

# Carer's Leave

## Policy and Procedure

### Policy statement

At Lancashire County Council, we recognise the challenges that carers face while trying to balance the demands of caring, work, and looking after their own health. This policy sets out the statutory right of employees to carer's leave to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long-term care need, and other support that we offer to combine work with care.

This policy should be looked at in conjunction with the [working carers policy](#).

### Scope

This policy applies to all council employees on LCC terms and conditions, excluding teaching and non-teaching employees employed by schools and employees who transferred to the council in accordance with TUPE regulations and who remain on their previous terms and conditions of employment.

This procedure does not apply in relation to parental leave or special leave which should be addressed under the appropriate policy and procedure.

### Principles

We recognise that caring can be unpredictable and emotionally upsetting. An employee may acquire caring responsibilities instantly or caring responsibilities may develop over time.

We realise that caring is a subject that not everyone finds it easy to talk about. However, we urge you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support. In particular, you are encouraged to speak to your line manager about your caring responsibilities to explore how we can help you with any challenges that you are facing.

If you have any questions regarding the process or require any support or advice, please contact your line manager, or contact [AskHR](#) for procedural guidance.

### Entitlement to carer's leave

Whatever your length of service, you have a statutory right to take carer's leave from day one of employment to provide or arrange care for a dependant if they have a long-term care need.

In the context of statutory carer's leave, a dependant means:

- your spouse, civil partner, child or parent;
- any person who lives in the same household as you (other than as a lodger, tenant, boarder or employee); or
- any other person who would reasonably rely on you to provide or arrange care.

A dependant has a long-term care need if they:

- have an illness or injury (whether physical or mental) that requires, or is likely to require, care for more than three months;
- have a condition that amounts to a disability under the Equality Act 2010; or
- require care for a reason connected to their old age.

This statutory right to carer's leave applies to a wide range of caring situations, but excludes general childcare, except where your child meets the definition of a dependant with a long-term care need.

### Amount of carer's leave you can take

The amount of carer's leave that you can take is up to one week in any 12-month rolling period.

A week of carer's leave is the same duration as your normal working week, meaning that a full-time employee is entitled to five days' carer's leave in any 12-month rolling period. For example, if you are contracted to work four days per week, you will be entitled to four days of carer's leave in any 12-month rolling period.

You can take the leave in one continuous block, as individual days, or as half days.

If you are caring for more than one dependant, you do not have a separate entitlement to carer's leave for each dependant.

## Notice to take carer's leave

If you need to take carer's leave, you should submit your notice on [Oracle Fusion](#).

We ask that you give as much notice as possible when requesting carer's leave so that we can plan for your absence. In any event, you must give notice in advance that is either twice the number of working days that you wish to take as carer's leave, or three days, whichever is earlier.

All carer's leave must be approved in advance by your line manager.

## Pay during carers leave

You do not have a statutory right to be paid during carer's leave. Therefore, any leave taken as carer's leave is unpaid.

Whilst it is unpaid, all other benefits will remain in place. For example, holiday entitlement continues to accrue. Any carers leave taken will not count for pension purposes unless you elect to pay Additional Pension Contributions (APCs) to purchase the amount of pension 'lost' during the period of leave. Further information can be found on the [Local Pensions Partnership Administration \(LPPA\) website](#).

## Postponing your carers leave

While every effort will be made to meet your request, we may postpone a period of carer's leave if we consider that your absence will disrupt the operation of our business.

If a decision is taken to postpone your leave, your line manager will consult with you to find an alternative leave period within one month of the carer's leave period original requested.

Your line manager will notify you within seven days of receiving your notice, clarifying the reason for the postponement and the revised dates on which the carer's leave can be taken.

## Cancelling your carers leave

You can cancel your carer's leave and take it at a different time as long as you let line manager know before your leave has started.

## Returning to work after carers leave

Following your carer's leave, you have the right to resume working in the same job as before on terms and conditions that are no less favourable than the terms that would have applied had you not been absent. Your continuity of employment is not affected.

## Other types of leave

The statutory right to carer's leave is intended to be for planned and foreseen caring commitments. If you need to take time off to manage an unexpected or sudden problems relating to a dependant and make any necessary longer-term caring arrangements, please see our [special leave guide](#).

We recognise that you may need a longer period of time off work that goes beyond your statutory entitlement to carer's leave under this policy. In such cases, we may agree for you to take the time off work as annual leave. You may also wish to consider a sabbatical in accordance with the [working flexibly policy](#), if you feel that you would benefit from an extended period of time away from work.

## Flexible working

We realise that flexible working can help navigate the challenges of caring while also working. We enable a wide range of flexible working practices within the workplace.

If you feel that you would benefit from any changes to your working arrangements to help balance your work and caring responsibilities, we encourage you to look at our [working flexibly policy](#).

## Additional Support

If at any point you need additional support, the Employee Assistance helpline is available 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. They can be contacted on 0800 0542 301 or online at [www.employeeassistance.org.uk](http://www.employeeassistance.org.uk) using the access code **lccsupport**.

You may also wish to access the council's [employee health and wellbeing resources](#) and/or contact your [trade union](#) if you are a member. You can also reach out to the various support networks within the council, which include the [Disabled Workers Forum](#), the [Forum of Asian and Black Employees \(FABE\)](#) and the [LGBT Employee Network](#).

There are various external organisations that provide help and support to carers, including:

- [Carers UK](#), which provides help and advice for carers on employment rights, benefits and tax credits, assessments, and other practical matters for carers;
- the [NHS website](#), which provides a wealth of information and advice for carers;
- [Grace Care Consulting](#), which provides advice and support on care, special needs and neurodiversity; all needs and neurodiversity.
- [Age UK](#) and [Independent Age](#), which offer information and support to anyone providing informal unpaid care to an older person through a range of local services;
- [Contact a Family](#), which provides support, advice and information to families with disabled children; and
- [Carers Trust](#), which works with other organisations to provide access for carers to breaks, information, advice, education, training, and employment opportunities.

## Documents & Useful Links

- [Working Flexibly policy & procedure](#)
- [Special leave guide](#)
- [Working carers policy](#)

## Policy Version Control

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Version	Date	Change
1	06/04/24	○ Policy created to reflect the Carer's Leave Regulations 2024

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