



WILLIAMSBURGH
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Special Leave/ Permitted Absence Policy

Revision History

Creation Date	February 2024
Reviewer(s)	HR
Approved by (committee name)	Finance, Audit and Corporate Services Sub committee
Committee date	7 th February 2024
Policy Review date	May 2025

Introduction

Williamsburgh Housing Association (WHA) recognises that there may occasions when staff require absence away from work which is not in relation to being off on annual leave, or when they are ill.

WHA operate a hybrid working system where most of our employees can work from home. Should a situation arise that you are unable to come into the office but could work from home, please telephone your line manager to discuss the situation and ensure there is an agreement for any temporary amendment in work location, and hours, for the day if required.

Should a situation arise where you are unable to work, requests by employees for time off work may be granted in various situations and subject to varying conditions as follows. Requests should be discussed with your line manager.

The following is a guide as to the types of permitted leave which may be considered and approximate periods of time off which might be considered.

Social purpose

Williamsburgh support staff who wish to undertake duties volunteering, for example, duties of an honorary, charitable or philanthropic nature. Normally, this leave will not exceed one day per year.

Any such leave should be agreed in advance with your line manager.

Fertility treatment

WHA support staff who go through fertility treatment and understand that this can be a demanding time and there may be a high level of appointments. As this will vary from person to person, you should discuss with your line manager how time off for treatment can be accommodated. As with all aspects of absence these conversations will be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Bereavements

Leave with pay will normally be granted on the following basis:

- If you are an immediate close relative (e.g. parent, partner) 1 week's leave,
- If you are responsible for making funeral arrangements, one week's leave,
- In the case of other relatives – up to 3 day's leave may be granted,
- For distant relatives, 1 day leave may be granted to allow the full day attendance of the funeral,
- In other cases, the necessary time off to attend the funeral service may

be granted.

Leave without pay may also be considered to extend these periods if necessary.

Discretion and sensitivity will be exercised in considering requests for bereavement leave.

Parental Bereavement Leave

Introduced to law in 2020, Parental bereavement leave is time off following:

- The death of a child, if they die under the age of 18
- A child who is stillborn after 24 weeks' pregnancy
- An abortion after 24 weeks – in very limited circumstances, an abortion can take place after 24 weeks if the mother's life is at risk or the child would be born with a severe disability.

There is a statutory right to parental bereavement leave which is a day one right and the entitlement is for 2 weeks leave which can be taken at any point in the 56 weeks following the death of the child.

WHA recognise that the death of child of any age is a difficult and challenging time and therefore would pay full pay for 2 weeks of leave should you require it.

Further information on the statutory right to parental bereavement leave can be found on the [Government website](#).

Miscarriage

Miscarriage is a deeply personal experience, and it's up to each person to decide how much information you want to disclose with your colleagues. It can be helpful for your manager to know that you're going through and processing something traumatic, but you might choose to grieve privately, and either way, it's up to you.

If you require time off work to recover, please discuss with your line manager.

Domestic Stress

Where an employee is required to be absent to make special domestic arrangements arising from an unforeseen situation, leave with pay for one day will normally be granted. This may be extended on a paid or unpaid basis according to the circumstances, and by agreement with your manager.

A maximum of 3 days per year can be used by staff in these situations.

Other Family/Domestic Emergencies

When requesting time to deal with other emergencies extends beyond one day and is not otherwise covered in this policy, staff will normally be given reasonable unpaid time to make arrangements to deal with the emergencies. Staff will be expected to inform their line manager of the reason for such leave and its likely duration.

Examples of such situations are as follows:

- to provide assistance on an occasion when someone you have caring responsibilities for falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependent who is ill or injured (physically or mentally)
- because an unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependent, or
- to deal with an incident which involves a child of the employee, and which occurs unexpectedly in a period which an educational establishment of the child attends is responsible for them.

Leave will not extend beyond the period which is necessary to deal with the emergency.

Medical Treatment

Staff should make every effort to arrange medical related appointments (E.g, GP, Dentist, Optometrist) out with normal working hours. Routine appointments to the should be covered using your own time. WHA recognise that it is not always possible to get an appointment before or after work so will accommodate appointments during working hours with the expectation being that the time is made up before or after the appointment.

Should you require an emergency appointment to the doctor or dentist, or in the case of hospital appointments where you have no option regarding the timing of the appointment, your manager may grant you permitted time off. Your line manager may request confirmation of the appointment from you.

Moving Home

One day leave with pay will be granted to employees moving home. This will be limited to a maximum of one day per year.

Jury & Witness Service

Jury Duty

On receipt of a summons to serve on a jury, an employee should report this to their manager. Leave will be granted unless an exemption is secured. This leave will be with pay, subject to the deduction of allowances for loss of earnings to which the employee is entitled. Employees should ensure that they claim such

allowances from the Courts.

Witness Citations

Where the employee is a Professional Witness, time off with pay will be granted. This is on the understanding that the employee will repay witness fees received (excluding travel and subsistence expenses) to WHA.

In other cases leave without pay will be granted. The onus will be on the employee to reclaim from the person citing them an allowance in respect of loss of remuneration.

Leave For Public Duties

Council Duties:

Employees who are local authority councillors will be granted unpaid leave, as and when required, to undertake approved duties with the authority concerned.

Advisory Roles

Where employees, at the discretion of the Management Committee, are engaged in an unpaid advisory capacity (by e.g. Government Departments or the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations) then paid leave will be granted to undertake these duties.

Positions of Public Responsibility

Employees appointed to positions of responsibility where no fees or allowances are paid for loss of earnings (e.g. Justices of the Peace or members of Children's Panels) will be granted paid leave to undertake associated duties. This will be limited in the first instance to 24 half days per annum before re-consideration by the Management Committee. They will decide whether further paid or unpaid leave can be granted.

Trade union duties

Reasonable time off to perform trade union duties **must** be agreed in advance with the union representative's line manager.