



What to Do If Your Employer Changes Your Shifts, Hours or Duties

Check what is proposed, what your contract says and how to raise concerns.

For care workers in England, Scotland and Wales. Northern Ireland has separate employment rules: contact the Labour Relations Agency. General information, not individual legal advice. Rights depend on employment status, contract and circumstances. No assessment or certificate.

What to do now

Ask whether the change is proposed or already decided, temporary or permanent. Compare it with your written terms and any relevant flexibility clause. A normal rota adjustment and a change to contractual hours are not necessarily the same. Explain promptly if the change creates a safety or practical problem.

What to ask

Ask for the reason, start date, effect on pay and the consultation process. For new duties, ask about training, supervision and competence before undertaking them. Explain caring responsibilities or disability-related difficulties and discuss alternatives rather than assuming the employer already knows.

What to record

Keep the old and proposed terms, rota notices, messages and your written response. Record whether you agreed, objected or asked for time to consider. If an arrangement is reached, request a written statement of the changed terms and any review date.

What to avoid

Do not assume every change is unlawful or every flexibility clause permits unlimited changes. Do not sign immediately if you do not understand the impact. Continuing without raising an objection can complicate a dispute; get advice promptly. Do not simply fail to attend a shift without communicating.

Words you can adapt

Please confirm the proposed change to [hours/duties], its basis and its effect on pay. My concern is [specific impact]. I would like to discuss [alternative]. I have not yet agreed to a permanent contractual change and would appreciate time to obtain advice.

Where to get help

Acas, your union or an employment adviser can help interpret the situation. Seek advice before refusing work, resigning or deciding to work under protest. Keep any immediate care-safety concern separate and escalate it through the service process.

Your next steps

- Compare the proposal with existing terms.
- Explain the impact.
- Record your response.
- Confirm any agreement in writing.

Sources and further help

[Acas: Changes to employment contracts](#)

[Acas: Flexible working](#)

[Northern Ireland: Labour Relations Agency](#)

Reviewed 6 October 2026. Independent Academy information, not individual advice or endorsement by the linked organisations. Contains public sector information under the Open Government Licence v3.0 where applicable.