



Compassionate Leave Policy

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Contents

Purpose..... 1

Entitlement..... 1

Requesting Compassionate Leave..... 1

Purpose

Compassionate leave is designed to help an employee where they need to deal with necessary arrangements for or assist a close relative who is seriously or critically ill.

Entitlement

Employees are entitled to take [paid] compassionate leave of at the discretion of their line manager in any 12-month period in respect of a spouse or partner, child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or brother or sister-in-law.

We may exercise our discretion to grant [paid] compassionate leave in respect of any other relative or close friend, depending on the circumstances of each case.

An employee who is unable to return to work following a period of compassionate leave should contact their line manager. It may be appropriate to take a period of annual leave or unpaid leave in those circumstances.

Requesting Compassionate Leave

We recognise that it may not always be possible to request compassionate leave in advance. However, where it is possible, you should make a request to your line manager. You should tell them the reasons for your request and the number of days leave you would like to take.

Where it is not possible to request leave in advance you should contact your line manager as soon as possible to tell them the reason for your absence and the number of days you expect to be absent.

In exceptional circumstances we may have to refuse a request for compassionate leave. If so your line manager will give you a written explanation for the refusal. If you are dissatisfied with this decision you may make a complaint under our Grievance Procedure within 28 days of receipt of the written reasons for refusal.

Compassionate leave policy checklist

A comprehensive policy should:

1. outline the purpose of compassionate leave;
2. acknowledge that each case will be different and that the policy sets out guidelines only;
3. explain who compassionate leave will normally be available to;
4. explain how much paid/unpaid compassionate leave will normally be available;
5. show what other types of leave and return-to-work arrangements are available/open for discussion;
6. set out notification procedures;
7. explain what other support is available (e.g. counselling or useful helplines);
8. refer to other relevant procedures (e.g. health and safety, capability and equality and diversity policies); and
9. set out record-keeping procedures.