
- Judicious use of intermittents will avoid morale/equity issues with other categories of employees.
- If it is necessary to use an intermittent on a fixed schedule for a short time period, that intermittent may be scheduled in advance for no more than two pay periods (four weeks).
- The use of intermittents is a staffing tool; use it responsibly and properly.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HEADQUARTERS DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY
Fort Lee VA 23801-1800

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Personnel & Training

USING EMPLOYEES ON INTERMITTENT WORK SCHEDULES

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR

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AUTHORITY: This handbook is established in compliance with provisions of DoD Directive 5105.55, Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA), November 9, 1990.

MANAGEMENT CONTROL SYSTEM: This handbook does not contain Management Control provisions that are subject to evaluation and testing as required by DeCAD 70-2 and as scheduled in DeCAD 70-3.

APPLICABILITY: This handbook is applicable to all DeCA activities.

HOW TO SUPPLEMENT: This handbook may not be supplemented. However, any recommended revisions may be submitted to DeCA/DP for consideration.

DISTRIBUTION: Handbook is available on DeCA's Intranet. Initial hardcopy distribution was made to all commissaries.

SUMMARY: This handbook contains guidance to assist commissary management personnel in the responsible and proper use of employees on intermittent work schedules.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY (OPR): HQ DeCA/DP
COORDINATORS: HQ DeCA/CC/GC/IG/IR/SA

Schedule in advance of the administrative workweek

For those times when you need someone to cover peak workloads during the holidays (Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, etc.) and to cover periods of heavy leave usage (flu season, maternity leave, summer vacations), you can schedule, in advance, an intermittent to work for up to two pay periods--four consecutive workweeks. After working these two pay periods, the intermittent must return to being scheduled within the administrative workweek.

Example 1: You need additional Sales Store Checkers during the period December 3 through December 30, a four-week period. You can assign employees in advance to cover these four weeks. At the end of the four-week period, they must go back to being scheduled within the administrative week.

Example 2: Mary, a Sales Store Checker, is taking six weeks maternity leave. You need to cover her position. You prepare two work schedules to cover Mary's position, each for three weeks. You assign the work schedules to two of your intermittents.

If you schedule an intermittent employee in advance to work the entire six weeks (past the four consecutive weeks limit), then you must effect a work schedule change--make the employee's work schedule part-time or full-time. You do this by initiating a *Request for Personnel Action* to document the change. As appropriate, this work schedule change may be temporary or permanent in nature. The employee will then receive benefits.

To make a temporary work schedule change you must exercise care to ensure that the temporary nature of the change is documented and that the employee is fully aware of the temporary nature of the change. You do this by having the employee sign a statement acknowledging his/her acceptance of a temporary

Schedule within the administrative workweek

The administrative workweek begins on Sunday at 0001 hours and ends Saturday at 2400 hours. An intermittent can be scheduled to work one or all days of this week. The keys are (1) that the intermittent is scheduled for one week at a time with no fixed tour of duty and (2) the schedule is given to the employee after the beginning of the administrative workweek.

Example 1: Bob, a Store Worker, calls in on Tuesday to say that he will be out for four days due to a death in the family. You can schedule an intermittent to work Bob's shift for those four days. The work is scheduled within a single administrative workweek.

Actually, as long as you can justify the sporadic and unpredictable nature of the work and the schedule is tentative and subject to change, you can schedule an intermittent within the administrative workweek, week after week.

Example 2: The flu epidemic has hit your commissary. On Monday you had one Sales Store Checker out; on Wednesday you lost another. You know during the next several weeks others are going to be sick. You have several reliable intermittents. You use them to fill the voids. You provide each of them a work schedule at the beginning of each administrative workweek, and you ensure that the schedule varies from week to week. You continue to use these intermittents--no matter how many weeks it takes--until the workforce returns to normal.

Remember that the intermittent's schedule cannot be given to the employee before the beginning of the administrative workweek, the schedule must be tentative and subject to change, and the unpredictable need for the intermittent must be justified.

Purpose of Handbook

Many commissary management personnel may not be fully aware of scheduling flexibilities available through the use of intermittent work schedules. This handbook is to provide you--the person who assigns work schedules to commissary employees--with guidance on how to responsibly and properly assign employees on intermittent work schedules. Proper assignment will result in fewer complaints from employees, will increase your flexibilities in staffing your commissary, and will reduce your operating costs.

What is intermittent work?

It is work that is sporadic and unpredictable--work that normally cannot be scheduled in advance on a regular, planned basis.

Examples:

- *An injured employee is out on workers' compensation*
- *A power outage requires extra people to clean up spoiled stock and replenish refrigerated items*
- *An employee's family member has a crisis--injury, death, etc.--and the employee needs immediate time off*

Who can have an intermittent work schedule?

Employees on permanent, temporary, and term appointments who are hired to work intermittent work schedules are called "intermittents." They agreed, when hired, to be "on call." Although these employees agreed to work intermittent work schedules, sometimes they perceive little difference between the hours they work and the hours employees on full-time and part-time work schedules work. This perception can lead to dissatis-

faction regarding their lack of benefits, which may result in filing complaints. As a manager, it is important that you ensure your intermittents understand their status. They must understand that they agreed, when hired, to work on intermittent work schedules (often for their own convenience), that this work schedule has few benefits associated with it, and that their schedules will vary. Your continual reinforcement of these points will eliminate possible misperceptions.

For your information, the following chart summarizes the distribution of benefits. Although not shown on the chart, please note that intermittents in WG positions who are scheduled in advance of the administrative workweek for shifts of less than 8 hours duration are entitled to night shift differentials if the majority of their hours are worked during periods in which night shift differentials are payable. Except as noted above, GS and WG employees working intermittent work schedules are not entitled to night pay/shift differentials.

Eligibility for Employee Benefits								
Appointment	Work Schedule	Benefits						
		Health	Life Ins.	Retirement	Soc. Sec.	Within-Grade Increase	Leave	Holiday
Permanent	FT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	No	No
Temporary	FT	No ³	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	No ³	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	No	No
Term	FT	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ Applies to an employee hired after 12/31/83.

² A part-time employee receives holiday pay only for holidays that fall on scheduled workdays.

³ The employee becomes eligible to enroll after one year of current, continuous temporary employment.

⁴ A temporary General Schedule (GS) employee does not receive within-grade increases. A temporary Wage Grade (WG) employee does receive within-grade increases.

Based on the sporadic and unpredictable nature of intermittent work, supervisors may schedule intermittents without regard to the limits associated with part-time or full-time work schedules. Some weeks intermittents may not be scheduled at all, while on peak workload weeks they may be scheduled to work in excess of 40 hours. They are not guaranteed any prescribed number of hours. Rules for overtime pay under Title V USC and the Fair Labor Standards Act do apply.

Intermittent employment is not appropriate for a position which could be filled by a regularly scheduled part-time or full-time employee. In all cases you must judiciously manage the use of intermittents to avoid the potential of negative impact on employee morale. When considering changes in the manner in which intermittents are utilized, managers are advised to review provisions of any applicable negotiated agreements.

There is no standard for the appropriate number of intermittents to have in your workforce; the right mix will vary depending on the size of your commissary. Keep in mind that a third party reviewing authority can question any use of intermittents which is abnormally high. The key to proper use of intermittents is to ensure that their work schedules are for situations where the work cannot be regularly scheduled in advance, the work is sporadic and unpredictable in nature, and the scheduling criteria described in this handbook are followed.

How do you properly schedule an intermittent employee?

There are two ways to schedule an intermittent: (1) within the administrative workweek and (2) in advance of the administrative workweek. Guidelines for scheduling are provided on the following pages.