

Unpaid Leave Policy



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1 Reasons for Unpaid Leave

Planned unpaid leave will be considered in circumstances that may include but is not limited to;

- Taking an extended holiday to visit relatives abroad;
- To get married abroad;
- To provide an opportunity to participate in voluntary activities.

In addition, unpaid leave will be considered in unplanned circumstances that may include but is not limited to;

- To provide additional time to respond to and / or manage incidents requiring an extended period of absence.

2 Principles

The following key principles will apply but may be varied in exceptional circumstances to respond, in particular, to unplanned unpaid leave requests.

- The granting of unpaid leave is at the discretion of the relevant Service Manager, as determined by operational needs. Managers should liaise with Human Resources in order to achieve consistency.
- Each request for unpaid leave will be considered upon its own merits.
- Up to a maximum of 4 weeks unpaid leave may be granted for full time employees and is pro-rata for part time employees.
- Employees will normally contribute a proportion of their annual leave entitlement towards the total period requested.
- Unpaid leave should be taken in blocks of one week, or combined weeks, unless otherwise agreed by the Service Manager.
- Only one application for unpaid leave will normally be granted in a 12 month rolling period.
- Continuity of employment will be preserved for statutory and/or contractual purposes and benefits, including annual leave, which will continue to accrue at the normal rate during the maximum 4 week unpaid, leave period (pro-rata for part time staff).

During the 4 week unpaid leave period full pension membership continues and the employee will pay the pension contributions due at the normal level, (where applicable).

3 Process

Applications for unpaid leave must be submitted by the greater of ***either***;

- two months in advance ***or***
- equal to the individual's contractual notice period

This requirement may be varied by the Service Manager and / or when responding to unplanned unpaid leave requests.

Employees should complete an unpaid leave application form and submit this to the relevant Service Manager for approval and authorisation. Where possible, all applications should be approved, or otherwise, within 10 working days of receipt.

4 Exceptions

Unpaid leave cannot be utilised to:

- cover a period of sickness absence or a recovery period following surgery, (this must be recorded as sickness absence);
- work in other paid employment
- cover single day absences

Unpaid Leave Application Form

<i>To be completed by Employee</i>	
Name:	Job Title:
Service:	Section:
Reason for Unpaid Leave:	
On what date would you like the unpaid leave to commence?	Total number of days/weeks required:
How would you like to take your unpaid leave, (if not in one continuous block)?	

I wish to apply for a period of unpaid leave as indicated above and understand that I will be required to use a proportion of my annual leave entitlement towards the total leave period. I understand that this is a discretionary policy and approval is subject to operational requirements.

Signed..... Date.....

To be completed as appropriate and returned to HR.

Application for unpaid leave approved

I am not approving the above application because;

.....

Name..... (Service Manager)

Signed..... Date.....