

Live Active Leisure

CARER AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

INTRODUCTION

The Company acknowledges that many of its employees have to deal with the daily demands of caring for dependant relatives. This may involve caring for children, elderly, or those with a disability or chronic illness. Although long-term arrangements normally exist to allow these caring commitments to be met, on occasion it is possible for a clash of work and domestic issues to occur.

Under the 1999 Employment Relations Act, employees may take a reasonable amount to time off unpaid to deal with emergencies involving a dependent.

The leave provisions within this policy should provide employees with adequate short and long term solutions to meet caring responsibilities and unexpected, sudden or emergency situations involving someone who depends on the employee for help or care.

Dependent

Is identified as the employees husband, wife, partner, child, parent, or anyone living in your household as a member of the family. A dependant may also be anyone who reasonably relies on you for help in an emergency.

Carer Leave

There are situations, which occasionally arise affecting you and your dependents, which may require you to take time off work. These may include:

- To help when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted
- To make arrangements to care for an ill or injured dependent
- Due to an unexpected disruption to the care of a dependant
- To deal with an incident involving an employee's child at the school, nursery or other such child care arrangements that are in place

Leave for Emergency Domestic situations

There may be other occasions where an employee may have to deal with a domestic emergency such as fire, flood or the after effects of crime.

POLICY STATEMENT

If you have a caring responsibility and experience difficulties in ensuring the provision of normal care arrangements or have need for compassionate leave at short notice for the above reasons,

the following options are available to the employee to assist and reduce the pressure finding practical solutions. Their aim is to encourage managers and employees to discuss openly and resolve these problems in a mutually acceptable manner.

PAID LEAVE

Although there is no legal obligation to pay an employee for time off, the Company will consider granting up to a **maximum** of '3 days/shifts' paid leave of absence in any 12 month period. This will be pro-rated for part-time employees. The 3 days/shifts are intended to allow the resolution of immediate problems created by the need to cover short-term breaks in arranged caring provision or for other emergency issues and therefore will only be granted separately throughout a calendar year and not altogether.

ANNUAL LEAVE

For longer-term periods or when paid leave provision is exhausted with the agreement of your Manager, annual leave can be taken. To assist with care requirement annual leave entitlement can be expressed and taken in hours rather than full day or half day blocks. This would allow individuals to take their leave flexible on occasions when they may need time away from work through the working day.

UNPAID LEAVE

With agreement with your line manager and in consultation with the HR & Administration Manager a reasonable amount of unpaid leave may be granted.

AMENDMENTS TO WORKING PATTERNS

For longer-term periods or when paid leave provision is exhausted, consideration of a change in either pattern of weekly hours or a reduction in hours worked is an option. Any reduced hours working would be for a specific period of time with the requirement to revert to your original contract unless a permanent change is agreed with you Manager. The HR & Administration Manager should be notified of any requests to amendments to working patterns.

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE - DEATH OF A DEPENDANT

PAID LEAVE

Consideration can be given to grant up to a maximum of '3 days/shifts' paid leave in a single block of absence to make funeral arrangements and to attend the funeral, if the employee is solely responsible for the funeral arrangements.

Under exceptional circumstances this may be extended to a maximum of 5 days paid leave by the discretion of the HR & Administration Manager.

ANNUAL LEAVE

If further leave is required, annual leave (or unpaid leave) would be considered in agreement with your line manager.

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE - DEATH OF A NON DEPENDANT

The Company would consider compassionate leave if the non dependent was a sibling or grandparent.

PAID LEAVE

Consideration can be given to grant up to a maximum of '1 day/shift' paid leave to attend the funeral. This may be extended having regard for the location of the funeral.

ANNUAL LEAVE

If further leave is required, annual leave (or unpaid leave) would be considered in agreement with your line manager.

FUNERAL ATTENDANCE – NON DEPENDANTS

You will be granted appropriate annual leave or time off in lieu at short notice, staffing levels permitted to attend the funeral of friends or colleagues, this may be extended having regard for the location of the funeral.

MEDICAL & DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

There is no legal right to time off to attend medical or dental appointments; however the Company considers time off in lieu or annual leave as appropriate. The Company will consider paid leave for hospital and dental hospital referral appointments where the employee does not have control over when the appointment is set.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Employees must tell their employer as soon as practicable, providing the appointment referral letter and the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be away from work. It is not necessary to give notice in writing however upon return to work a paid leave application form must be completed if you wish to have the leave considered as paid leave. The absence form is available from, and must be signed off by your line manager.

When you know about the problem in advance

This policy covers emergencies and does not apply if you know about the event in advance. For example, if you want time off to take your child into hospital in a week's time the Carer leave does not apply. On such occasions the employee should discuss the issue with their line manager to enable annual leave or unpaid leave to be approved. Alternatively parental leave may be granted if the employee qualifies for such entitlement

PARENTAL LEAVE

An employee must be taking the leave to care for the child. This means looking after the welfare of a child and can include making arrangements for the good of a child.

For example, an employee might take parental leave to:

- spend more time with the child
- accompany the child during a stay in hospital
- check out new schools
- help settle the child into new childcare arrangements
- enable a family to spend more time together, eg taking the child to stay with Grandparents

Caring for a child does not necessarily mean the employee has to be with the child 24 hours a day.

Employees are entitled to 13 week's unpaid parental leave if they have;

- One year's qualifying service
- Responsibility for the care of a child under five years of age
- Have a child who was adopted within the past five years and is under the age of 18.
- Have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child
- A disabled child's 18th birthday

An employee is entitled to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave if their child is entitled to receive disability living allowance.

A week's leave is equal to the length of time the employee is normally required to work, eg a week's leave is:

- five days for an employee working Monday to Friday
- two days for an employee working Tuesday and Wednesday only

The parent doesn't have to be living with the child to qualify.

The right applies to a single child. Therefore, if an employee has twins they are entitled to 26 weeks' parental leave.

Parental leave cannot be transferred between parents.

Employees can take a maximum of four weeks' leave in any year in respect of any individual child. Therefore an employee with twins could take up to eight weeks in any one year.

Periods of leave must be taken in multiples of one week – unless the child is disabled, in which case it may be taken as individual days.

Parental leave applies to male or female employees, full and part-time.

21 days notice must be given in advance of the request and the requests should be for a minimum of one week blocks.

MISUSE OF PROVISIONS

Any abuse of the above provisions by an employee will be investigated in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary procedure.