

# Four-day working week or an alternating weekly schedule

## Interview guide



### WHAT IS IT?

Full-time employees in the private sector have been able to work a four-day working week as of November 2022. Specifically, this means that they **spread their working week across four days or use an alternating weekly schedule**.

The measure stems from the **Labour Deal** of the federal government in 2022 and allows employees to have a better work/life balance.

### WHAT IS THE EFFECT ON WELLBEING?

The introduction of the four-day working week offers a range of benefits for employees, but it can also have disadvantages.

**The future will reveal the extent to which an adapted working week affects employees' wellbeing.** Initial studies appear to indicate that employees find the four-day working week an interesting measure, but the lasting impact on their health and wellbeing has yet to be investigated sufficiently. Further studies will be necessary to measure objective health parameters.

For employers, too, the four-day working week entails a number of challenges in terms of work organisation. This is why it is important to develop a good framework of agreements in order to apply the schedule in practice and so as to discuss it properly with all parties involved. IDEWE's interview guidelines can be a useful source of information in this regard.



[View the guide](#)



[What does the law say?](#)

### HOW TO USE THE INTERVIEW GUIDE?

To support organisations with this topic, the IDEWE Group has drawn up this **interview guide**. We list the questions that you, as an employer, can discuss with employee(s) who wish to work on the basis of a four-day working week or alternating weekly schedule. We pay attention to the individual, the team and the organisation.



# Interview guide Four-day working week

## Interview guide for start of new schedule

Individual aspects	
Why did you opt for a four-day working week/alternating weekly schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What effects do you think a ten-hour working day will have on you?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How will you remain focused and maintain healthy working habits during an extra-long working day?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it feasible to balance this work schedule with your private life?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What else do you need to make this work schedule a success?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Team aspects	
What arrangements are required within the team to implement this new work schedule as smoothly as possible? - Examples include arrangements on monitoring mailboxes, Teams, intranet, etc. - This also includes arrangements regarding how and when to reach colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>
What risks may arise regarding your collaboration with colleagues? How can you tackle this with maximum effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Organisational aspects	
What else can the organisation do to make this work schedule a success?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the arrangements regarding the adjusted work schedule clear at organisational level?	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Interview guide for follow-up (e.g. after three months)

Check-in	
How is the adjusted weekly schedule going for you so far?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What things did you initially think would be different?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What other support could be given to you to make this work schedule sustainable?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How is working with your team going?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any other expectations of HR or your manager?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you feel this weekly schedule is having an impact on your lifestyle or your health? Is this impact negative or positive?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What would you recommend to others who are considering adopting a work schedule like this?	<input type="checkbox"/>



# What does the law say?



## FOUR-DAY WORKING WEEK

Employees in full-time employment are given the opportunity to **spread their working week across four days** or switch to an alternating weekly schedule. A four-day working week allows employees to have a longer weekend or enjoy a day off during the week. This allows employees to work 9.5 hours a day (in a 38-hour week) or 10 hours a day (in a 40-hour week) without overtime or an overtime allowance.

Employees, who wish to work with such a schedule, may request this in writing from their employer. Each request covers a period of six months and can be renewed. An employer may refuse an employee's request, stating the reasons for doing so. If the employer agrees, it formalises the new working arrangement in a written agreement with the employee and amends the company policy.

## ALTERNATING WEEKLY SCHEDULE

In addition, it will also be possible to work an **alternating weekly schedule**, where more work will be performed in one week and less in another. Such a schedule means the normal weekly working hours are respected over a cycle of two consecutive weeks. As an example, this may allow employees who co-parent to free up more time to spend with their children.

An exception to the two-week cycle is made in the summer months of July, August and September, and in the case of unforeseen events. In such periods and situations, the cycle is extended to four consecutive weeks.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

The Labour Deal also stipulates that employers must notify part-time employees on alternating work schedules of their work schedule seven working days in advance. A sectoral CLA may reduce this notification period to three working days.

The draft legislation provides for a transition period. Organisations must amend their company policy within nine months of the new rules entering into effect. Sectors had until 31 December 2022 at the latest to update their CLAs.