

AECOM

Work Life Balance

Creating a workplace where inclusion and diversity are embedded into the culture provides a positive climate for employees to excel, and these ideals are at the heart of a multinational engineering firm's ethos.

AECOM is an international engineering firm that works with communities and clients around the world. It employs nearly 600 staff in New Zealand.

AECOM launched its Diversity and Inclusion strategy in 2015, after an employee survey suggested that the pressure to perform in the modern workplace can be overwhelming, and 93 per cent of employees said that workplaces of the future must be flexible. Surveys also indicated that there were stigmas attached to using flexible working options. To specifically address flexible working, AECOM developed a number of initiatives under the umbrella of its FlexWorks programme.

FlexWorks includes:

- FlexDay, which allows employees to work a condensed work week
- Term-time employment, a trial policy which allows parents to work during school time and take school holidays off while receiving a constant salary
- No formal start and finish times
- Enhanced Parental Leave, including Alternative Primary Carer Leave for fathers to act as primary caregivers
- Part-time working
- Remote working



The group of policies is guided by the principle that "if it works for you, your team and your clients - it works for us," a reflection of AECOM's ongoing commitment to embedding flexibility into its culture. All role vacancies are advertised as being flexible, and if a role cannot accommodate flexibility the hiring manager must provide valid justification for it.

All the FlexWorks policies are supported by the leadership team, and many senior leaders work flexibly, which helps encourage others to take advantage of these options.

FlexWorks has seen a number of improvements in the workplace. Up to 80 per cent of AECOM NZ employees actively utilise one or more of the options, and participation in all the initiatives is on the rise.

The rise of flexible work within the organisation has led to benefits across the workplace:

- Managers report a more engaged and productive workplace
- Voluntary turnover is down year on year
- Fewer sick days were taken during the trial of FlexDay
- Expanded candidate pools during recruitment are created by a willingness to tailor roles to the individual candidates
- Employees are remaining in the workforce while they have a family or pursue personal interests outside of work

- Progress has been made towards a 50/50 gender split, a challenge in the engineering field, which trends heavily towards men

Employees are on board with the programmes, too. Sherinne de Fanti, a Senior Talent Acquisition Specialist, has seen numerous benefits with the initiative: "This has been a game changer for me. It makes me feel that AECOM aims to give staff flexibility that works. I've used FlexDays to spend time with family, leave early for long weekends and do home admin which I prefer not to do on the weekends! It has been the most engaging benefit for me and complements the other flex benefits."

Bevan Welch, Principal Designer, is among the trial group for Term-Time Employment, and says, "Term-time working has allowed me to get some good personal one-on-one time. Opportunities like this don't come up too often and you have to take advantage while you can and while the kids are still young."

Naomi Macorison, a Team Leader, has school-age children and says flexible working, allows her to work full-time and still be a mum.

"I can collect my two children and take them to their activities. For the first time I feel like I can give my best to my employer, as well as my children."



IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION,
TOOLS OR RESOURCES TO MAKE
YOUR WORKPLACE MORE INCLUSIVE

Visit diversityworks.nz
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