



PRESS RELEASE

Bathurst launches pilot project for compressed work week and hybrid working model

Bathurst, Wednesday April 19, 2023 – The City of Bathurst will be launching a pilot project for compressed work week and hybrid working models. The initiative, available to two targeted employee groups, will begin on Monday April 24th, for a duration of six months.

“Attracting and retaining top talent is becoming more and more of a challenge in any business or enterprise, and municipal governments are not immune to this challenge. Even with competitive wages and great employee benefits, it’s been demonstrated that offering schedule flexibility is an excellent add-on strategy for recruiting and maintaining an effective workforce, this without compromising client service. In that optic, we view this pilot project as an important step to establish ourselves even more as a destination of choice for employment,” said C.A.O. Todd Pettigrew.

A compressed work week is a flexible work arrangement whereby an employee works longer shift hours in exchange for a reduction in the number of working days in the working week, whereas a hybrid working model is a flexible work arrangement where an employee fulfils his or her regularly scheduled job responsibilities, for a number of days at the workplace and a number of days at a remote location, usually the employee’s home.

In both models, the number of weekly hours worked remains the same as a regular work week.

“The schedule flexibility in these working models has been shown to enhance productivity, improve client services during extended hours, reduce absenteeism, and increase employee satisfaction and morale. So, we look forward to reviewing the concrete data from our work force, during and after the pilot project, to clearly demonstrate that these models deserve to be permanently implemented,” stated Pettigrew.

Members of the Management team and the administrative personnel (C.U.P.E. Local 1282 employees) will have the opportunity to submit their interest to be part of the pilot project.

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CITY OF BATHURST
**COMPRESSED WORK WEEK
AND
HYBRID WORKING MODEL**
PILOT PROJECT



Project launch on April 17, 2023

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Context

Attracting and retaining top talent has become a significant concern in all business models. While competitive wages, top-notch employee benefits packages and adequate vacation time are essential, offering schedule flexibility is establishing itself as an excellent add-on strategy for recruiting and maintaining an effective workforce, without compromising corporate productivity and client service.

Hence, the compressed workweek and hybrid working models have become attractive components across various industry, commercial and government environments.

While not all sectors / departments may be suitable environments for compressed and hybrid models, these work approaches have established merit in their integration, enhancing worker flexibility, morale and productivity, this without compromising the objective of serving clients and maintaining budget targets.

Definitions

What is a compressed workweek?

A compressed work week is a flexible work arrangement whereby an employee works longer shift hours in exchange for a reduction in the number of working days in the working week.

What are the benefits of a compressed work week?

The compressed work week can enhance employee recruitment and retention, enhance productivity, improve client services during extended hours, and reduce absenteeism. It also allows employees to enjoy extra days away from work to focus on their families and personal schedules, this with no reduction in pay.

What is a hybrid working model?

A hybrid working model is a flexible work arrangement where an employee fulfils his or her regularly scheduled job responsibilities, for a number of weekdays at the workplace and a number of weekdays at a remote location not operated by the employer – usually an employee's home.

What are the benefits of a hybrid working model?

With studies showing that work elements like planning, project development, writing, reading, research, analysis, data entry, word processing, or computer programming, an employee participating in the hybrid working model could benefit from a greater scheduling flexibility, improving productivity, increased levels of employee satisfaction and morale, and reducing absenteeism.

Compressed workweeks and hybrid models in government working environments

A noticeable trend towards compressed and Hybrid workweeks has been expanding across North America in the past few years. However, it is not a new phenomenon. It should be noted that the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador has had some of these working models established since 2009.

That said, many municipal governments across Canada have adopted workplace policies for compressed workweeks and hybrid models. In New Brunswick, namely, the municipalities of Sackville, Saint John, Riverview, Miramichi and Quispamsis have established pilot programs.

Implementation of pilot project in Bathurst

Research before project launch

During the fall of 2022, the City of Bathurst's Human Resources Department conducted an extensive Industry research of various compressed workweek and hybrid working model initiatives. The Department also conducted an employee survey, analyzed the data, then presented the findings and operational plan to City Council.

When will the pilot project begin, and for how long?

Beginning on Monday April 24, 2023, the City of Bathurst will roll out a pilot project to implement the compressed work week and hybrid working models, this for a duration of six months.

Which employees are eligible to participate?

Members of the Management team and administrative personnel (C.U.P.E. Local 1282 employees) will have the opportunity to submit their interest to be part of a compressed work week or hybrid working model.

Who approves compressed work week or hybrid working model applications?

Approval of individual requests for a compressed work week will be considered by the employee's managing supervisor.

How will the pilot project be evaluated?

During the pilot project, the Human Resources Department will get valuable feedback from the participants and review the data, to determine the continuation of these programs after the six-month period.