**Procedure**

We appreciate that at times employees will go through difficult situations in their personal life where they may need support from us. The purpose of this policy is to set out an employee’s entitlement to compassionate leave.

**About**

Compassionate leave is designed to help you deal with traumatic personal circumstances such as the death of a close relative or where a close relative has a life-threatening illness or injury.

**Death /critical illness of a close relative**

Paid time off is available when a close relative has died, is critically ill with a life-threatening illness, or has suffered a life-threatening injury. Employees are entitled to this from the first day of their employment, the amount of leave is at the discretion of your manager.

Where an employee experiences the loss of a child under the age of 18, they will be entitled to take two weeks’ parental bereavement leave. The first two days will be paid at full pay, with the remainder paid at the rate of statutory parental bereavement pay subject to the employee meeting eligibility requirements. Please read our separate policy on Parental Bereavement Leave for more information on this entitlement.

**Other compassionate leave**

In a situation regarding the death of someone other than a close family member, your line managers’ discretion will be used when granting any compassionate leave.

An employee will not automatically have the right to take extended compassionate leave by taking unpaid leave.

**Requesting compassionate leave**

We recognise that it may not always be possible to request compassionate leave in advance. However, where it is possible, you should make a request to your line manager. You should tell them the reasons for your request and the number of days leave you would like to take.

Where it is not possible to request leave in advance, you should contact your line manager as soon as possible to tell them the reason for your absence and the number of days you expect to be absent. Someone can do this on your behalf if necessary.

In exceptional circumstances, we may have to refuse a request for compassionate leave. We will give you a written explanation setting out our reasons. If you are dissatisfied with the decision, you may appeal to your line manager in writing within 5 days of receiving our written reasons or make a complaint under our Grievance Procedure.

**Unpaid leave**

Employees have a right to take time off for dependents in order to deal with an unforeseen emergency involving a dependent, including when a dependent dies. This policy does not affect that regulation.

**Further Guidance**

**www.gov.uk/time-off-for-dependants**