

Guidelines and procedure for requests for carer's leave

Policy

The University recognises that unforeseen situations may arise which require the attendance of an employee in relation to their caring responsibilities for a dependent. A dependent is the spouse, civil partner, partner (irrespective of sex¹), child, parent or other family relative who lives in the same household as the employee or for whom the employee is the primary carer. It is important to note that paid carer's leave is only applicable when the incident is unexpected or unforeseen; if an employee was aware of the need, or potential need, to care for a dependent with sufficient time to make alternative arrangements, it would not apply. Circumstances which may be covered include:

- Providing immediate care if a dependent falls ill, or has been injured and is unable to care for themselves
- Making longer term care arrangements for a dependent who is ill or injured;
- Dealing with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependent;
- Dealing with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child (up to age 16 or up to age 18 if the child is disabled) which requires the provision of care during school hours;

In these circumstances, an employee may take up to 5 days paid leave (calculated in hours for part time workers) in any 12 month period in order to deal with the situation or to make arrangements to deal with the situation, although such leave would not normally be more than 1 or 2 days for each occasion. Exceptionally, where the employee may need additional time to support the dependent then requests for annual leave and unpaid leave may be considered. Any requests for paid leave for more than one week must be submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the 'request for leave of absence' form.

There may be circumstances which, although they require some attention from the employee, do not fall in to the categories outlined above for paid carer's leave. In these cases, managers should explore the use of flexitime, annual leave and, where necessary, unpaid leave.

Procedure

Managers will be responsible for balancing the needs of the employee at this time with the need to maintain work priorities and therefore will need to recognise that a sensitive and prompt response is required. After reading this procedural guidance, if you are unsure how

¹ Partner refers to a person you are in a relationship with, who is of the same sex, of the opposite sex, or is trans.

this policy applies to your situation, then please contact your line manager or HR Staff Services for further advice.

Such leave will necessarily be taken at short notice. If the employee has not yet attended for work when the need for carer's leave becomes apparent then they must contact their manager as soon as possible after the start of their normal working day, and at least within two hours of their start time. In all cases of requests for carer's leave, an [application form](#) must be completed, even retrospectively where appropriate. A copy of any **authorised** leave form should then be forwarded to the Payroll Department for action and inclusion on the employee's personal file.