

FACTS ABOUT PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING

Predictable Scheduling: Predictable scheduling encourages employers to provide at least two weeks notice of work schedules and/or premium pay for changes in work schedules made with short notice.

What are the costs and challenges of predictable scheduling?

Some employers claim that fluctuating demand makes constant schedule changes necessary, however, staffing needs are much more stable than many assume. One study found that 80% of store hours remain stable week after week (Lambert, S. et. al., 2010).

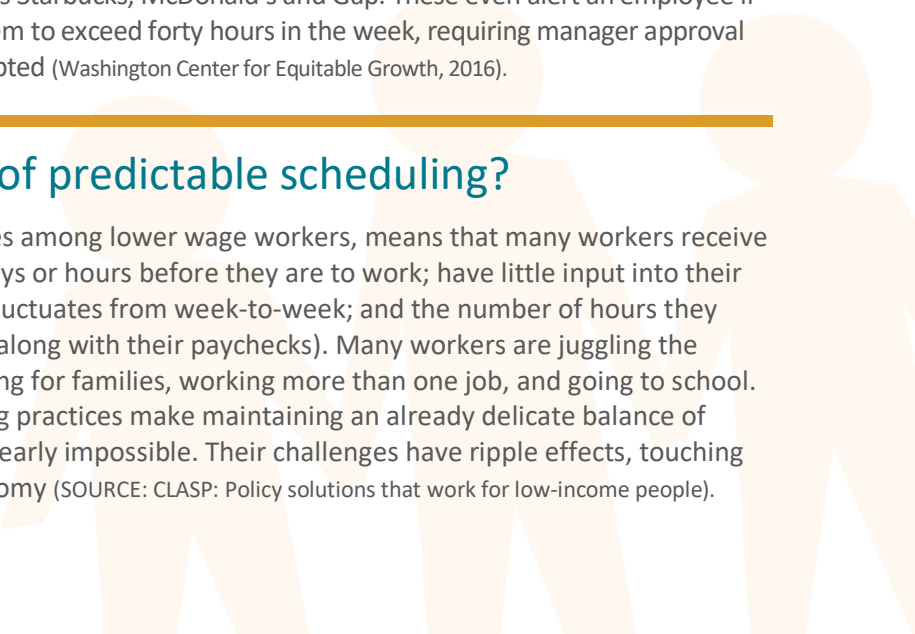
- Managers express concern that once employees have a set schedule in place, they treat it as an entitlement. Having a clear request process for work change requests (both from the employer and employee) can ease this tension and still maintain that business needs must be met before schedule changes are approved.
- Managers' heavy workloads and competing priorities hamper their ability to introduce new work practices.
- Changing workplace culture can be difficult. Last-minute schedules and schedule changes are often the norm, especially in the retail and service industries. Successful attempts to change norms like these, takes time and tenacity.

What can businesses do to make it work?

- Find out more about what your employees actually need.
- Inform senior-level management about the business case for predictable scheduling.
- Establish a workplace scheduling committee.
- Consider technology to assist with schedule changes. New apps that are gaining popularity and praise allow staff to trade shifts or sign up for extra shifts without making the manager the middleman. This empowers employees and removes the burden from managers. 7Shifts is designed specifically for restaurants, and Myshyft is another widely used scheduling app used by companies such as Starbucks, McDonald's and Gap. These even alert an employee if their request will push them to exceed forty hours in the week, requiring manager approval before the change is accepted (Washington Center for Equitable Growth, 2016).

What are the benefits of predictable scheduling?

Unpredictable and unstable schedules among lower wage workers, means that many workers receive their schedules at the last minute, days or hours before they are to work; have little input into their schedules; the timing of their shifts fluctuates from week-to-week; and the number of hours they receive rises and falls unexpectedly (along with their paychecks). Many workers are juggling the demands of their jobs while also caring for families, working more than one job, and going to school. For these workers, volatile scheduling practices make maintaining an already delicate balance of work, family, education, and more, nearly impossible. Their challenges have ripple effects, touching children, communities, and the economy (SOURCE: CLASP: Policy solutions that work for low-income people).



Irregular scheduling has been shown to exacerbate work-family conflict, and can be minimized by predictable schedules (Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #394, 2015).

- When hourly workers have workplace flexibility, productivity increases and absenteeism decreases (Richman, A et. al., 2009);
- Accommodating employees' scheduling needs significantly reduced turnover (Boushey, H., 2012, Lambert S et. al & Warhurst, Chris, et.al., 2012);
- Flexibility promotes employee engagement and reduces operation costs (Swanberg, J. et. al. 2004, Harvard Business Review, 2012).
- Cross training employees can be an effective strategy for enabling scheduling stability – when it is slow in one area, train workers in another area (Lambert, S. et. al. June 2010).

Sample Predictable Scheduling Policies

Seattle's City Ordinance:

<http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Council/Issues/SecureScheduling/Secure-Scheduling-Infographic.pdf>

San Francisco's City ordinances: <http://sfgov.org/olse/formula-retail-employee-rights-ordinances>

What critical policy components should my company consider?

1. Allow employees to request their preferred schedule and location.
2. Require employers to engage in an interactive process with employees to discuss schedule requests, which must be granted in certain situations unless there is a "bona fide business reason" not to grant the request.
3. Prohibit employers from retaliating against employees who decline a shift that is added to their schedules with less than two weeks of notice.
4. Require employers to offer shifts to existing staff before hiring additional workers.

Modeled after the City of Seattle's Ordinance –Taking effect July 2017

CITATIONS

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