

APPENDIX 1 - Special Leave Policy

1. Introduction

This policy applies to all employees of the Council.

Special Leave is a short period of time off work to allow employees to deal with bereavement or personal/ family emergencies such as the immediate care for children or elderly relatives.

With the exception of time off for bereavement, Special Leave will be unpaid.

All Special Leave request will be treated reasonably and will depend on the needs of the service.

This policy applies to all employees of Redditch Borough Council.

The following policies should be read in conjunction with the Special Leave Policy:

- Annual Leave Policy
- Flexi-time Policy
- Parental Leave

2. Policy

Managers may authorise up to five days paid time off for bereavements. This includes time to deal with the immediate impact of the death and to attend the funeral.

All other absences under this policy, including those for emergencies such as breakdown in child/elderly care, illness of a dependent or a domestic problem such as fire or flood, will be unpaid.

Managers will take into account the possibility of using annual or flexi leave when considering applications for unpaid Special Leave.

3. Procedure

3.1 Employees

All time off under this policy must be approved by Line Management.

Each request will be considered on its merits, taking individual circumstances into account. Managers may turn down requests for operational reasons or because the request does not comply with this policy.

When requesting paid or unpaid leave you must:

- Discuss with your Line Manager as soon as practicable the reason for your request and expected date of return to work.
- Submit a Special Leave application form to your Line Manager.
- Stay in touch with your Line Manager while you are away from work and let them know of any changes in your circumstances.

Approach your Line Manager as soon as possible if you think you may need more time off. Your Manager will decide whether this is possible from a service delivery perspective. A further discussion will be required with your Line Manager whereby options can be discussed including the use of flexi and annual leave

3.2 Managers

You should consider the request for Special Leave in accordance with this policy. Approval of applications will depend on service delivery considerations, taking into account:

- what is the reason for request
- whether it is possible to provide cover for the absence without causing serious disruption to the service or incurring significant costs and
- other absences for the period requested, e.g. maternity/paternity/adoption leave, training commitments, annual leave.

You must also:

- notify the employee of your decision as quickly as possible
- agree arrangements for keeping in touch
- notify Payroll if adjustments to pay are appropriate

4. Types of Special Leave

4.1 Bereavement

The number of days granted as Special Leave will depend on the nature of the employee's relationship to the deceased, any responsibility they may have for funeral arrangements and the distance the employee has to travel to attend the funeral.

Managers will allow up to five days paid Special Leave following the death of a partner/civil partner/spouse, child/stepchild, brother/sister, parent or grandparent. This will include time to attend the funeral and can therefore be taken in separate spells, if necessary.

Where an employee wishes/needs to take more time off, they will be expected to use annual or flexi leave and this will be subject to agreement by Line Management in the normal way.

4.2 Other Time Off

With the exception of time off for bereavements, all Special Leave will be unpaid.

Unpaid Special Leave allows employees to deal with immediate problems such as illness of a dependent, breakdown in child/elderly care (including unexpected school closures) or domestic emergencies such as fire, flood, heating breakdowns etc.

Where an employee needs to take more time off, they will be expected to use annual or flexi leave and this will be subject to agreement by Line Management in the normal way.

5. Adjustments to salary per day

Reduction in salary resulting from unpaid leave will be calculated at 1/365 of the annual gross salary (1/366 in leap years)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS POLICY, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER.