

Carer's Policy Template

Introduction

Establish the principle behind the policy

- This policy aims to ensure that we are able to support you if you assume caring responsibilities
- You will not be discriminated against or disadvantaged on the grounds of caring responsibilities
- Employees are actively encouraged to inform their line manager if they are caring for someone

1. Definitions

If you are a carer, you will have responsibilities which impact on your working life. You will be responsible, on an unpaid basis, for the care and support of a disabled, elderly or chronically sick partner, child, relative or close friend who is unable to care for themselves.

2. Company Leave Support

If you have caring responsibilities, you will be entitled to request time off. This may include sudden or short-term leave arrangements being agreed with your manager.

2.1 Carer's Emergency Leave

[Employer] will give up to five working days paid leave (pro rata for part-time staff) for short-term needs, in line with your statutory rights. If the absence extends beyond a week it becomes planned leave and treated accordingly. If short-term carer needs exceed five days (or pro rata) in any leave year, unpaid leave will be considered.

2.2 Planned Carer's Leave

Planned carer's leave is paid and primarily designed to cover: nursing care following serious illness; removal situations; attending appointments. Planned carer's leave will last for a defined period, will be agreed in advance, and will be 'matched' by your annual leave entitlement.

2.3 Unpaid Leave

If as a carer you have exhausted all paid forms of support, you may apply for unpaid absence.

2.4 Parental Leave

Unpaid parental leave is a statutory entitlement, available for up to 13 weeks for those parents of legal guardians with care responsibilities for children aged under six, or for children with disability up to the age of 18.

2.5 Paid Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death of the person for whom the employee has been caring, up to two weeks bereavement leave may be taken.

3. Support Options: working arrangements

3.1 Flexible Working

Employees can make a request for flexible working arrangements to accommodate their need to be a carer. This can range from a request to work part-time hours to flexible working patterns such as flexible starting and finishing times or a different shift pattern. The process for doing this is in [the employer's] flexible working policy.

In certain circumstances the employee may wish to discuss a career break (see section 4).

3.2 Telephone Access

Employees will be provided with access to a telephone so that they can maintain contact with the person they are caring for.

3.3 Counselling

An employee assistance programme (known as EAP) is in place to support all employees and their families.

3.4 Support Needs

[The employer] will identify whether there is a need for a support network for carers within the organisation.

4. Carer's Career Break Scheme

4.1 Eligibility

Employees with long term caring responsibilities will be eligible to take a carer's career break.

4.2 Length of Break

- Employees will resign from the company at the start of their carer's career break and their employment terms and conditions will cease.
- The carer's career break will be for a period of at least three months up to a maximum of two years from the date of starting the carer's career break
- Employees should confirm, in writing, their intention to return to work at least three months in advance.

4.3 Contact During the Break

- A person on [the employer's] career break will continue to receive communications, and may continue with further education or training agreed before the career break commenced.
- Where any temporary work is undertaken, payment will be based on the salary of the job that the employee held immediately prior to their resignation.

4.4 Return to Work

- Where the career break is for one year or less, [the employer] will hold the employee's post open.
- Where the career break is for between one and two years, at the end of the career break we will make every effort, in consultation with the individual, to offer a suitable post to the employee, at the level held prior to the start of the career break.

Information

Further details about external support options and external information are available from the HR department.