

Compassionate and Bereavement Leave Policy

Our approach

Losing someone you love is one of the hardest things you will go through. When it happens, the last thing you should be worrying about is work.

This policy sets out the paid leave available to you when someone close to you dies. It also covers compassionate leave for other serious personal circumstances. It applies from your first day with us.

We want you to take the time you need. If the leave set out here is not enough, talk to your manager and we will see what else we can do.

Bereavement leave - when a close family member dies

Who this covers

You can take bereavement leave if any of the following people have died:

- Your partner (husband, wife, civil partner, or long-term partner)
- Your parent or step-parent
- Your child (over 18) or step-child
- Your grandparent
- Your brother or sister (including step-siblings)

If you have lost a child under 18, or experienced a stillbirth after 24 weeks, please see our Parental Bereavement Leave policy - you have additional rights and support available to you.

How much time you can take

You can take up to a week of paid bereavement leave. This is available from day one of your employment.

You do not need to take it all at once. If it helps, you can take them separately - for example, some days immediately and some around the funeral.

Letting us know

Just let your manager know as soon as you can - by phone, text or email. There is no form to fill in. Tell them what has happened and how much time you think you need.

If you are too upset to call, ask someone else to let us know on your behalf. We understand.

If you need more time

A week may not be enough. Grief does not follow a schedule, and practical things like funerals, probate and family responsibilities can take longer than expected.

If you need more time off, talk to your manager. Options may include:

- Using annual leave
- A period of unpaid leave
- Temporarily adjusted hours or working patterns

We will always try to find a solution that works for you and for the business. You will not be penalised for needing more time.

Compassionate leave - other serious circumstances

Bereavement is not the only reason you might need compassionate time away from work. Serious personal circumstances - such as a close family member becoming critically ill, a house fire, or a family emergency - can also be covered.

If something serious happens and you need time off, speak to your manager and we can look at ways to help support you.

If you are not sure whether your situation qualifies, just ask. We would rather you told us what was happening than struggled in silence.

Other bereavements

If someone important to you has died who is not on the close family list above - a close friend, an aunt, an uncle, a grandchild, an ex-partner, or someone else who mattered to you - there is no automatic entitlement to bereavement leave.

But we recognise that grief is personal. The relationship matters more than the label. Speak to your manager, and they will consider what support is appropriate - this might be a day of compassionate leave, use of annual leave, or a flexible arrangement.

Pay

Bereavement leave for close family members is paid at your normal rate.

If you are unsure about pay arrangements, speak to your manager and they will confirm what applies to you.

Coming back to work

When you are ready to come back, let your manager know. They will arrange a quiet conversation on your first day back to check how you are doing and whether you need any support.

Grief does not end when you return to work. You may have difficult days weeks or months later. If you need flexibility, a lighter workload, or just someone to talk to, please tell us.

Questions

If you have any questions about this policy, or if you are going through a difficult time and are not sure what support is available, please speak to your manager. We are here to help.

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