

*April 2001 Updated December 2009*

**PEOPLE AND WORK UNIT  
UNPLANNED LEAVE**

**Compassionate Leave  
Time off for Dependants  
*and* Time off for Public Duties**

*(This document forms a part of the People and Work Unit Employment Pack)*

**Compassionate leave and Time Off for Dependants**

The People and Work Unit is committed to being a reasonable and fair employer. The Unit understands that there may be occasional circumstances when an employee needs to take an unplanned absence from work for personal reasons. Such reasons may include:

- The illness of a dependant where there is no-one else available to provide care
- Close family bereavement
- A family or domestic crisis.

(A dependant is classified as: the husband, wife or partner, child or parent of the employee: someone who lives in the same household as the employee, as a member of the family, e.g. elderly aunt or grandparent: in the case of illness or accident, it may be someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance, e.g. an elderly neighbour or aunt who lives nearby for whom the employee is the primary carer. Not classified as dependants are: tenants or boarders living in the family home: an employee in the household e.g. a housekeeper.)

In all such cases employees should notify their line manager as soon as possible, giving the reason for the absence and the expected length of the absence. The line manager will make a judgement, at this point, about whether the absence is reasonable. If the absence is not considered justified the line manager will ask the employee to come into work and time lost will be noted on his or her time sheet or personal file.

If the absence is considered reasonable the employee will be offered a number of options.

1. to make up the time lost through the flexible work arrangements detailed in his/her contract, in agreement with the line manager.
2. to take the time lost as annual leave.
3. to make a request for paid compassionate/ dependant leave.

In normal circumstances employees will be expected to take up options 1 or 2. The awarding of compassionate/dependant leave is entirely at the discretion of the Unit's Director. Employees wishing to apply for compassionate/dependant leave must complete the appropriate form (attached) and submit it to his/her line manager. The line manager will then forward it to the Director.

### **Paid and unpaid Compassionate or Dependent Leave**

The Director may agree paid compassionate or dependant leave, up to a maximum of 4 days per annum and/or unpaid compassionate leave up to a maximum of 6 days per annum. **These days indicate a limit to the Director's scope for discretion. They do not indicate any form of entitlement.**

### **Emergency dependent leave**

There is no limit to the number of times an employee may take time off to deal with dependent emergencies as long as these are judged to be reasonable by the Director. For a definition of emergencies please see attached sheets. A detailed record of the time taken off must be provided to the employee's line manager as soon as is reasonably possible.

### **Complaints**

An employee who feels that an unfair decision has been made regarding unplanned absence from work or compassionate leave can appeal using the Grievance Procedure (*a copy of the Grievance Procedure is included in the People and Work Unit's Employment Pack*).

## **Time off for Public Duties**

The People and Work Unit is required to allow employees **reasonable** time off for public duties. Such duties may include: duties as a justice of the peace: meetings of boards of school governors: attendance as a member of a statutory tribunal: meetings of NHS Trusts etc. (*A complete list is obtainable from the People and Work Unit's office.*)

The employee should notify his/her line manager in advance of any time off required for public duties, and the line manager will forward the notification to the Associate Director. All **reasonable** requests will be granted.

There is no obligation on the People and Work Unit to pay the employee for such time off, and any payment will be entirely at the discretion of the Unit's Director.

Any employee who considers that the People and Work Unit has not dealt properly with a request for time off for public duties should, in the first instance, appeal using the Grievance Procedure.

(*A copy of the Grievance Procedure is included in the People and Work Unit's Employment Pack*).

