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| New Logo 2 | Barnardo’s  |
| Corporate Policy  |
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Time off for dependants - unpaid

Date: 07 July 2023

Review Date: 31 October 2024

Policy Owner: People Strategy & Projects Team

Distribution: Internal – not confidential

#### **Purpose**

This non-contractual policy and procedure aims to:

* explain the right employees have to take unpaid time off for emergency situations involving a dependant;
* ensure that Barnardo’s complies with the requirements of current legislation.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all employees.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

**The Individual is** responsible for ensuring they follow the procedure set out below and informing their line manager of the reason for the absence and the estimated length of the absence as soon as possible.

**Line Managers** are responsible for discussing and agreeing time off with their employee and arranging for any time off for dependants to be recorded on Oracle via Direct Input.

**People Teams** are responsible for advising and guiding employees and line managers on this policy.

**People Strategy & Projects Team** is responsible for ensuring this policy complies with current legal obligations, updating it and other associated documents or processes, accordingly.

#### Definitions

Dependant

* the employee's spouse, civil partner or partner (including same sex couples), child or parent of the employee;
* anyone living within an employee’s household as a member of the family. It does not include tenants or boarders living in the family home, or someone who lives in the household as an employee, such as a live in housekeeper;
* in cases of illness or injury, or where care arrangements break down, a dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance.  This may be where the employee is the primary carer, or is the only person who can help in an emergency.  For example, an aunt who lives nearby, who the employee looks after outside work, falls ill unexpectedly; or an elderly neighbour living alone who has a fall.

#### Policy and procedure

# **When time off is available**

**Unpaid** time off can be requested in the following emergency situations:

* If a dependant falls ill, has been injured, assaulted or gives birth.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured.1
* To deal with the death of a dependant, this could involve making funeral arrangements and attending the funeral.1
* To deal with the unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant, such as a child minder or carer failing to turn up or the closure of an educational establishment.
* To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employee’s child during school hours, such as being suspended or in distress.

# **Length of leave**

For most cases, one or two days should be sufficient to deal with the issue. If a longer period of time is required because alternative longer-term arrangements cannot be made, the employee should discuss this with their line manager as soon as possible and discuss other potential options available.

# **Frequency of leave**

This type of leave is intended to cover genuine emergencies.  Therefore, it is not possible to prescribe a frequency and should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

# **Other types of leave which may be available**

If an employee knows in advance that they are going to need time off to care for a dependant or to make longer term arrangements, there are other types of leave, many of which are paid, which may be available in these circumstances2.

1. Notification of absence

An employee must contact their manager as soon as possible, giving the reason for the absence and details of how long they expect to be away from work and agree an anticipated return date.

If an employee becomes aware of an emergency situation while at work, they should immediately speak to their manager about leaving early.  If the line manager is unavailable the employee should make every effort to contact a senior or equivalent manager.

The employee should keep in contact with their manager and notify them as soon as possible of any change in the anticipated date of their return to work. They should contact their manager on the day they come back to work, to confirm their return and discuss any ongoing support needs.

# **Providing false information**

If an employee knowingly provides false information in relation to taking time off for dependants, this may be treated as a disciplinary matter, which could potentially be regarded as an act of gross misconduct.

#### Associated guidance and documents

* Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy
* Additional Leave (paid and unpaid) Policy
* Shared Parental Leave Policy
* Unpaid Parental Leave Policy
* Support Leave Policy and Procedure

#### Compliance

* People Teams monitoring of general adherence to policy.
* Feedback from UNISON and Barnardo’s Forums.
* Audits.

#### Document History

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Author** | **Status** | **Comment** |
| 1 | 01.08.13 | Policy and Advice Team | Updated policy |  |
| 2 | 10.03.14 | Policy and Advice Team | Updated policy | Definition |
| 3 | 06.03.15 | Policy and Advice Team | Revised | New format |
| 4 | 01.08.2022 | People Strategy and Projects Team |  | Updated to reflect agreed review date |
| 5 | 07.07.23 | People Strategy and Projects Team | Agreed | Policy updated to reflect revised review date in accordance with planned schedule agreed by CLT |

**Owner**

People Strategy & Projects Team

1. 1 See Other types of leave which may be available

2 See Associated guidance and documents [↑](#footnote-ref-1)