

Bereavement Leave Policy

Document ID: HR-LOA-015 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2024 **Last Updated:** January 2024 **Owner:** People Operations **Applies To:** All Employees

Purpose

NovaTech provides bereavement leave to support employees during times of loss. This policy ensures employees have time to grieve, make arrangements, and attend services without concern for work obligations.

Eligibility

All employees are eligible for bereavement leave from their first day of employment, including: - Full-time employees - Part-time employees - Temporary employees

Bereavement Leave Entitlement

Immediate Family

Up to 5 days paid leave for the loss of: - Spouse or domestic partner - Child (including stepchild, adopted child, foster child) - Parent (including stepparent, parent-in-law) - Sibling (including step-sibling) - Grandparent - Grandchild

Extended Family

Up to 3 days paid leave for the loss of: - Aunt or uncle - Niece or nephew - Cousin - Spouse's grandparent - Spouse's sibling

Close Non-Family

Up to 1 day paid leave for the loss of: - Close friend - Colleague - Other significant relationship

Additional Considerations

Pregnancy loss: Covered under bereavement leave. Contact HR for support.

Pet loss: While not covered under bereavement, employees may use PTO. Talk to your manager if you need flexibility.

Using Bereavement Leave

Notification

1. Notify your manager as soon as reasonably possible
2. Provide expected duration of leave
3. No documentation required unless requested by HR (rare circumstances)

When to Take Leave

Leave may be taken: - Immediately following the loss - For memorial services (even if later) - In non-consecutive days if needed - Flexibly based on circumstances

What's Covered

Bereavement leave is intended for: - Grieving and emotional recovery - Funeral or memorial service attendance - Travel to services - Making arrangements - Handling estate matters

Additional Time

Extended Leave

If you need more time than the policy provides: - Talk to your manager and HR - Additional PTO may be used - Unpaid leave may be available - Leave may be extended for extenuating circumstances

FMLA Eligibility

In some cases, additional leave may qualify under FMLA: - Serious health condition related to grief - Care for family members

Contact HR to discuss options.

Pay During Leave

What's Paid

- Bereavement leave is paid at your regular salary
- No impact on PTO balance
- Benefits continue during leave

Travel Expenses

- Travel for bereavement is a personal expense
 - If death is of a colleague, company may assist (case-by-case)
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Manager Responsibilities

When Notified of a Loss

1. Express condolences
2. Don't ask for details unless offered
3. Confirm leave duration
4. Arrange coverage
5. Communicate only what's necessary to team
6. Check in appropriately upon return

Supporting Your Team Member

- Be flexible with return timing
- Reduce workload initially if possible
- Don't pressure for quick return
- Offer EAP resources
- Follow up periodically

What NOT to Do

- Don't question the relationship
 - Don't ask for documentation (unless directed by HR)
 - Don't discuss with others without permission
 - Don't assign work during leave
 - Don't express frustration about coverage
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Returning to Work

Transition Back

- You may return whenever you're ready
- Consider a gradual return if needed
- Talk to your manager about workload
- Take breaks if needed

Available Support

- EAP counseling (free, confidential)
- Mental health days (3 per year)
- Flexible work arrangements
- HR check-in available

Manager Check-In

Your manager should: - Welcome you back warmly - Brief you on essential updates - Not overwhelm with work immediately - Check in periodically - Respect your privacy

Support Resources

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- 24/7 phone support: 1-800-XXX-XXXX
- Up to 6 free counseling sessions
- Grief support specialists available
- Family members can also access

Additional Resources

- Headspace (free for employees) - Grief meditations
- Mental health days (3 per year)
- Flexible work arrangements
- HR support: hr@novatech.com

Grief Support Groups

HR can connect you with: - External grief support groups - Employee communities (if desired) - Professional counseling referrals

Documentation

Typically Not Required

NovaTech trusts employees and does not require: - Death certificates - Obituaries - Funeral programs - Proof of relationship

When Documentation May Be Requested

In rare circumstances (e.g., extended leave, pattern concerns), HR may request: - Basic information about the loss - Documentation supporting extended leave

This is handled sensitively and confidentially.

Privacy

What We Keep Confidential

- Reason for leave (shared only on need-to-know basis)
- Details about the loss
- Your emotional state
- Family circumstances

What May Be Shared

With your permission: - That you are on leave - Expected return date - How to handle urgent matters

You control what information is shared with colleagues.

Multiple Losses

If you experience multiple losses in a short period: - Additional leave may be provided - Contact HR to discuss your situation - We will support you through difficult times

FAQs

Q: Do I need to provide proof of the death? A: No. We trust our employees. Documentation is only requested in rare circumstances.

Q: Can I take bereavement leave for a miscarriage or stillbirth? A: Yes. This is covered under bereavement leave. Contact HR for support.

Q: What if the funeral is weeks after the death? A: You can take bereavement leave for the service even if it's later.

Q: Can I take leave for a death that happened before I was employed? A: Leave is intended for recent losses. Talk to your manager if you need time for an earlier loss.

Q: What if I need more time than the policy provides? A: Speak with HR. We will work with you on PTO or extended leave options.

Q: Is bereavement leave separate from PTO? A: Yes. Bereavement leave does not reduce your PTO balance.

Contact

For questions or support: - **HR:** hr@novatech.com - **Slack:** #ask-hr - **EAP:** 1-800-XXX-XXXX

Related Documents: PTO Policy (HR-LOA-001), FMLA Policy (HR-LOA-020), Mental Health Days (HR-LOA-025), EAP Guide (HR-BEN-020)