

Carer's Leave

1. What is Carer's Leave?

The Carer's Leave Regulations 2024, effective from 6 April 2024, provides employees who have caring responsibilities for a dependant with a long term care need with the right to apply for Carer's Leave.

A "dependant" for entitlement to Carer's Leave is defined as anyone for whom an employee reasonably has caring responsibility for, and does not have to be a family member. This includes a spouse, civil partner, child, parent, a person who lives in the same household as the employee (other than by reason of them being their employee, tenant, lodger or boarder), or a person who reasonably relies on the employee for care.

Employees will be entitled to leave to give or arrange care for a dependant who has:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than 3 months;
- a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010);
- elder care needs.

2. Eligibility for Carer's Leave

To be eligible for Carer's Leave, employees must:

- Have a dependant with a long-term care need;
- Seek to take the leave to provide or arrange care for that dependant; and
- Have not exceeded their entitlement to one week of Carer's Leave during any 12-month rolling period.

There is no qualifying service requirement for this right, therefore employees are able to make an application for Carer's Leave from the first day of employment.

3. Entitlement to Carer's Leave

Employees who meet the eligibility criteria as set out above will be able to take a period of up to one week of Carer's Leave, in any 12-month rolling period. The entitlement is pro-rated for people who work part-time, so for example if an employee works 3 days per week, their entitlement would be for 3 days.

There is the option for employees to take this leave as full or half days, and as either consecutive or non-consecutive days.

If an employee needs to care for more than one person, they cannot take a week of Carer's Leave for each dependant. They can only take up to one week every 12 months. They can use the leave on more than one dependant.

4. Occupational Entitlement to Carer's Leave Pay

Whilst there is no statutory entitlement to pay for employees taking Carer's Leave, the University acknowledges that this may a difficult time for employees and has therefore taken the decision to pay the employee's salary for the period(s) of Carer's Leave taken.

5. Evidence of Entitlement

Employees wishing to take Carer's Leave will not be required to provide evidence in relation to a request for Carer's Leave.

6. Notice Requirements for Carer's Leave

The University will require employees to provide notice of their intention to take Carer's Leave, prior to taking the leave, specifying:

1. that they are entitled to take Carer's Leave, and
2. the days on which the Carer's Leave is to be taken.

Employees are required to provide notice for leave, either by giving a notice period that is double the length of the requested leave, prior to the first day of the proposed leave, or by giving a notice of three full days before the first day (or half day) mentioned in the notice. The method that results in the earliest notification should be used. For example:

- If the request is for half a day or a day, the notice period must be at least 3 working days.
- If the request is for more than one day, the notice period must be at least twice as long as the requested leave. For example, if the request is for 2 days, the notice period must be at least 4 working days.

The notice period needs to be in full days, even if the request includes half day amounts.

Whilst the notification does not have to be in writing, the University will need to retain a record of the leave. Employees must, therefore, complete the Carer's Leave Notification Form and provide this to their line manager to sign to confirm agreed dates and approval.

If approved, managers must then forward the Carer's Leave Notification Form to the HR Services team for the form to be retained on the employees' personal file.

7. Postponing Carer's Leave

Every effort will be made to meet an employee's request for Carer's Leave, however where it is considered that the operation of the School/department would be unduly disrupted if the employee took Carer's Leave during the period identified in the employee's request, the leave may be postponed.

Line managers should contact their HR Advisor or HR Partner as soon as possible if they are proposing to postpone Carer's Leave. The following will then need to occur:

- the employee will be allowed to take the leave at another time within one month of the earliest day originally requested by the employee;
- HR will work with the manager to provide the employee with written notice that the leave will be postponed, stating the reasons for this postponement and the alternative agreed dates on which the leave can be taken; and
- this notice must be provided either seven days after the employee gave notice to the University or before the earliest day requested by the employee, whichever is the earliest of the two.

8. Terms and Conditions of Employment During Carer's Leave and Return to Work

All terms and conditions of employment will be preserved during the period of Carer's Leave. This includes the accrual of annual leave.

Employees will remain bound by the terms and conditions of their employment for the duration of any period of Carer's Leave.

Employees will retain the right to return to the job that they were employed to do before taking any period of Carer's Leave.

If an employee takes a period of a different type of statutory leave, Carer's Leave does not contribute to the continuity of a period of absence in respect of the employee's right to return to the job which they were previously employed before their absence.

Employees who request or take Carer's Leave are protected from suffering a detriment or being dismissed because of doing so.

9. Other Forms of Leave and Support for Carers

In addition to Carer's Leave, employees may wish to consider options to extend or add to their leave by using other forms of paid or unpaid leave, such as Parental Leave (if eligible) or annual leave. Employees are also reminded of the Annual Leave Purchase Scheme. These options should be discussed and agreed with your line manager.

Employees are also reminded of the Flexible Working Procedure if they wish to submit a request to vary their current working hours or pattern in order to support their caring responsibilities.

The University also provides an [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#), which is an independent, free, confidential support, information and counselling service called Confidential Care. This is a telephone service that can be accessed at any time of the day or night and is available 365 days of the year. There is also a wealth of information on the Well Online website that provides information, advice and support for employees with caring responsibilities.

These guidelines outline the University's approach to handling Carer's Leave.

Please refer to your [HR Partner/Adviser](#) if you require further advice.

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