

Colleagues,

I am happy to announce the elimination of the requirement to take a thirty minute meal break (lunch) for all flexible work schedules. This change was accomplished in partnership with our three labor unions and will be effective October 29, 2017.

Employees on flexible schedules will no longer be required to take a thirty minute unpaid meal break regardless of the number of hours worked in a day. Employees may choose not to take a meal break or employees may choose to take an unpaid meal break of any duration and should treat that time as mid-day flex. Flexible work schedules at the USPTO include eight-hour flexible schedule, IFP, IFS, and Maxiflex.

This change does not apply to employees on fixed schedules. As they do today, employees on fixed schedules are still required to take a thirty minute unpaid meal break as the fixed work schedules do not allow for mid-day flex. Fixed work schedules at the USPTO include the eight-hour fixed schedule as well as the 5/4/9, and the 4/10 compressed schedules.

Some employees may wish to select a flexible work schedule because of this change. Generally, employees may only select work schedules at the beginning of a quarter. However, due to this change, employees may select a new work schedule prior to November 12 if you would like to take advantage of this flexibility.

Thank you for your dedication and helping to make 2017 another successful fiscal year. Your service to the United States intellectual property system is first-rate and we hope you will enjoy this additional flexibility for managing your time. Please contact your supervisor for further information if you have questions about this change or your work schedule.

Sincerely,

Tony Scardino

Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Acting Deputy Director of the USPTO

Via email to all USPTO employees:

Sent: Monday, October 23, 2017 3:06 PM

To: AllUSPTOEmployees <AllUSPTOEmployees@USPTO.GOV>

Subject: 30-Minute Lunch Requirement Eliminated for Employees on Flexible Schedules