



TIME OFF FOR DEPENDANTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

JANUARY 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Company encourages and promotes a better work life balance for all its employees. We understand that balancing work commitments and the commitments that we may have to those that depend upon us outside of work can be challenging, practically and emotionally, and we will do our best to offer you the support that you need.
- 1.2 Whilst some employees may need a short breathing space to deal with an unexpected event involving a dependant, the Company recognises that other employees may develop caring responsibilities at any time, which is equally challenging. The Company recognises that carers play an invaluable role in society and one that is often overlooked and we are committed to supporting our carers to ensure that they can achieve a reasonable balance between their professional and personal commitments.
- 1.3 Our independent Employee Assistance helpline (EAP) may be able to help. It is a confidential service, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They provide health and wellbeing support for employees, including concerns about issues that arise outside of the workplace. Their telephone number is **0800 678 1466** or **01480 323323 (option 4)**. You can find out more about this service on [Lighthouse](#).

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 This policy is designed to:
- provide employees with a short breathing space to deal with an unexpected event involving a dependant;
 - provide employees who are carers to be able to have time off to provide or arrange care for their dependant; and
 - ensure that the Company:
 - complies with relevant employment legislation;
 - follows best practice; and
 - signposts employees to sources of support.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This is a group level policy that applies to all employees of Anglian Water Group Limited, with the exception of Anglian Water (Ireland) Limited and Wave Limited (and their respective subsidiaries, which include Celtic Anglian Water and Anglian Water Business (National)).

4. STATUS

- 4.1 This policy is subject to regular review by the Company and is updated as appropriate.

5. POLICY OWNER

- 5.1 Head of Employee Relations.

6. POLICY

6.1 Eligibility – unexpected event/emergency

6.1.1 All employees, regardless of length of service, have the right to take a reasonable amount of **unpaid** time off work to deal with an unexpected event/emergency involving their dependants. Dependants in respect of whom you can take time off are:

- your spouse or civil partner;
- your child;
- your parent;
- a person who lives in your household (excluding tenants, lodgers and other employees);
- a person who reasonably relies on you for assistance in the event of an accident or for care in the event of an illness or injury, for example an elderly neighbour; and
- in relation to the unexpected disruption or termination of care for a dependant, i.e. a person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of care.

6.2 Eligibility – carers' leave

6.2.1 The Company defines carers as employees with significant dependant caring responsibilities for a dependant with long-term care needs or a terminal illness.

6.2.2 All carers, regardless of length of service, have the right to request **unpaid** carers' leave to provide care or to arrange care for such dependants.

6.3 Time off for dependants

6.3.1 Time off for dependants is **unpaid** discretionary leave. Alternatively, there may be an opportunity for you to make up the time off taken on another occasion, in addition to normal working time. You should agree the best option for you with your Line Manager when requesting the time off.

6.3.2 The law says that you may request this type of unpaid leave when you need time away from work to:

- a) provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted;
- b) make arrangements to provide care to a dependant who is ill or injured;
- c) deal with the death of a dependant;
- d) deal with the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant; or
- e) deal with an incident involving your child during school hours.

6.3.3 The table below provides examples of what does and doesn't attract time off for dependants:

Examples of when Time off for Dependants is available.	Examples of when Time off for Dependants is NOT available.
Taking a spouse to hospital after they have had an accident.	Attending planned surgery with a spouse.

Emergency assistance to an elderly neighbour who has broken their leg.	Doing the weekly shopping for an elderly neighbour.
Dealing with probate following the death of a parent.	Grieving for a parent.
Taking a child to a relative's house when the child's childminder is sick.	The long-term care of a child where the child's childminder stops being a childminder.
Looking after a child because of school closure following flooding.	Looking after a child during half term.

6.3.4 A reasonable request for unpaid leave to deal with a genuine emergency involving a dependant will not be refused. However, the amount of time that is reasonable to take off at any particular time is difficult to determine. The amount of time approved will be very specific to the circumstances the individual faces and may be more problematic if/when absence impacts on service or others.

6.3.5 The Company has a [Bereavement Policy](#) that may also apply, which provides for up to two weeks' paid leave.

6.4 Carers' leave

6.4.1 The law says that as a carer you:

- are entitled to request up to one week's **unpaid** discretionary leave per year, which can be requested in consecutive, or non-consecutive, half-days or full days;
- must give notice, in writing, of your intention to take carer's leave – confirming your entitlement to take it and must give at least twice the amount of notice than the period of leave requested.

6.4.2 Practically, this means that the one week's unpaid leave will be based on what a typical working week is for an individual employee and will be pro-rated accordingly, e.g. an employee that works 3 days per week may receive a total of 3 days' unpaid leave in total, where as an employee that works 5 days per week may receive a total of 5 days' unpaid leave. The leave may be taken flexibly, i.e. as a one week block or as individual days or half days and should be requested in advance in the same way that annual leave is requested.

6.4.3 A reasonable request for unpaid carers' leave will not be refused.

- 6.4.4 We recognise that additional time off (in excess of the one week's unpaid leave provided) may be required in some circumstances. If you need more time, talk to your Line Manager about other options, e.g.
- making up time off by working extra time on another occasion;
 - using paid annual leave/buying more annual leave in accordance with the [Annual Leave Policy](#);
 - a temporary/permanent change to work patterns or contractual hours by way of [a flexible working request](#).

7. PROCEDURE

- 7.1 If you are eligible and need to take unpaid time off for dependants leave, you must contact your Line Manager and let them know as soon as reasonably practicable:
- that you are not coming to work;
 - why you need the time off; and
 - how long you think you may need off work.
- 7.2 If you are eligible and need to take unpaid carers' leave, you must contact your Line Manager to confirm your eligibility, to discuss your needs and to agree the period of leave. You must maintain reasonable contact with your Line Manager during any period of absence.
- 7.2 Once discussed with your Line Manager, you must book your agreed time off for dependants or carers' leave on Workday – go to the Absence section of Workday > Other Absence (short term > discretionary unpaid). Your request will go to your Line Manager for approval.
- 7.4 In the highly unlikely event that this policy is abused, we reserve the right to deal with matters by the appropriate management protocols.

8. RECORDS

- 8.1 All information will be held on the employee's record in accordance with the Company's Data Retention [Policy](#).

9. FURTHER ASSISTANCE & SUPPORT

- 9.1 Other types of leave and support may be available also – please see [Lighthouse](#) for a summary of our family friendly policies.
- 9.2 Details of other sources of information and support are set out at [Appendix 1](#).
- 9.3 If you have other questions about this policy contact your [Employee Relations Manager/Advisor](#).
- 9.4 If you have questions about the Workday process contact PeopleSupport@anglianwater.co.uk.

LAST REVIEWED

January 2024

APPENDIX 1 - SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Internal

Employee Assistance helpline (EAP) Their telephone number is **0800 678 1466** or **01480 323323 (option 4)**. You can find out more about this service on [Lighthouse](#).

Carers – information and signposting to support is available on the Inclusion pages on [Lighthouse](#).

Caring for an Elderly Relative - information and signposting to support is available on the Well Being pages on [Lighthouse](#).

External

Please note that these organisations are outside the control of the Company and we cannot take any responsibility for the information or advice they provide.

Carers First - a registered charity working with unpaid carers to provide practical information and advice - <https://www.carersfirst.org.uk/home>

Call on 0300 303 1555 or email hello@carersfirst.org.uk

Carers UK – provides free, impartial advice about caring on 0808 808 7777 or advice@carersuk.org or Carers Direct on 0808 802 0202.

Child Law Advice - <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/special-guardianship/>
Child Law Advice is a charity operated by Coram Children’s Legal Centre. It provides advice on child and family matters. General information is provided online and it also has a telephone advice line.

Local Authority/Council

Your Local Authority/Council may be able to provide advice and assistance.

The Fostering Network - <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/policy-practice/policies/fostering-legislation-in-england>

The Fostering Network provides advice and information to prospective and approved foster carers. It has general information online and provides a telephone advice line.

Citizens Advice Bureau – www.citizensadvice.org.uk

The Citizens Advice Bureau provides advice and support for individuals on a wide range of issues, including work. They run a telephone helpline and face-to-face appointments may be available at your local office.