

Handling requests

In some circumstances, employees or workers may ask their employer for changes to their employment contract. For example, employees may have the legal right to ask for flexible working.

Flexible working requests

By law, someone has the right to ask for a contract change through a 'flexible working request' if they're [legally classed as an employee](#).

For example, they might ask to:

- reduce their hours to work part time
- work from home
- split their time between their usual place of work and working remotely from somewhere else ('hybrid working')
- have flexibility with their start and finish times (sometimes known as 'flexitime')
- share the job with someone else

If an employee makes a flexible working request, you must handle the request reasonably.

[Find out more about flexible working](#)

Other requests for contract changes

An employee might also ask for other kinds of changes to their contract, for example, because:

- they've been doing work that is different to what was originally agreed in their contract
- they've started a new job in the same organisation
- they're keen to develop their skills by taking on new tasks
- they're unhappy about something at work, for example they feel bullied and want to change their shifts or work location
- they feel they deserve a [pay rise](#)

The employee does not have to put the request in writing, but encouraging them to do so can help make sure:

- the employee fully considers what they are requesting and why
- you have a clear idea about the request and the reasons for it before discussing it with the employee

Consulting with employees and representatives

You should consult with the employee and any employee representatives to:

- listen to their reasons why a change may be needed
- understand the details of the proposed change

- carefully consider how you might be able to accommodate the request, including the potential benefits for you and the employee

[Find out more about consulting on employment contract changes](#)

Finding an appropriate solution to a proposed change

If you've considered an employee's request carefully and you feel it may not be appropriate to make the proposed change, you should consider and discuss any alternative changes that may be suitable.

For example, if an employee requests a change of work location because they feel they're being bullied, you should look into their concerns and take any appropriate action. Agreeing to relocate them might work as a temporary solution, but may not fully address the cause of the problem.

It's always important to try to find an appropriate solution to any concerns and understand why an employee has requested a contract change. Not resolving concerns can lead to longer-term tensions at work. This can affect employee wellbeing and productivity in an organisation.

[Find out more about dealing with a problem raised by an employee](#)