

4-20 WORK HOURS

The policy applies to all DCFS employees and shall set forth agency regulations regarding employee work hours and schedules. Requests for exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing to the State Office Human Resources Section (HR) for review and recommendation to the Secretary or designee. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Work Schedules

The **official standard hours of operation** for DCFS are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. All offices/units must remain open and fully operational during these hours, providing full service. Managers and supervisors must ensure adequate staffing during these hours and do not have authority to alter the official hours of operation.

Each full time DCFS employee shall be assigned a regular 40 hours per week work schedule by the employee's appointing authority or designee. The appointing authority or designee may establish an 80-hour bi-weekly work schedule for employees who are considered exempt by the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) (FLSA).

1. Employees are expected to follow their approved schedule.
2. New employees must have their work schedules ([DCFS Work Schedule Request Form](#)) submitted to HR for system entry during their onboarding process.
3. Employee work schedules are entered into the LaGov system. Maintaining current work schedules is important for determining overtime eligibility and pay.

Work Hours

Work hours must begin between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and end no earlier than 3:30 p.m. or later than 6:30 p.m. (except for employees on shift schedules providing 24-hour coverage or who work four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day). Workdays shall commence and end on the hour, half hour or quarter hour. The work week for DCFS is the seven day period beginning 12:01 a.m. each Monday and ending at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) the following Sunday.

During emergency/disaster operations, an employee's assigned work hours may be changed based on department need. (See policy 4-10 Human Resource Procedures for Emergency/Disaster Operations).

Alternate Work Schedules/Schedule Changes

An alternate work schedule is any approved work schedule other than the standard Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. When feasible, the department may allow employees to deviate from the standard work schedule.

Decisions will be made on an individual basis by the employee's appointing authority or designee taking into account factors such as workload, operational/staffing needs, client service, work

quality, and the unit's mission. Alternate work arrangements are considered privileges, not rights, and can be revoked at any time.

Available alternate work schedules options for full-time DCFS employees are:

- **4-9:** four 9-hour days, plus one 4-hour day per week (4-hour day must be the same day each week);
- **4-10:** four 10-hour days per work week (1 day off must be the same day each week);
- **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) EXEMPT EMPLOYEES ONLY:** four 9-hour days and one 8-hour day one week of the pay period, and four 9-hour days and 1 day off during the other week of the pay period; and
- **24 hours/7 days:** only for units responsible for providing 24-hour coverage/services.

Breaks

Employees must adhere to an approved meal break period of 30, 45, or 60 minutes, usually between 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Employees are allowed two 15-minute breaks per day, one in the first half and one in the second half of the workday.

1. No unit shall close for the meal break, and primary work areas must be covered.
2. These breaks are paid, given at the department's discretion, and are not mandatory.
3. Breaks cannot be combined with meal breaks or leave time, and cannot be used to report late or leave early.
4. Unused break periods are lost.
5. Employees are prohibited from performing any work related duties during their meal break. If an employee works during their meal break, it is considered work time and may be subject to overtime.

The department will provide reasonable break times to express breast milk for up to one year after the child's birth, as required by federal law. The frequency and duration of these breaks will vary based on the employee's needs.

Requesting a Schedule Change

Any proposed changes to an employee's schedule must be submitted using the DCFS Work Schedule Request Form and approved by the appointing authority or designee. Once an alternate work schedule is approved, changes cannot be requested for at least three months, unless switching to a 5-day work week or in an emergency situation. However, the appointing authority or designee can change an employee's schedule whenever deemed necessary.

If the change involves altering the number of hours worked per day or days worked each week, the effective date must be the first day of a future pay period. The approved request form **must also** be submitted to State Office HR for system entry **before** the effective date.

Holiday and Alternate Work Schedules

Employees are entitled to a holiday consisting of the number of hours scheduled to work on the holiday. If a holiday falls on the employees regular scheduled off day, then the closest work day (before or after) is designated as the holiday as determined by the appointing authority or designee.

References:

DCFS Policy 4-10 Human Resources Procedures for Emergency-Disaster Operations
Louisiana Department of Civil Service Rules
Fair Labor Standards Act

Organizational:

DCFS – DCFS Departmental Policy – 4. Human Resources – 4-20 Work Hours

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