

Emergency Leave - Time Off for Dependants Policy

Our approach

Emergencies happen. Your child is sent home from school. Your parent has a fall. Your partner is taken to hospital. When something unexpected happens involving someone who depends on you, you have the right to take time off to deal with it.

This is a day-one right. You do not need any minimum length of service.

When you can take time off

You can take reasonable unpaid time off when a dependant:

- Falls ill, is injured
- Is taken to hospital or needs emergency medical attention
- Needs you to arrange their care because existing arrangements break down unexpectedly - for example, a childminder does not turn up, or an adult care provider cancels at short notice
- Is involved in an unexpected incident at school or nursery
- Their school, nursery or care provider closes unexpectedly - for example, due to flooding, heating failure, or staff shortages

Who counts as a dependant

A dependant includes your spouse, civil partner, child, parent, or anyone who lives with you as part of your family. It can also include someone who reasonably relies on you in an emergency - for example, an elderly neighbour you check on regularly.

How long can you take?

The law says 'reasonable' time. In most cases, this means enough time to deal with the immediate emergency and make any necessary care arrangements - usually one or two days, though it depends on the situation.

This leave is for dealing with the emergency itself. It is not intended for long-term caring (see our Carer's Leave policy for that).

Letting us know

Let your manager know as soon as you can - before you are due to start work if possible, or as soon as practicable. Explain briefly what has happened and how long you expect to be away.

Pay

Time off for dependants is unpaid under statutory law. However, depending on the circumstances, your manager may consider paid compassionate leave or other arrangements.

Questions

If you have had to take time off in an emergency and are unsure about pay or next steps, contact peopleteam@milbank.co.uk.

milbankgroup.co.uk

Version	Date	Author	Changes
V1	-	Milbank Group	Creation
V2	30/04/2026	Milbank Group	Approved