Myths and Facts About Gradual Return to Work after Birth or Adoption (GRTW)

1. **Myth:** If I let one person have a GRTW schedule, everyone will want it.
   **Fact:** Everyone’s needs are not the same. Many employees cannot afford to reduce their incomes, even on a short-term basis. Among Fortune Magazine’s “100 Best Companies to Work For,” just 2% of professional employees and 10% of hourly or administrative workers work part-time on an ongoing basis. Managers within the AVPF area estimate that over the last three years, less than twenty employees have arranged for short-term reductions in their appointments after birth or adoption.

2. **Myth:** If I let one employee have GRTW it won’t be fair to other staff. I need to treat all employees equally.
   **Fact:** The 21st Century workforce is diverse and has different needs at different times of their lives. No longer will one solution work for every employee. Treating your employees fairly means giving their needs and desires equal individual attention and respect.

3. **Myth:** To work as a team, everyone needs to be in the office at the same time.
   **Fact:** With phones, teleconferencing, email and electronic file sharing, team members can have meetings, work on documents together, and stay in touch easily.

4. **Myth:** Won’t I, as the manager, have to do a lot more work in order to manage a part-time employee?
   **Fact:** Not with resources to help you outline work expectations and monitor performance. [insert reference here to “X + Y Tools” from the toolkit.]

5. **Myth:** Won’t GRTW work arrangements create more work for the flexer’s colleagues?
   **Fact:** The way co-workers communicate and work on projects with an employee who flexes may change, but the overall workload of co-workers should not increase much, if at all. In the case of gradual return to work arrangements, co-workers may be asked to pick up some additional duties on a short-term basis, but this effort is greatly preferable to the increased work and disruption that would be caused if a valued employee resigned in order to achieve flexibility. It’s also important for co-workers to remember that they may need to rely on their colleagues for similar support in the future.

6. **Myth:** I thought non-exempt employees couldn’t have flexible work arrangements because of overtime rules.
   **Fact:** Overtime rules do not prohibit alternative work schedules or work from home as long as the employee has agreed to the arrangement. As long as the employee does not work more than forty hours in a single pay period, overtime does not need to be paid.

7. **Myth:** Don’t union rules prohibit me from making gradual return to work arrangements with bargained-for employees?
   **Fact:** No. In fact, it may be your unionized employees who are most in need of gradual return to work arrangements, given the high cost and limited availability of infant care.