



Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependants

Policy

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Definition of a dependant	2
3	When emergency time off may be required	2
4	When emergency time off is not applicable	3
5	Leave entitlement & pay	3
6	Notification	4
7	Manager responsibility	4
8	Useful/Related Links	4
9	Policy Review	5

1. Introduction

The University recognises that employees may require time off during working hours to deal with an immediate issue or emergency involving a dependant. As such, the University provides paid 'emergency time off' leave beyond the statutory provision and staff will be granted 'reasonable' time off work to deal with such matters. The right to time off to care for dependants applies to all staff, regardless of their length of service.

This policy will be applied in a fair and consistent manner and without discrimination, in line with the University's [Equality & Diversity Policy](#).

2. Definition Of A Dependant

For the purposes of this policy a dependant is classed as someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance or support in relation to their wellbeing, for example being a primary carer. A dependant will generally be the spouse, civil partner/partner, child or parent of the employee, or someone who lives with the employee as part of their family, for example, an elderly relative (although this does not extend to tenants, boarders or a staff member's employee).

This definition is broader than that outlined in the University's Support for employees with Caring Responsibilities policy.

3. When Emergency Time Off May Be Required

Employees will be granted time off under this policy in order to:

- Provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth unexpectedly or is injured or assaulted;
- Make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured;
- Deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant, for instance when a nurse or child minder fails to turn up or due to school closure etc;
- Deal with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child during school hours, for instance, if the child has been involved in a fight or is being suspended from school;
- Deal with matters in consequence of the death of a dependant (reference to the Bereavement Policy may be applicable here depending on circumstances).

This list is not exhaustive - members of staff will be allowed time off in order to take necessary action to deal with any unexpected or sudden emergencies involving a dependant. For the time off to be justifiable, however, the employee's presence must be crucial in resolving or assisting with the problem.

The time taken should be enough to deal with/manage/respond to the emergency and/or make longer-term arrangements. The right to time off under this policy does not cover situations where the need to take time off is known in advance.

4. When Emergency Time Off Is Not Applicable

Once the emergency or immediate issue relating to the care of a dependant has been dealt with and/or necessary arrangements made, any subsequent time off will not be classed as 'emergency time off'. For example:

- Emergency time off may be required to take a dependant to hospital, however, this leave type would not be applicable if further days/weeks off were required to care for the dependant at home;
- Emergency time off will be granted where childcare arrangements have broken down in order that the member of staff can make alternative arrangements, however, if they need to provide care after the first day off, emergency time off would not apply.

Additional time off required in such circumstances should be dealt with via annual or unpaid leave. Employees with caring responsibilities (under the definition of the University's Support for employees with Caring Responsibilities Policy) may consider using Carers Leave. The appropriate leave to be taken should be discussed and agreed with the line manager.

Time off under this policy will not be granted for domestic emergencies e.g. where a boiler has burst, a washing machine is leaking/needs to be repaired etc. Time off in such circumstances is at the discretion of the line manager and should be taken from annual leave entitlement or as unpaid leave.

This policy is not intended to deal with longer term periods of absence or changes to working hours in order to manage caring responsibilities. Where employees are looking to make either short or longer term changes to their working hours to accommodate caring responsibilities, they should discuss this matter with their line manager to establish potential options in line with the University's Flexible Working Policy.

5. Leave Entitlement & Pay

The University allows for up to 3 days paid Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependants, which goes beyond the unpaid statutory provision. Paid Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependants is at the normal rate of pay on any given day.

Beyond the 3 days paid provision, employees are entitled to unpaid Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependants. A reasonable amount of time off is permitted to deal with emergencies with no set limit on how many times and individual can take time off to care for dependants. The amount of time off which is reasonable will vary depending on individual circumstances.

Whilst on unpaid leave employees will:

- retain continuity of employment
- be entitled to progress through normal annual pay increments (where appropriate)
- not receive salary, allowances or any other contractual benefits whilst superannuation payments will be suspended for the period (i.e. treated as a deferred member of the pension scheme – for further information on pension implications please contact [Payroll](#))
- not normally be entitled to ill-health and death in service benefits
- will not accrue entitlement to paid annual leave or be paid for public holidays or other days
- will not be entitled to sickness leave even where this is medically certified
- be entitled to conditions of service relating to notice of termination, redundancy compensation and disciplinary and grievance procedures

6. Notification

Where an employee requires emergency time off, they must inform their line manager as soon as possible of the need to take time off, explaining the reason for the absence and how long they expect to be away from work. If the manager cannot be contacted at that time, the employee should ensure that they have informed another appropriate employee in the team who can update the manager on their return.

Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependants can be requested/recorded in the normal way through the CoreHR self-service system. Once 3 days of paid leave have been using in any one year period it will revert to unpaid leave automatically.

7. Manager Responsibility

On being informed that an employee requires emergency time off and that they have elected to take leave under this policy rather than using leave from their holiday entitlement, the manager must ensure that this is recorded through Manager Self Service.

8. Useful/Related Links

[Flexible Working Policy](#)

[Annual Leave Policy](#)

[Support for Staff with Caring Responsibilities](#)

[Other Time Off \(inc Unpaid Leave\)](#)

9. Policy Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the University and may be amended at any time following appropriate consultation.

<u>Document Control</u>	
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