



Service Instruction XXXX Bereavement Leave

Document Control

Description and Purpose

This instruction is intended to provide guidance for employees and managers surrounding applications for time off following a bereavement.

Active date	Review date	Author	Editor	Publisher
6/4/20	5/4/22	Amanda Cross	Mike Pilkington	xxx
Permanent	x	Temporary	If temporary, review date must be 3 months or less.	

Amendment History

Version	Date	Reasons for Change	Amended by
1.0	25/02/2020	New Document created	Amanda Cross

Risk Assessment (if applicable)

Date Completed	Review Date	Assessed by	Document location	Verified by(H&S)

Equalities Impact Assessment

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Document location

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment (if applicable)

Date	Assessed by	Document location

Related Documents

Doc. Type	Ref. No.	Title	Document location
SI		Absence and Attendance	Portal
SI		Capability	Portal

Contact

Department	Email	Telephone ext.
Workforce Planning and People Authority	attendancemanagement@merseyfire.gov.uk	0151 296 4300

Target audience

All MFRS	X	Ops Crews		Fire Protection		Fire Prevention	
Principal officers		Senior officers		Non uniformed			

Relevant legislation (if any)

The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (General) Regulations 2020
 The Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020
 The Employment Rights Act 1996
 The Equality Act 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Authority recognises that there are times when an employee needs to take time off away from work to help to come to terms with the death of a loved one.

This instruction advises line managers and employees as to what support is available to assist them to deal with these circumstances.

SI 0770 Time off in Emergencies provides guidance in cases of short notice unexpected domestic/personnel situations including time off to care for dependents.

Bereavement Leave

Managing the needs of bereaved employees is a sensitive issue and employees deal with grief and the death of a loved one in different ways.

Paid bereavement leave is available generally to staff based on the closeness of the familial relationship. The Authority is however mindful that not all modern familial relationships slot easily into 'traditional' relationship categories and a degree of flexibility and discretion will be applied when granting leave dependent on the specific circumstances.

As a general guide:

- Employees who lose a parent, step-parent, sibling, child over 18, spouse, civil partner or grandchild will be granted 1 full week of bereavement leave paid at their normal weekly wage.
 - For full time APTC staff this will be 5 days/35 hours.
 - For part time APTC staff this will be the normal weekly hours under the contract
 - For Grey Book Ops staff this will equate to 1 full tour of duty (4 shifts / 48hours)
 - For Grey Book day related staff this will be 5 days/42 hours.
- For employees (inc part time staff) who lose other close relatives such as grandparents, cousins', aunts and uncles and mother/father in-laws bereavement leave of up to 3 days/shifts depending on the circumstances will be granted.

Bereavement leave approved as per above may be split to allow a maximum of 2 days to be taken on a later date if required to support funeral organisation and attendance. Bereavement Leave can be taken at any date up to 1 month after the bereavement.

In any of the above circumstances, if an employee wishes to take additional leave they are able to utilise annual leave in the usual way and line managers are encouraged to be sympathetic to such requests taking account departmental exigencies.

The Authority will take into consideration travel arrangements to attend funerals in determining the amount of paid bereavement leave.

Any staff not wishing to utilise the full entitlement of bereavement leave can advise TRM of how much of the entitlement they wish to use and when they intend to return to work.

Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020

The Authority recognises that, while dealing with any bereavement is difficult, the death of a child is among the most devastating events that an employee can ever face.

Parental Bereavement Leave applies to employees who have suffered the loss of a child, under the age of 18. This also applies to parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

The Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020 confirm the following guidance;

- A bereaved parent can take up to two weeks' paid parental bereavement leave.
- Leave can be taken either as a single block of two weeks, or two separate blocks of one week at different times.
- Where split in two separate weeks, the blocks of leave must be taken within 56 weeks of the date of the child's death.
- Parental Bereavement Leave cannot be split into or taken as single days

This period of 56 weeks within the Regulations recognises that as a bereaved parent, an employee may need some flexibility as to when you take the leave. For example, employees may wish to take leave around the first anniversary of the child's death or at another particular time that is special, such as a birthday.

In MFRA there is no requirement for employees to have 26 weeks' unbroken service before becoming entitled to bereavement or parental bereavement leave.

Applying for Bereavement or Parental Bereavement Leave

Application for bereavement leave should be made to Time and Resource Management (TRM) using an FS38B1. Line Managers can submit applications on behalf of employees if required.

Employees are also able to notify TRM direct via 0151 296 4300 should they suffer a bereavement and TRM will advise your Line Manager as necessary.

The definition of a parent (under the Parental Leave Regulations) also extends to those employees who are the primary carer of a child and whose relationship is therefore parental in nature, this would include step parents, foster carers, legal guardians, and individuals who have obtained court orders which give them day to day responsibility for the caring of a child for at least four weeks before the death of the child.

Pay during Parental Bereavement Leave

Employees will receive their normal remuneration during periods of approved Bereavement or Parental Bereavement Leave.

Additional Support

The Authority will also offer the following support to bereaved employees:

- We will maintain regular contact to offer support and assistance through Line Manager Welfare calls and capability meetings.
- We will advise the employee of the Employee Assistance Programme and counselling opportunities.
- We can advise the employee of our chaplaincy.
- We can signpost the employee to partner agencies and charities such as CRUSE or Gingerbread who can offer specialist support.
- We can work with the employee to arrange how to communicate the news of the death to other employees.
- We can work with the employee to see if religious or cultural norms require them to observe specific practices to make special arrangements to be off work at particular time.
- We can work with the employee to consider making short or longer term changes to his/her working arrangement, for example a short term career break or adjustment of hours.
- We will ensure that if the employee reaches an absence trigger that any support form captures key dates such as birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day etc. so they can be managed in a sensitive way.