

Time away from work guidance

A guide to time away from work

This guide has been produced to aid the consistency of approach when employees request time away from work during working hours.

In considering requests for time off for medical appointments managers need to see an appointment letter and be assured that the employee has made every attempt to book an appointment outside of working hours.

The guide is not exhaustive and has been developed to provide broad examples of time away from work. Further advice should be sought from your HR Business Partner and Advisor if there are any uncertainties.

** Special leave is not an automatic entitlement; it exists for genuinely difficult circumstances and is subject to approval. Please refer to the relevant Guidance for more detail.*

	Authorised absence	Special leave	Flexi	Annual leave	Sickness	
General Medical appointments						
Attendance at doctor/dentist/optician etc for routine appointment			✓	✓		There will be no time credited for employees for routine medical appointments. These must

e.g. dental check up						be made and taken in the employee's own time.
Attendance at physiotherapy or counselling appointments arranged privately			✓	✓		There will be no time credited for privately organised physiotherapy or counselling appointments. Employees will need to use their own leave such as flexi-time or annual leave and discuss with their Line Manager in the first instance.
Attendance at a hospital appointment where an appointment time is specified by the hospital	✓					
Attendance at an appointment to undergo significant or emergency medical procedures where preparation or recovery time is required	✓		✓	✓	✓	In the case of a significant medical procedure, authorised absence would be granted for any appointments prior, and for the day of the procedure. If recovery time was needed, this would then be another form of leave e.g. sickness absence. Employees should speak to their Line

						Manager in the first instance.
Attendance at an appointment to undergo elective surgery in cases where this is not recommended by a medical practitioner as treatment for a recognised condition			✓	✓		
Occupational Health						
Attendance at physiotherapy or counselling appointments referred through the organisation	✓					
Occupational Health referral appointment	✓					
Regular or recurring appointments						
Attendance at hospital for regular appointments in association with the monitoring of ongoing long term medical conditions e.g.	✓					It is recommended to process an Occupational Health referral for the employee in these circumstances to support

6 monthly consultant appointments following a recovery						the requirement for authorised absence, especially if appointments will be ongoing.
Absence in relation to Pregnancy and IVF						
Attendance at appointments in relation to pregnancy/ante natal care, including scans	✓					Please refer to the Family Leave Policy.
Accompany partner to routine appointments in relation to pregnancy/ante natal care, including scans			✓	✓		
Attendance at hospital in relation to IVF treatment or scans	✓					
Absence from work due to sickness relating to IVF					✓	Please refer to the Family Leave Policy.
Absence in relation to adoption						

Attendance at preparatory groups. This includes pre-adoption training	✓					Please refer to the Family Leave Policy.
Employees intending to adopt a child have the right to paid time off to attend up to five appointments for any purpose connected with the adoption.	✓		✓	✓		Joint adopters (i.e. adopting with a partner) where both are qualifying employees of the Council, will need to choose which member of the couple will take paid time off to attend up to five appointments, while their partner may take unpaid time off to attend up to two appointments. If appointments exceed the allowance, other forms of leave may need to be used, such as flexi-time or annual leave.
Absence in relation to Gender Transitioning						
Specialist appointments relating to transitioning	✓					

Recovery time from medical procedures			✓	✓	✓	Employees should speak to their Line Manager for support and advise on types of leave they are able to use.
Absence following a bereavement						
The day of the death of a close relative		✓				Please see within this Policy and Appendix H of the Local Conditions for the definition of a close relative.
To attend the funeral of a close relative		✓				
To attend the funeral that falls outside the definition of a close relative			✓	✓		In exceptional circumstances, special leave may be granted. Employees should speak to their Line Manager in the first instance.
Other absences						

To care for a close relative following hospitalisation, where they are unable to care for themselves		✓				Production of evidence to support the request may be required.
If, as a result of illness or another emergency the presence of the employee is required to give assistance to a close relative		✓				Employees may be entitled to one day special leave to cover the day of the emergency, if further time off is required, other forms of leave may need to be used. Employees should speak to their Line Manager in the first instance.
To accompany a close relative to a medical appointment		✓				Production of evidence to support the request may be required.
To collect a sick child from school or nursery		✓				Employees may be entitled to one day special leave to cover the day of the illness of the child. If further time off to care for the child is required, other forms of leave may need to be used. Employees should speak to

						their Line Manager in the first instance.
To care for your child for the first day due to an unexpected school closure		✓				This does not apply where the school closure is known in advance, e.g. a teachers strike, when employees will need to take another form of leave.
To attend an interview with another public service authority		✓				After one years' service.
To attend own graduation ceremony when the Council has contributed to course fees and the qualification gained is a requirement of the post		✓				

