

Carer's Leave Policy and Procedure

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1. Policy

- 1.1 St Mary's University is committed to supporting all staff to achieve a good work life balance in order to continue excelling at work, whilst being able to balance their caring responsibilities. The aim of the University's Carer's Leave Policy and Procedure is to set out the statutory rights and entitlements of carer's in accordance with the Carer's Leave Act 2023.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of the contract of employment and the University may amend it at any time.

2. Scope of the Procedure

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all staff on a permanent or fixed term contract.
- 2.2 Carer's leave is a day one right, so no particular length of service is required to qualify.

3. Entitlement

- 3.1 Staff have a statutory right to take a week's unpaid leave in a 12 month period, to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long term care need.
- 3.2 A long term care need is defined as:
 - A physical or mental illness or injury that means care will be required for more than 3 months;
 - A disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010); or
 - Due to old age.
- 3.3 A dependant is defined as an employee's spouse, civil partner, child or parent, any person who lives in the same household as the employee (other than a lodger or similar) or any other person who would reasonably rely on the employee to provide or arrange care. This does not have to be a family member.
- 3.4 Staff are entitled to a maximum of 5 days unpaid leave in a 12 month period. This is pro-rated for staff who work on a part time basis i.e. if a staff member works 3 days a week, they are entitled to 3 days unpaid carer's leave in a 12 month period.
- 3.5 Leave can be taken in one block of a week or as days or half days throughout the year.
- 3.6 If a staff member needs to care for more than one person, they cannot take a week of carer's leave for each dependant, but they can use the week of leave for more than one dependant.

4. Procedure

- 4.1 Staff should provide their line manager with the required notice prior to taking any period of carer's leave:
 - If the request is for half or one day, 3 day's notice must be provided;
 - If the request is for more than one day, notice must be at least twice as long as the leave requested i.e. 4 day's notice provided for 2 days leave.
- 4.2 The request does not need to be in writing, however staff may make the request in writing if they wish to.
- 4.3 Any leave taken must be recorded by the staff member on Peoplenet. Following which the request will go to the line manager for approval.
- 4.4 Staff are not required to provide evidence of their dependant's care needs.
- 4.5 The University cannot refuse a request for carer's leave, however, the leave can be postponed if the employee's absence would unduly disrupt university business.

4.6 If the university postpones a leave request it will:

- Agree an alternative date with the employee that is within one month of the original date of the request;
- Confirm the reason for the delay and the new date in writing to the employee within 7 days of the original request and before the requested start date of the leave.

5. Other Sources of information

- [Parent and Carer's Staff Network](#)
- [Carer's Trust](#)
- [Carer's UK](#)
- [Citizens Advice](#)

6. Other Relevant University Policies

- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Compassionate Leave Policy](#)
- [Emergency Dependants Leave Policy](#)
- [Parental Leave Policy](#)

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