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## Flex - Options



### Flex-Options for Women

**Working women are increasingly requesting flexible work schedules to help them balance work and family obligations.**

**"The Voice of Working Women"**

Flexible workplaces are not only good for the workforce, they've also proven to be beneficial to business. Studies show that flexible policies improve recruitment and boosts moral, which aids retention and productivity. That's why the Women's Bureau is excited about *Flex-Options for Women* -- a new initiative to help women business owners develop and implement flexibility programs by providing tools, mentoring and networking opportunities.

*"The demand for flexibility in the workplace is growing. The Women's Bureau is proud to be a leader in recognizing this need and helping women business owners develop workplace flexibility solutions,"* said WB Director Shinae Chun in launching the Flex-Options for Women initiative.

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**According to the 1996 Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employee Benefits in Small Private Establishments report, 96% of the 39, 816 employees interviewed worked with fixed work schedules, 1% work with flexible work schedules and 2% work with non-fixed worked schedules.**

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The Flex-Options for Women project will extend to six WB regions-New York, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, San Francisco, and Seattle, covering 27 states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Women business owners will learn about the successes and challenges of implementing flexible work policies and programs through group mentoring, which includes sharing of expertise, ideas, and best practices.

Working with women business owners, work-life experts, business associations, mentors, businesses and employees we are creating virtual and real forums where people can share successes and challenges. Women business owners can participate in the following ways:

- 5 teleconferences and one webcast will cover various flexibility topics of interest to women-owned companies (The first teleconference, "*Trends in Flexibility*" was held January 8, 2004, with over 180 women participating. You can visit the *Flex-Options for Women* website at [www.we-inc.org](http://www.we-inc.org) for a recap of the briefing.) Upcoming teleconference calls will be held on February 11, March 11, April 15, June 24 and August 26. To learn more about future teleconferences, e-mail [Women'sBureauNetwork@dol.gov](mailto:Women'sBureauNetwork@dol.gov).
- You can visit [www.we-inc.org](http://www.we-inc.org) on a regular basis and review the *Flex-Options for Women* tool kit, read interesting articles, learn about events or share information about flexible policies and programs you have implemented or plan to develop.
- You can participate in local face-to-face meetings, which are taking place in selected cities. To learn about events in your state go to [www.we-inc.org](http://www.we-inc.org).

Corporate mentors, work-life experts, seasoned women business owners and other resource people will share information with women business owners on conference calls as well as provide informative content for the website. Key pieces of wisdom covered in virtual forums will be captured and posted regularly on [www.we-inc.org](http://www.we-inc.org). Women business owners who take part in direct mentoring opportunities at the regional level will also share their successes and lessons learned.

The WB anticipates that *Flex-Options for Women* will touch many workplaces and enhance the ability of women business owners to help employees better manage work and life responsibilities while adding to their own bottom-line.

To learn more about *Flex-Options for Women*, please visit [www.we-inc.org](http://www.we-inc.org), or the Women's Bureau website at [www.dol.gov/wb](http://www.dol.gov/wb).

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For More Information About WB, Contact:  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Women's Bureau  
200 Constitution Avenue, NW - Room S-3002  
Washington, DC 20210  
Telephone 1-800-827-5335 or (202) 693-6710  
Fax (202) 693-6725

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**U.S. Department of Labor**  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20210

**1-800-827-5335**  
[Contact Us](#)