

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Holidays

The provisions relating to your entitlement to paid annual leave are set out in your contract of employment.

Religious holidays

Subject to complying with the relevant provisions as to notice as set out in your contract of employment and to the requirements of the Company's business, you will normally be allowed to use your annual leave entitlement to observe special religious holidays.

Jury service and witness attendance

Should you be called up for jury service or required to attend court to give evidence as a witness, you must notify your line manager as soon as reasonably practicable. Time off work will normally be granted in these circumstances. You will be required to provide a copy of the court summons to support your request for time off work.

You have no contractual or statutory right to be paid for time not worked due to jury service or witness attendance. Any payment of salary by the Company during this period is done so in its absolute discretion and will be subject to the deduction of any monies received from the court in respect of loss of earnings. You must therefore submit a claim to the court for loss of earnings and claim the full allowance available to you.

If on any day on which you attend court you are told that your services are not required, you must then return to work and report to your line manager before starting work.

Other public duties

If you are a justice of the peace, you have a statutory right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work for the purpose of performing any of the duties of the office.

If you are a member of one of the following bodies, you also have a statutory right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work for the purpose of attendance at meetings of the body, or any of its committees, or undertaking other duties approved by the body for the purpose of discharging the body's functions:

- A local authority.
- A statutory tribunal.
- A police authority.
- An independent monitoring board for a prison or a prison visiting committee.
- A relevant health body (e.g. an NHS trust, an NHS foundation trust, a Strategic Health Authority, a Special Health Authority or a Primary Care Trust).
- A relevant education body (e.g. a managing or governing body of an educational establishment maintained by a local education authority, a governing body of a further or higher education corporation or the General Teaching Council for England or Wales).
- The Environment Agency or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.
- Scottish Water or a Water Customer Consultation Panel.

You have no contractual or statutory right to be paid for time not worked due to performing public duties. Any payment of salary by the Company during this period is done so in its absolute discretion.

Membership of the armed forces reserves

If you are a member of the armed forces reserves, you may use your paid annual leave entitlement to carry out your duties, provided that you comply with the provisions relating to annual leave set out in your contract of employment. The Company expects you to use your paid annual leave first before applying for further time off.

Otherwise, any further time off relating to membership of the armed forces reserves will only be granted at the absolute discretion of the Company and you have no contractual or statutory right to be paid for this leave. Any payment of salary made by the Company in such circumstances is done so in its absolute discretion. If you wish to apply for this type of leave, you should apply in writing to your line manager stating the period of leave requested and the reasons for it.

Medical appointments

It is appreciated that visits to doctors and dentists and other medical practitioners are necessary and, whilst time off will be normally be granted, such appointments should, as far as possible, be taken outside of normal working hours or with the minimum disruption to the working day (i.e. at the beginning or end of the working day). Time off for such appointments must be approved by your line manager in advance and no more than two hours should be taken off work for any one appointment.

You have no contractual or statutory right to be paid for absences relating to attendance at medical appointments. Any payment of salary during attendance at such appointments is made at the absolute discretion of the Company.

For the provisions on time off for ante-natal appointments please refer to the Company's maternity policy, for the provisions on time off to accompany a pregnant woman to ante-natal appointments please refer to the Company's paternity leave policy. Other types of leave, such as adoption leave, may also warrant a specific approach and the Company will always endeavour to be fair and consistent in its approach.

If the appointment relates to a disability, attendance at the appointment and pay during that time may be granted as a reasonable adjustment, but this will depend on what is reasonable in the circumstances. Accordingly, if that is the reason for the appointment please let the Company know.

Compassionate leave

Subject to your statutory right to time off to deal with a family emergency (see the Parental Leave and Family Emergencies Policy), if you suffer a bereavement or serious illness in your family or in a close relationship, compassionate leave will be considered on an individual basis and must be approved by your line manager.

There is no contractual or statutory entitlement to be paid for absences relating to compassionate leave. Any payment of salary during compassionate leave is made at the absolute discretion of the Company.

Subject to your statutory right to time off to deal with a family emergency, the Company expects you to use your paid annual leave entitlement for time off needed to care for sick relatives or friends.

Elective surgery

Elective surgery is surgery that is not considered to be medically necessary, for example because it is concerned with the enhancement of appearance through surgical and medical techniques. It includes cosmetic surgery (such as breast implants and face-lifts) and other non-essential medical procedures such as laser eye treatment and vasectomies.

If you wish to take time off for elective surgery, you may use your existing paid annual leave entitlement, provided that you comply with the provisions relating to annual leave set out in your

contract of employment. Any further time off is at the absolute discretion of the Company and will be unpaid leave.

Fertility treatment

Medical appointments in connection with the early stages of the fertility treatment process will be treated no less favourably than any other medical appointments and the section above on 'medical appointments' applies. If you wish to take additional time off for fertility treatment, you may use your existing paid annual leave entitlement. Any further time off is at the absolute discretion of the Company and will be unpaid leave.

General

Failure to return from leave and report for work on the due date of return without reasonable excuse is a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure.

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