



Mineral



Question of the Week

November 1, 2023

Question

Can we decrease the number of hours employee's work?

ANSWER

Yes. Absent an employment contract or other legally binding agreement, you can reduce an employee's work hours—there is no law that prevents this. Hours are typically reduced for reasons such as a decrease in business needs, the company's productivity has decreased, job restructuring, or reorganization.

It's important, however, to make scheduling decisions in a manner that is consistent with legitimate business needs and to ensure that you're being consistent in how you treat employees. Reducing an employee's work schedule can expose you to legal claims if it is perceived to be based on an unlawful reason such as discrimination or retaliation. And of course, there's also the risk that the affected employee may decide to look for work elsewhere.

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.