

Leave Policy Toolkit

Contents

Annual Leave.....	2
Purchasing Additional Annual Leave	2
How are the deductions calculated?	2
Can additional annual leave be carried over into the following annual leave year?	3
When can I purchase additional annual leave?	3
What impact does purchasing additional leave have on other payments and contributions?	3
Flexi Leave	3
4-Day Week.....	4
Medical Appointments	9
Adverse Weather	9
Time Off for Jury Service or Attending Court	10
Sabbatical.....	10
Training Leave.....	12
Time Off For Parents and Carers.....	12
Parental Leave	12
Dependants Leave	13
Special Dependant Leave	14
Parental Bereavement Leave.....	15

Annual Leave

If you become sick during a period of annual or unpaid leave you should inform your line manager in a timely fashion (by telephone if possible). You are entitled to receive sick pay for the period covered. You can claim back annual leave up to the statutory amount or recover your unpaid leave. To do this you will need to provide a GP fit note covering the period of sickness. Further, you must submit a written request to your manager no later than five days after returning to work. This should set out how much of your holiday was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that you wish to take at another time. Any holiday leave that is amended to sick leave will be managed under our Sickness Absence policy.

If you haven't had the opportunity to take your annual leave due to sickness you may carry over your outstanding hours up to the statutory amount. This should be authorised by your Head of Service.

Purchasing Additional Annual Leave

You can purchase up to four weeks of your contractual hours per leave year. Additional leave is calculated in hours.

The Council reserves the right to refuse requests for reasons which may include but are not limited to:

- increased pressure on service delivery
- health and safety
- providing cover at a higher cost.

How are the deductions calculated?

The costs to salary are deducted in equal amounts across the remaining months in the leave year. Deductions will be made from gross monthly pay, and your rate of pay will be calculated as of the date of the agreement.

The calculation for the cost of an hour's pay for a full-time colleague working a standard working pattern, i.e., 37 hours over 5 days, is;

One day's annual leave based on 1/260

E.g., £20,000 x 1/260 = £76.92

76.92 / 7.4 = £10.36

Can additional annual leave be carried over into the following annual leave year?

No. All purchased annual leave must be used within the same leave year in which it was purchased for.

When can I purchase additional annual leave?

Additional leave can be purchased at any point before or during the annual leave year it will be used. However, the amount must be deductible across the remaining months in the leave year.

What impact does purchasing additional leave have on other payments and contributions?

Pensions contributions will continue to be made based on the gross amount of pensionable pay you receive.

Purchasing additional leave may affect your payments for maternity, working tax credits and/or child tax credits. Employees may wish to seek independent financial advice before submitting a request.

Flexi Leave

If you are participating in the 4 Day week trial flexi time and leave doesn't apply.

If you have opted out of the 4 Day week trial, you should record working hours on the timesheet template. You should agree any out of hours working in advance with your line manager.

4-Day Week

Can I switch my non-working day? Perhaps on an ad-hoc basis if required?

Most desk-based colleagues will take either Monday or Friday as their day off. Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday were only to be agreed where there were operational reasons for taking them. We did this to try to minimise disruption in how we deliver our services. For our waste crews, most colleagues have a Monday off as this was the most effective way to reorganise the collection rounds and there is no option to change.

For desk-based colleagues, we do not generally expect people to be swapping their non-working days. Any change to a non-working day will ordinarily be for a business reason, with the non-working day changed to a different day in that same week. However, it could also be for exceptional personal reasons – for example, a one-off annual sports day, extended healthcare appointment or graduation ceremony.

If there is any reason why a non-working day cannot be switched to a day during that same week, speak with your line manager. Any change needs to be agreed with your line manager and must not impact negatively on business requirements. Where you do switch your non-working day, please remember to set your out of office email response appropriately and ensure the colleague you ask people to contact in your absence will be working on that day.

Can I take on a second job to earn more money on my non-working day?

As we outlined in one of our earlier Guiding Principles documents, whilst we are working in this way, colleagues may not take on any additional paid work during their regular working hours on their non-working day. For example, if outside of four-day week working you would usually work through the day on a Monday, we don't expect colleagues to do paid work elsewhere through the workday on Monday instead. This is in the main because we are more productive at work when we are well rested. The benefit of an extra day off is part of the reason why people can fit their work into a shorter time and work at a faster, more intensive pace. It remains the case that you may hold a second job during non-contractual hours, as was already the situation

before the four-day week trial, but you must tell the People team about this second job before you start it.

Can I claim overtime?

Not usually. We of course respect the need for colleagues to balance their home and work commitments – so we will normally avoid entering paid overtime working arrangements, and instead encourage time off in lieu.

However, there may be one-off, specific occasions when overtime does need to be paid, but this must be agreed in advance with your member of Leadership Team and should be on the absolute rarest of occasions.

For full time staff, overtime should only be claimed if you work over your contractual hours (37 hours) - not your four-day week hours. Part time colleagues are entitled to enhanced pay only at times and in circumstances in which full time employees would qualify. In other words, for part time employees, enhanced overtime rates will only be considered when their weekly hours worked have exceeded 37.

Where do I have to work from during the four-day week arrangements? What are the rules on coming into the office?

Overall, we should all expect that, on average, we will be in the office at least one day a week. Bear in mind that being in the office may mean, for some job roles, working from a location such as the Northstowe Cabin or one of our Hub Offices where this is an essential part of their role. But we expect most colleagues to spend their 'office' time at either South Cambs Hall, the Depot at Waterbeach, or in case of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning colleagues - the City Council offices.

Remember, for many colleagues, being able to interact in person is important for their wellbeing. There is strong research-based evidence that social relationships at work are beneficial, and that these are less likely to develop when people work in a hybrid way. The importance of this social interaction is also reflected in our regular staff wellbeing surveys.

We also continue to encourage colleagues to think about where they can work most effectively for any task. For example, there are many occasions when working in the office, and the speed of in-person collaboration that brings, saves a great deal of time through reduced emails, Teams messages or calls. If you find being in the office once a week to be difficult for any reason, then please discuss this with your line manager in the first instance.

Colleagues are also reminded that if they wish to work outside of the UK for any period of time, they should comply with our Working Overseas Protocol.

Now we work 32 hours during the week (for full time colleagues) – when should I be doing them?

During your four working days is the preferred / suggested option. Like we've always said, the benefits of having the extra day off work are clear. If you wish to make a significant change to your working pattern, such as moving to a five-day reduced hours schedule, or opting-out of four-day week working arrangements, please speak with your line manager. Remember, the four-day week is not compulsory, and colleagues can discuss concerns at any time. Again, just speak to your line manager if you want to talk about this, or the People team.

What is the situation with bank holidays?

The approach to bank holidays remains the same as it has been since we began this working pattern. In every week of the year, you will work the same number of hours. If there is a bank holiday in that week, that bank holiday automatically becomes your non-working day, and you would work your usual hours for that week on the other days. For full time staff this means you would work 32 hours, and for part time staff this means you would work 86.5% of your contractual hours. If you wanted to have both your usual non-working day and the bank holiday off, then you can agree with your manager to book one day of annual leave.

If you wanted to have your usual non-working day which is not the bank holiday, you can work on the bank holiday day (if there is work you are able to do and you are not reliant on any other colleagues or coming into the office) and take your usual non-working day.

How much leave do I get?

Your annual leave entitlement is based on the percentage of your contracted hours you are working under four-day week arrangements. Remember, full time colleagues are still formally contracted for 37 hours a week and are currently 'gifted' their non-working day every week.

As we currently work 32 hours a week (for full time colleagues) – this is 86.5% of our contracted hours. Therefore, you receive 86.5% of your contractual annual leave – in addition to an extra non-working day every week of course.

How flexible is the four-day week now? For example, if I need to go and do a school run or attend a GP appointment – can I still do those things within the course of the working day?

It is impossible to provide guidance for every single situation and this is all about common-sense. We continue to trust and expect colleagues and managers to be flexible and balance business need with home and personal commitments. Everyone who is full time (pro-rata for part time) needs to work 32 hours per week over the course of the week. If there is an appointment that cannot be scheduled on a non-working day, you should discuss this with your line manager. The expectation continues to be that both colleagues and managers are flexible and supportive. For example, if there is a dentist appointment you need to attend at 10am on a working day – can you plan to start later and then finish later than usual?

What happens if I need to work during an evening or at a weekend? Can I claim time back?

We all have those longer days from time to time – but they should be the exception rather than the rule. Again, this is all about flexibility and common sense. If you know you need to work into an evening, working with your line manager, can you plan to start later that day? Alternatively, can you take the time back soon afterwards? We know we don't want to get back into clocking hours as it is unproductive – so work with your manager to reach an agreement that everyone is happy with. If you have concerns about this, or find it hard to achieve, please speak to a member of the People team.

Are there different approaches being taken by different teams?

The general rules and guidance are the same for everyone, but it is for teams to decide what works best for them. As a result, there may be some slight variations between teams or service areas depending on what can be accommodated, and how big team sizes are. But to emphasise - these general rules and this guidance applies to everyone.

When should I be doing my learning and development (for example, online courses) now? I.e. which day should I be doing them on?

Learning and development required for business purposes, such as mandatory online training, should be scheduled during normal working time – and by that we mean within the days that you work.

If you are undertaking professional development courses, you can complete this additional professional development on your non-working day if you choose to. If you are undertaking an apprenticeship, you are entitled to six hours of work time per week to complete your studies.

When I am sick on my non-working day how should this be recorded?

When you return to work after being sick, you should have a return-to-work meeting with your line manager who will record the whole period of your sickness on iTrent, including your non-working day if you were sick on that day. This is because your contract is still for 37 hours even though you are only currently required to work 32. Recording the correct period that you were sick is important, as it ensures that you get the right level of support and help you need to stay well in the longer term. If you are sick only on your non-working day, you do not need to phone in and report this on the day, but you should let your line manager know when you are next working so it can be recorded on iTrent.

Medical Appointments

Staff should make every effort to attend hospital, doctors, or dentist appointments outside of working hours. However, where required, time may be taken back on a different day within the current work week. Alternatively, TOIL (time off in lieu) or annual leave should be deducted in agreement with your line manager.

Pregnant employees are entitled to reasonable time off with pay for antenatal appointments. These are made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner.

Employees who are adopting are also entitled to reasonable time off for appointments.

Adverse Weather

The Council has a duty to maintain service provision during periods of adverse weather. You should make a reasonable effort to get to work without compromising your safety. If this is not possible you should contact your line manager at the beginning of the working day. You should discuss whether you are able to work from an alternative location or from home (subject to IT access) or how your absence will be recorded. This could be unpaid leave, annual leave, flexi-leave or an agreement to work extra hours at an alternative time.

Time Off for Jury Service or Attending Court

The Jury Service will usually provide you with a Statement of Earnings Form, to show your normal net earnings. After you have finished, the court pays you a cheque to cover personal expenditure and an amount per day for loss of time at work. You will then pay the Council the amount relating to the time lost.

The Council will not, in the first instance, deduct monies. This would be an inconvenience to you who would then have to wait for reimbursement from the Court Service. However, if we don't receive payment from you within a month of your jury service ending then the relevant deduction will be made from your pay. You will have already been compensated by the Court Service by that point.

Sabbatical

The granting of a sabbatical is at the discretion of your Head of Service who will consider the following:

- The duration requested
- Availability of cover
- Anticipated service demands
- Cost of cover / reallocation
- Impact on service, team, performance
- Anticipated structural changes
- Potential benefits for the service

Eligibility criteria

We require you to keep in touch at regular intervals during your break and the Council will retain the right to contact you and consult as if you are at work. You will continue to be subject to all Council policies and procedures during your sabbatical.

Procedure

You should complete a sabbatical request form, giving 3 months' notice before the requested start date. Your line manager should confirm their decision in writing within 28 days of receipt of your request. They should send a Variation to Contract form to the People team with details of the agreement so they can confirm this in writing.

Continuity of service

During a sabbatical you will accrue continuous service for statutory employment reasons such as:

- Entitlement to redundancy
- Unfair dismissal rights
- Maternity/adoption/paternity leave arrangements (but not necessarily pay)
- Annual leave entitlement
- Accruing sickness pay rights

However, we will not count service relating to any service-related benefits. This includes occupational sickness, maternity/adoption, and occupational redundancy payments. For these purposes, service prior will be aggregated with service after the sabbatical.

Leave During a Sabbatical

You will be entitled to maternity, adoption and paternity leave during a sabbatical, and you can apply as if you are at work. However, if you start any of these types of leave you will automatically end your sabbatical. You must meet the qualifying conditions to be entitled to statutory payments under the relevant policies.

You will be eligible for Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) or Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP) if you meet the qualifying criteria. Your entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) may be affected. SMP is calculated on the basis of your salary 15 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).

Pensions Payments during a Sabbatical

When you apply for a sabbatical, you will have the option to pay the pension contributions of day 1-30 of your break before you leave. Payroll will deduct an extra month of pensions contributions when your sabbatical begins. If you check your payslip, you will see the normal monthly amount that's deducted, so you can anticipate how much will be deducted from your pay.

Pensions deductions cannot be made during a sabbatical as you will be receiving zero pay. Upon your return, you will be contacted by Payroll who will calculate the total cost of buying your lost pension. There is the opportunity to buy back lost pension in 6-12 instalments, which is agreed after you return.

Training Leave

Your line manager can authorise paid time away from work to attend training courses relevant to your role. However, you should discuss this with them to determine the need and relevance for your role or development.

If you are not participating in the 4-day week trial, you should record all day training, on your flexi time sheet as a normal day's work at 7.24 hours. Any accrued extra time is at the discretion of your line manager. If you have a signed training agreement this should state the amount of time that has been authorised for you attend the course.

For further information, please refer to the [Learning and Development Policy](#).

Time Off For Parents and Carers

Parental Leave

You may take parental leave straight after the birth or adoption of a child or following maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

You will need to repay any occupational maternity or adoption pay if you do not return to work. Parental leave does not count towards the required 3-month return period.

You will remain employed with the Council. You will keep your contractual notice period, redundancy rights and continuous service.

You will need to decide whether to pay your pension contributions during unpaid leave. You should state this on your application form. Non-payment may affect your final pension.

The Council may postpone a parental leave request if there is a good business reason to do so. This can be up to 6 months, providing it does not end after your child's 18th birthday. We will make every effort to avoid this. You should talk to your line manager with a view to reaching an agreement that meets your needs and service delivery. These might include:

- A different pattern of leave, e.g. part time rather than full time
- A shorter or longer period of leave
- Alternative dates

Your line manager should ensure arrangements are made to cover your absence so as not to affect service delivery.

You may carry over parental leave entitlement from one employer to another.

Dependants Leave

The term "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);
- any other person who would reasonably rely on you for assistance. For example, if they fall ill or are injured or assaulted, or who would rely on you to make arrangements for their care in the event of illness or injury; or
- in relation to the disruption or termination of care for a dependant. They are any other person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of care.

Examples where you are entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off during working hours as dependant leave includes:

- to provide help on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, or is injured or assaulted.
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- in consequence of the death of a dependant.
- because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant
- to deal with an incident involving a child which occurs unexpectedly during school hours.

Special Dependant Leave

The same definition of a dependant applies for special dependant leave.

These events may be foreseen but they are of a more serious nature making your presence necessary, such as:

- time off to settle an elderly relative into a care home.
- to attend a hospital appointment with a dependant
- go to the hospital for a planned operation with a dependant/partner.

Employee Responsibilities

You should talk to your line manager as soon as the need for time off arises giving the reason and how long you expect to be away from work. If you have to respond to an emergency whilst at work your line manager should authorise the time off. You must contact them on returning to work to give the reason for your absence.

Line Manager Responsibilities

Your line manager should record Dependant or Special Dependant leave on ITrent. The reason is 'time off for dependants or special dependant leave - unpaid'.

Line managers must notify the People team by completing the unpaid leave form on iTrent, specifying the reason for the request.

Break in Service to Care for a Dependant

You may have a break in service for the reason of caring for children or other dependants. Your previous service will be taken into account for sickness and parental leave purposes. To qualify your break in service should not exceed eight years. Further, no permanent paid full-time employment should have intervened. For annual leave calculations the eight years' time limit does not apply.

To qualify, you must declare in writing that you left local government service to care for your children or other dependants. You must also confirm that you undertook no permanent employment during this period.

Parental Bereavement Leave

To request parental bereavement leave please contact your line manager or the People team, to inform us (this can be by telephone):

- the date of your child's death.
- the date on which you are beginning your parental bereavement leave; and
- if you intend to take one or two weeks' parental bereavement leave.

If this is within the first 56 days, you do not need to give us any notice. If this is after the first 56 days, you must give your manager or the People team at least one week's notice.

You can cancel your planned leave and take it at a different time (within 56 weeks of your bereavement).

During the first 56 days after your bereavement, please let your line manager and the People team know before your normal start time on the first day.

After 56 days, please let your line manager and the People team know at least one week in advance that you wish to cancel it.

You cannot cancel any week of parental bereavement leave that has already begun.

Returning to work after parental bereavement leave

When you return to work after some time on parental bereavement leave, you generally have the right to return to the same job.

However, a different rule applies if you return from time on bereavement leave immediately after family leave. This applies when bereavement leave is taken in relation to the child who has passed away, and your total time on leave is more than 26 weeks.

In these circumstances, you have the right to return to the same job, unless this is not reasonably practical. In this case you have the right to return to a suitable and appropriate job on the same terms and conditions.

This rule also applies if your leave includes more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave (in relation to any child), regardless of the length.

If you are taking parental bereavement leave, but are unsure where you stand on your return, please contact the People team.

Additional Support

We understand how difficult this time can be and we aim to support you as much as possible. The contact number for the Employee Assistance Programme is 03303 800 658. They are available 24/7, 365 days of the year and you can book counselling sessions by calling them. There are further details about different support measures on the mental wellbeing section of Insite. Please speak to the People team if you would like more information.

If there is further support that you need, please speak to your line manager or the People team as soon as possible. For example, this may include working flexibly, or adjusting your working hours for a specific time period.