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# Carers Leave Policy

**This policy sets out what employees can expect if they have caring responsibilities and want to take Carers Leave.**

It explains:

- The roles and responsibilities of employees and line managers
- How to request time off to care for the person concerned

**This policy covers employees in Great Britain, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Northern Ireland.**

**If you're in the Republic of Ireland, you should refer to the Carers Leave policy (ROI).**

This policy is not contractual and is subject to change at the Group's discretion. This policy will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it reflects the Group's legal obligations and its business needs.

## **Content of this policy:**

1. Employees
2. Line Managers
3. How Carers leave affects pay and benefits
4. Further information and support

## 1. Employees

Carers Leave helps you to take time off if you have long term or permanent responsibilities for caring for a sick, elderly or disabled relative or partner. If you need to take Carers Leave, we'll support you and treat you fairly.

If you're considering applying for Carers Leave it's your responsibility to read and follow the guidance in this Carers Leave policy:

### What are you entitled to?

If you are a carer you can take a maximum of **18 weeks' unpaid Carers Leave**. Carers Leave is taken in full weeks, up to a maximum of four weeks in a year and up to a maximum of 18 weeks in total. Carers Leave is pro-rate's for part time employees.

### What is the definition of a 'relevant' person in need of care?

The person must need significant supervision and dedicated support throughout the day, in connection with normal physical or mental functions.

### Who is a 'carer'?

In general, the carer must live with the 'relevant' person. However, if the carer is not living with the 'relevant person', there are some additional conditions.

The carer needs to provide one of the following:

- Permanent care and attention
- Temporary, full-time care and attention. This could be, for example, when the person being cared for is unable to look after themselves for a period of time following a hospital stay
- Respite for another person who is providing full-time care and attention to the person being cared for.

### Does this policy include caring for children?

No, Carers Leave isn't for people with parental responsibilities for a child under the age of 18. The Parental Leave policy on the intranet covers this.

### What length of service is required to qualify?

One year's continuous employment with the Group when you take Carers Leave.

### How to request Carers Leave:

- Make sure you're eligible before you fill out your request
- Go to workday and submit your request. You must complete this at least 21 days before you'd like your leave to start
- Upload your Carers Leave entitlement evidence to workday. This could be from a medical practitioner, for example your GP, a community support worker or charity
- If we can't grant leave on your requested dates talk to your line manager about alternative dates

### How are holidays treated?

You will continue to accrue holiday entitlement when you're on a period of Carers Leave.

## 2. Line managers

To help you manage a Carers Leave request, read and follow the guidance in this Carers Leave policy.

### How to manage a request for Carers Leave

- Discuss the request with your employee to understand their need
- Ask your employee to go to workday and upload their supporting evidence. This must show that the person being cared for is a 'relevant' person (section 1) and also outline the carer's responsibilities. This evidence could be from a medical practitioner, for example a GP, community support worker or charity
- Consider other requests for time off work from your team and how this may impact the period requested
- Consider whether your team are able to cover essential work for the period of absence and any impact on the customer

### **If you're able to approve the leave:**

- Review and approve the request on workday
- The employee will receive confirmation that their request has been approved
- Complete the administration checks on workday to stop their pay

### **Can you postpone a request for Carers Leave?**

If possible, you should accept all valid requests for Carers Leave. But to meet business needs, you may have to postpone the request for up to three months.

Reasons that we may need to postpone a request include:

- The leave conflicts with a peak business time
- A number of the team have applied for leave at the same time
- Because of the role of the employee, taking leave at that time would have a negative effect on the business and ultimately the customer

Discuss the reasons for postponing the leave with your employee and confirm the postponement arrangements on workday. This should happen within seven days of the employee applying for leave to support them in making alternative arrangements.

You must keep the documents which support the decision to postpone leave.

### **What about flexible working employees?**

Flexible working employees are entitled to leave in proportion to the time they work.

Someone, for example, who works two days a week is eligible for a maximum of 18 of their two day working weeks.

We calculate a week by dividing the number of days worked in a year by 52.

If an employee works four days a week for 40 weeks of school term time but not during 12 weeks of school holidays, they'd be entitled to  $18 \times 40$  (number of weeks worked) divided by 52. This gives 14 weeks of Carers Leave as we round the number up to the nearest whole week.

### **What happens if the employee needs more time off?**

- The employee should discuss this with you. You may be able to help, perhaps by the employee working more flexibly and using annual leave.

### **What happens if the employee doesn't return to work on the agreed date?**

We might consider this as an unauthorised absence unless this has been agreed in advance or they couldn't return because of sickness. This will be investigated under the Group's disciplinary procedure.

## **3. How Carers Leave affects pay and benefits**

### **What pay, pension and benefits will employees receive?**

- Employees don't receive any salary while they're on Carers Leave. Pension funding and any benefit funding will continue
- Employees will continue to receive all benefits they have elected via RBSelect and charges for these options will continue to be taken from the employees' ValueAccount

## **4. Further information and support is available**

Further support is available through our Employee Assistance Programme (HR>HR Information>Wellbeing).