

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPECIAL LEAVE (UPDATED MARCH 24)

The University of Aberdeen recognises the need to support staff by providing arrangements for Special Leave as outlined below. If you wish to request a period of Special Leave, you should contact your Line Manager in the first instance. To ensure that arrangements for Special Leave are being implemented fairly and consistently across the University, your Line Manager will seek advice from Human Resources (HR) prior to reaching their decision. Your Line Manager will then make a recommendation to the Head of School/Section. The decision when approving either paid or unpaid leave will be based upon the nature of the compassionate situation, your family responsibilities and any other relevant information.

1 COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

The University of Aberdeen recognises the need to support staff by providing compassionate leave (reasonable time off, either paid or unpaid, on a non-recurrent basis) to meet particular unforeseen circumstances. Requests for compassionate leave will be looked upon sympathetically, taking into account individual circumstances.

2 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Leave of absence with pay may be granted, at the discretion of the Head of School/Section, to members of staff in the event of the death of a relation as follows:

- in the case of the death of a close relation (i.e. normally a partner, parent, brother or sister, child), up to a maximum of one week's leave. Where the child is under 18, Parental Bereavement Leave will apply. This provides for at least two weeks' leave for employees following the loss of a child under the age of 18 or a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. Please contact HR for more information.
- in the case of the death of a relation (including relatives-in-law) the day of the funeral.

In some cases, this provision may not be sufficient, and in such circumstances, you should discuss the position with your Line Manager, who will consider the matter sympathetically and may recommend to the Head of School/Section that a further period of leave of absence be granted with or without pay.

We recognise that the circumstances outlined above refer to Christian services; however, requests for leave to accommodate arrangements for those of all faiths and beliefs will also be considered sympathetically on an individual basis.

3 URGENT DOMESTIC DISTRESS/TIME OFF FOR DEPENDENTS

The University commits to supporting staff and each member of staff has access to a bank of 7 paid days (pro-rata for part-time staff) per year to cover the following situations:

- Resolve unexpected disruption to or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant (defined as a spouse, partner, child, parent or a person who lives in the same house as the employee other than as a tenant or lodger) and for whom the employee has primary caring responsibilities.
- Deal with an incident that involves a child of the employee and which occurs unexpectedly in a period during which they are under the care of an educational establishment or other childcare provider.

It should be noted that time off provided under Urgent Domestic Distress/Time Off For Dependents is intended to allow you to make alternative arrangements for the care of those for whom you have primary caring responsibilities. The provision for paid time off under this policy is not intended to be a long-term arrangement. Staff will not normally be expected to take more than one or at the most two days off to deal with each specific situation. Allowing a bank of up to 7 days provides flexibility and support for staff throughout the course of a year to deal with similar situations.

The bank of 7 days paid per year will be in line with the annual leave year from 1 October to 30 September. The bank of 7 days or any part thereof may not be carried into the next leave year. Line managers will keep a record of any days granted as special leave.

4 CARERS LEAVE

From 6 April 2024 staff who are carers are entitled to take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave per year to care for a dependant with a long-term care need. This entitlement is a day one right for those eligible. A carer is anyone with caring responsibilities who provides care, assistance and support to any other individual who may be seriously ill or unable to care for themselves. In the context of statutory carer's leave, a dependant means:

- your spouse, civil partner, child or parent, any person who lives in the same household as you (other than as a lodger, tenant, boarder or employee); or any other person who would reasonably rely on you to provide or arrange care.

A dependant has a long-term care need if they:

- have an illness or injury (whether physical or mental) that requires, or is likely to require, care for more than three months, have a condition that amounts to a disability under the Equality Act 2010; or require care for a reason connected to their old age.

Staff do not need to give evidence of their dependant's care needs.

This statutory right to carer's leave applies to a wide range of caring situations, but excludes general childcare, except where the child meets the definition of a dependant with a long-term care need.

The minimum period of carer's leave that a staff member may take is half a working day and the maximum period is one continuous week. The leave does not have to be taken on consecutive days. Staff must give notice equal to at least twice as many days as the number of days of carer's leave they wish to take, or three days, whichever is earlier e.g. if they wish to take a week, they must give two weeks' notice. For further information please refer to the Guidance for Carers Leave.

Approved by the University Court on 31st October 2006
Amended re Urgent Domestic Distress 2022.
Amended re Carers Leave Feb 2024

(Reference - Carer's leave Act 2023 and Carers Leave Regulations 2024)

Title	Special Leave
Author / Creator	Human Resources
Owner	Director People
Date published / approved	Approved by the University Court on 03 October 2006 Amended re Urgent Domestic Distress 2022 Amended 2024 - PNCC
Version	3
Date for Next Review	May 2027
Audience	All Staff
Related	Homeworking Policy, Hybrid Working Guidance, Purchase of Annual leave, Adoption/Surrogacy Procedure, Shared Parental Leave, Parental (Unpaid) Leave, Paternity/Partner Leave, Equality & Diversity
Subject / Description	Details of legislation and University procedure for Flexible Working
Equality Impact Assessment	TBC
Section	Human Resources
Theme	Employment

Keywords

HR, Staff, Maternity/Birth Parent, Adoption/Surrogacy Procedure, Shared Parental Leave, Parental (Unpaid) Leave, Paternity/Partner leave, Equality & Diversity, Family friendly