

Time off for dependents policy

1. About this policy

- 1.1 The law recognises and we respect that there may be occasions when you will need to take time off work to deal with unexpected events involving one of your dependants.
- 1.2 This time off for dependants policy gives all employees the right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with certain situations affecting their dependants.
- 1.3 No-one who takes time off in accordance with this policy will be subjected to any detriment.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 1.5 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 1.6 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

2. Reasonable unpaid time off

- 2.1 You have a right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work when it is necessary to:
 - (a) provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted;
 - (b) make longer-term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured;
 - (c) take action required in consequence of the death of a dependant;
 - (d) deal with the unexpected disruption, termination or breakdown of arrangements for the care of a dependant (such as a child-minder falling ill); and/or
 - (e) deal with an unexpected incident involving your child while a school or another educational establishment is responsible for them.
- 2.2 A **dependant** for the purposes of this policy is:
 - (a) your spouse, civil partner, parent or child;
 - (b) a person who lives in the same household as you, but who is not your tenant, lodger, boarder or employee; or
 - (c) anyone else who reasonably relies on you to provide assistance, make arrangements or take action of the kind referred to in paragraph 2.1.

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- 2.3 This policy applies to time off to take action which is necessary because of an immediate or unexpected crisis. This policy does not apply where you need to take planned time off or provide longer-term care for a dependant. If this is the case, you should take advice from your line manager.
- 2.4 Whether action is considered necessary will depend on the circumstances, including nature of the problem, the closeness of the relationship between you and the dependant, and whether anyone else is available to assist. Action is unlikely to be considered necessary if you knew of a problem in advance but did not try to make alternative care arrangements.
- 2.5 Reasonable time off in relation to a particular problem will not normally be more than one or two days. However, we will always consider each set of circumstances on their facts.

3. Exercising the right to time off

- 3.1 You will only be entitled to time off under this policy if, as soon as is reasonably practicable, you tell your line manager:
 - (a) the reason for your absence; and
 - (b) how long you expect to be away from work.
- 3.2 If you fail to notify us as set out above, you may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under our Disciplinary Procedure for taking unauthorised time off.
- 3.3 We may in some cases ask you to provide evidence for your reasons for taking the time off, either in advance or on your return to work. Suspected abuse of this policy will be dealt with as a disciplinary issue under our Disciplinary Procedure.

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