

Flexible Contracts

Dear Colleague,

I want to make GMB union's position on flexible contracts clear.

The first thing to say is that GMB is neutral and neither supports nor opposes these contracts.

The introduction of flexible contracts is an ASDA initiative and not one GMB have sought at all. On being told of this proposal by ASDA, I insisted from the start that these contracts must be totally voluntary. ASDA agreed to this.

ASDA tell us that the trend of shoppers is changing and they would like their colleagues to be flexible to meet shoppers' needs.

Whilst they are offering a £1 an hour increase, there are a number of conditions attached, not least, unpaid breaks, bank holiday working and, of course, flexibility. It is impossible, therefore, for GMB to second guess how this will impact upon our members because it will affect all of you differently.

The offer will clearly be attractive to some and, either not attractive or not possible for others. It is for this reason that the accepting or not is purely voluntary.

There has, understandably, been quite a reaction since the announcement, a reaction which GMB is listening to, in line with our partnership with ASDA. What I would restate is this:

No-one will be forced or compelled to sign the new contracts. No-one will be penalised, in any way, for not doing so.

There is until June, 3 months, before anyone needs to decide anything and I would encourage all colleagues to use this time to speak to your GMB store rep and get advice and guidance on what suits your own particular circumstances best. Alternatively, speak to a GMB officer when they make their store visits.

These contracts are voluntary. There are pros and cons. That's why GMB have insisted on your rights to choose.

I do hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Tim Roache

GMB General Secretary