

Human Resources

Leave Policy

Policy effective from

1st July 2016



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Culture Statement

The Council's HR policies and procedures underpin the organisational culture and behaviours we expect from all our employees to ensure that:

We are an organisation where we all make a positive contribution at work for the whole Council.

Where we never lose sight of the fact that we are here to serve the people of the Borough.

This is the place where

- We are valued, trusted and supported
- We are heard
- We take responsibility for our own development
- We work hard
- We are not afraid to try something new
- We belong

CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Aims and Objectives	1
2. WHAT LEAVE CAN I TAKE?	1
2.1 Annual Leave	1
2.2 Purchase of Additional Annual Leave	1
2.3 Other Paid/Unpaid Leave	2
2.4 Other Leave Options:	2
3. How to Request Leave of Absence or Other Leave	2
3.1 Leave of Absence Forms	2
 APPENDIX 1 - A-Z GUIDANCE ON LEAVE	
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL LEAVE PURCHASE SCHEME	3
ADOPTION LEAVE	3
ADOPTION SUPPORT LEAVE	3
ANTENATAL CARE	3
BANK HOLIDAYS	4
BEREAVEMENT	4
BLOOD DONORS	4
CARERS LEAVE	4
DISABILITY LEAVE	5
ELECTIONS	5
COSMETIC SURGERY, DENTISTRY OR SIMILAR PROCEDURES	5
EMERGENCY LEAVE FOR DEPENDENTS	5
FERTILITY TREATMENT (In Vitro Fertilisation)	5
FLEXI LEAVE	5
FOSTERING	6
GRADUATION	6
HEARINGS / APPEALS (disciplinary, grievance, etc)	6
INTERVIEWS	6
JURY SERVICE	6
MATERNITY LEAVE	7
MATERNITY SUPPORT LEAVE	7
MEDICAL / DENTAL APPOINTMENTS	7
MEDICAL PROCEDURE/OPERATION	7
MEDICAL SCREENING FOR CANCER	7
PARENTAL LEAVE	8
PATERNITY LEAVE	8
POST ENTRY TRAINING (for learning supported by the Council)	8
PUBLIC DUTIES	9
REDUNDANCY (following issue of notice of dismissal)	9
RELIGIOUS REQUESTS	9
RELOCATION	9
RESERVE FORCES	9
RETAINED SERVICE	9
SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE	9
SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP	10
TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES	10
VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS	10
VOLUNTEERING	10
WEATHER	10
WITNESSES	10
 LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM	 11

Leave Policy

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This policy applies to all Council employees (except school and casual employees). It should be noted that all leave requests, whether for annual leave, paid or unpaid leave, or other leave arrangements are subject to the prior approval of the relevant Manager.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

We want our employees to work hard but we recognise that we all need some time off work to enjoy holidays, look after family members, follow hobbies or interests or simply just to take some time out. The Leave Policy aims to:

- Ensure our employees have access to appropriate annual leave entitlements and arrangements;
- Help our employees achieve a good work/life balance; and
- Support our employees at difficult times,

whilst recognising the need to ensure the continued effective delivery of services to the people of the borough.

2. WHAT LEAVE CAN I TAKE?

2.1 Annual Leave

You are entitled to take the following number of days annual leave per annum:

Under 5 years service: 26 days

5 years or more service: 31 days

Annual leave is calculated on the 1st day of the month after your birthday. Part time employees' leave will be calculated pro rata.

It is important that you ensure that you obtain prior approval from your Manager before taking annual leave as it is clearly essential that the service can accommodate your annual leave requested and that services can still be delivered effectively. Any particular service requirements regarding leave arrangements will be notified to you. It is possible to carry forward up to 5 days annual leave in to the next leave year subject to your manager's approval, however all employees are encouraged to take their full entitlement of annual leave in any leave year.

2.2 Purchase of Additional Annual Leave

The purpose of the Additional Annual Leave Scheme is to provide employees with additional flexibility in respect of planned time off work. The Scheme provides the opportunity to buy an agreed amount of additional annual leave with the deduction in pay spread usually over a maximum 12 month period.

Employees can usually apply to purchase between 3 and 10 days per leave year (pro rata for part time employees). For further details please refer to the Additional Annual Leave Purchase Scheme under Forms, Policies and Templates on the Intranet

2.3 Other Paid/Unpaid Leave

In some circumstances it may be appropriate for your Manager to authorise paid or unpaid leave. Your Manager can authorise the following:

Paid Leave

- Up to 1 week paid leave
- More than 1 weeks paid leave in consultation with HR

Unpaid Leave

- Up to 2 weeks unpaid leave
- More than 2 weeks unpaid leave in consultation with HR.

Managers and employees should consider the Leave A-Z Guidance detailed in Appendix 1 when requesting or determining any request for paid and unpaid leave. Advice from HR can be sought and must be obtained when considering periods of paid leave in excess of 1 week and unpaid leave of more than 2 weeks.

2.4 Other Leave Options:

There may be some circumstances when you need more flexibility with your leave arrangements. In addition to or as an alternative to using annual leave and authorising paid/unpaid leave, consideration can be given to any or all of the following:

- Changing a proportion of your annual leave from half or full day to hours – this may enable you to work shorter days for a period of time;
- Bringing forward your annual leave entitlement so you have more days to take immediately;
- Spreading the cost of additional annual leave purchase over a longer period than your birthday year;
- Allowing you to take forward an increased deficit of flexi time;
- Periods of home working;
- Temporary changes to your working hours.

Whilst we would hope to be able to put an appropriate package of leave and support together this will very much depend on your particular circumstances and requirements of the service. Unfortunately there are some services in the Council which cannot respond as flexibly as others.

3. How to Request Leave of Absence or Other Leave

Employees should discuss leave of absence requests or leave options with their Line Manager in the first instance.

Leave of absence or other leave arrangements should be recorded within the service by the relevant Manager

3.1 Leave of Absence Forms

Leave of Absence Forms only need to be completed for:

- Paid Leave of absence of more than 1 week
- Any periods of Unpaid Leave of Absence (in order that payroll are notified)
- Jury Service
- Reserve Forces

Please send completed leave of absence forms to HR General Enquiries for authorisation. HRGeneralEnquiries@stockton.gov.uk

Please note that separate forms are required for maternity/paternity/adoption/ parental leave. Please see Becoming a Parent Policy for details.

APPENDIX 1 - A-Z GUIDANCE ON LEAVE

This Guidance is indicative of the periods of paid or unpaid leave that can be made available and where specific periods of paid or unpaid leave of absence are detailed it should be noted that managers do have the discretion to approve further paid/unpaid leave depending on the particular circumstances.

Advice must be sought from HR for any paid leave of absence exceeding 1 week or unpaid leave of absence exceeding 2 weeks.

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL LEAVE PURCHASE SCHEME		
<p>This scheme is in addition to any other leave arrangements and provides the opportunity to buy an agreed amount of additional annual leave days, with deduction in pay spread usually over a maximum of 12 months.</p> <p>The Additional Annual Leave Purchase Scheme can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	Usually between 3 - 10 days per holiday year (pro-rata)	UNPAID (reduction in pay spread usually over 12 months)
ADOPTION LEAVE		
<p>Employees are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave, plus an extra 26 weeks additional adoption leave, making 52 weeks in total.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>Up to 6 wks at 90% of an employee's average earnings plus 33 weeks SAP which may include 12 weeks half pay</p> <p>followed by 13 weeks</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>
ADOPTION SUPPORT LEAVE		
<p>Granted to any employee nominated by the child's adopter to provide support at or around the time of placement.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	Up to 2 weeks	PAID
ANTENATAL CARE		
<p>i.e. medical examination, midwife appointments, relaxation classes and parent craft classes for the pregnant mother only.</p> <p>Partners accompanying pregnant mother is unpaid</p>	<p>Discretionary - reasonable amount</p> <p>Discretionary - reasonable amount</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
BANK HOLIDAYS		
<p>Where an employee is required as part of their normal working week to work on a bank holiday, time off will be allowed at a later date as follows:</p> <p>Where time worked is less than 4 hours or less than half the working shift (where the shift exceeds 7.5 hours)</p> <p>Where time worked is more than 4 hours or more than half the working shift where the shift exceeds 7.5 hours</p> <p>Bank holiday adjustments for part time employees should be managed through their flexi time sheet, and be taken no later than the next flexi period subject to operational service requirements.</p>	<p>Half day (pro rata)</p> <p>Full day (pro rata)</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>PAID</p>
BEREAVEMENT		
<p>It is acknowledged that bereavement can affect individuals differently and can depend on the nature of the relationship with the deceased. Requests should therefore be dealt with sympathetically, based on individual circumstances, taking into account the relationship between the employee and the deceased.</p> <p>The following leave of absence can be granted:</p> <p>In the case of immediate family</p> <p>Extended family and close friends</p>	<p>Up to 2 weeks</p> <p>1 day</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>PAID</p>
BLOOD DONORS		
<p>Employees will be granted paid leave subject to each appointment not exceeding three hours and having been agreed in advance with their line manager.</p>	<p>Discretionary – reasonable amount</p>	<p>PAID</p>
CARERS LEAVE		
<p>Leave to care for critically ill dependents. Evidence that the employee is the nominated primary carer may be needed.</p>	<p>Discretionary – reasonable amount (usually up to 20 working days per annum)</p>	<p>PAID</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
FOSTERING		
<p>Fostering leave is available to employees who apply to foster with Stockton Borough Council.</p> <p>Pre and post approval training.</p> <p>Where an employee is an approved long term foster carer for the Council and they have been matched with a specific child the principles of Parental Leave will be applied. Evidence of long term foster care of a child will be required which can be obtained from the Child Placement Team in CESC.</p>	<p>5 days (pro rata)</p> <p>18 weeks (in blocks of not less than one week other than for a disabled child AND no more than 4 weeks leave in a 12 month period in respect of any individual child</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>
GRADUATION		
<p>Employee's own graduation (when the course is sponsored by the Council, otherwise employees are expected to take annual or unpaid leave).</p>	<p>1 day</p>	<p>PAID</p>
HEARINGS / APPEALS (disciplinary, grievance, etc)		
<p>Accompanying an employee at a hearing / appeal within SBC.</p>	<p>As required</p>	<p>PAID (where employee is at work)</p>
INTERVIEWS		
<p>Paid leave to be granted to employees attending interviews (excluding travelling time) within local government service only.</p>	<p>As required</p>	<p>PAID</p>
JURY SERVICE		
<p>Where an employee is called up for jury service they are required to provide a copy of the court summons before paid time off will be approved.</p> <p>The employee must also submit a claim to the court for loss of earnings. They will be paid whilst on jury service at their normal rate of pay, subject to the deduction of any monies received from the court in respect of loss of earnings.</p>	<p>As required</p>	<p>PAID (less court allowance)</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
MATERNITY LEAVE		
<p>All women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, plus an extra 26 weeks additional maternity leave, making 52 weeks in total.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>Up to 6 wks at 90% of an employee's average earnings plus 33 weeks SMP which may include 12 weeks half pay followed by 13 weeks</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>
MATERNITY SUPPORT LEAVE		
<p>Granted to any employee nominated by the mother to provide support at or around the time of the birth, this does not need to be a husband or partner but can be a relative or friend and should be taken within 1 month of the birth.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>Up to 2 weeks which must be taken in one block</p>	<p>PAID</p>
MEDICAL / DENTAL APPOINTMENTS		
<p>Employees are expected to attend appointments outside of normal working hours or utilise the flexitime scheme, where possible, to attend for example doctors, dentists, physiotherapy, counselling, hospital etc.</p> <p>In certain circumstances paid leave may be appropriate particularly where the employee is attending counselling or physiotherapy services provided by the Council.</p>	<p>Discretionary – reasonable amount</p>	<p>UNPAID/PAID</p>
MEDICAL PROCEDURE/OPERATION		
<p>Where an employee is required to undergo a medical procedure/operation in hospital or equivalent (not a doctor's appointment at a surgery), which is NOT cosmetic surgery or dentistry</p>	<p>Period of admission to hospital and a reasonable period for recommended recovery time. Longer recovery periods are more appropriately covered by a fit note and recorded as sickness absence.</p>	<p>PAID</p>
MEDICAL SCREENING FOR CANCER		
<p>Where the appointment cannot be made outside of an employee's normal working hours.</p>	<p>Duration time of the appointment</p>	<p>PAID</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
PARENTAL LEAVE		
<p>Leave entitlement per child up until the child's 18th birthday. For an adopted child under the age of 18, 5 years from the date of adoption or until the child's 18th birthday whichever is the sooner.</p> <p>For a disabled child, the employee can take up to 18 weeks until their 18th birthday.</p> <p>To qualify for parental leave, employees must have completed at least one year's continuous service with the Council. The Council may postpone a period of parental leave, other than where it has been requested immediately after childbirth or adoption, by up to 6 months where there are business reasons.</p> <p>Please note 21 days notice is required for the request.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>18 weeks (in blocks of not less than one week other than for a disabled child AND no more than 4 weeks leave in a 12 month period in respect of any individual child)</p>	<p>UNPAID</p>
PATERNITY LEAVE		
<p>For paid leave the employee must have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks up to the "qualifying week" (i.e. 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth) and notification of their intention to take paternity leave must also be 15 weeks before the date the bay is due to be born on. In the case of adoption no later than 7 days after notification of the match.</p> <p>Paternity leave must be taken within 8 weeks of the birth/adoption.</p> <p>Legislation also allows qualifying parents to transfer up to six months of the mothers (or adopters) leave and payment to the father or partner.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>Up to 2 weeks which must be taken in one block</p>	<p>PAID</p>
POST ENTRY TRAINING (for learning supported by the Council)		
<p>Revision Leave – taken within 4 weeks preceding the exam and time allowed to sit exam.</p>	<p>Discretionary – usually 1 day for revision per exam and duration of examination</p>	<p>PAID</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
PUBLIC DUTIES		
Employees who wish to undertake public duties should discuss the situation with their manager. Prior to approval of dates, written notification seeking approval from their manager should be provided. This should be provided as far in advance as possible.	Discretionary - reasonable amount	PAID
REDUNDANCY (following issue of notice of dismissal)		
To look for new employment or arrange training for future employment.	Discretionary - Reasonable amount	PAID
RELIGIOUS REQUESTS		
Requests for time off on religious grounds will be considered in line with service needs.	Discretionary - Reasonable amount	UNPAID
RELOCATION		
As part of an agreed recruitment package and in accordance with the criteria for relocation.	Up to 2 days	PAID
RESERVE FORCES		
<p>Training dates must be notified to the line manager as soon as possible and approval will be subject to the needs of the service but will not be unreasonably refused.</p> <p>If employees are required to undertake military service overseas they should contact their line manager.</p>	<p>Discretionary – reasonable amount (usually up to 2 weeks)</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>
RETAINED SERVICE		
Employees who meet the retained service requirements will be granted time off work, subject to service requirements, with pay in addition to any other fees received. In most instances these will be in response to emergency situations and time off will not be unreasonably refused.	Discretionary - reasonable amount (usually up to 2 weeks pro rata).	PAID
SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE		
<p>Employees can share up to 50 weeks Maternity or Adoption leave arrangements with their partner or the father of the child. Employees can be given time off from work at the same time as the partner/father, and the time can be taken in three separate blocks.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Becoming a Parent Policy which can be accessed from the Policies section of the intranet</p>	<p>Up to 37 weeks statutory Shared Parental Pay and may be entitled to up to 12 weeks ½ pay in addition.</p> <p>followed by up to 13 weeks</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>UNPAID</p>

REASON	ENTITLEMENT	PAID/UNPAID
SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP		
When Placement is made under a Special Guardianship Order	Up to 2 weeks Followed by Reasonable Amount	PAID UNPAID
TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES		
<p>Conferences Leave shall be granted to delegates attending the annual conference of recognised Trade Unions subject to the demands of the service. The Director of Service will give approval after consultation with HR and leave will not be unreasonably withheld. 1 Union representative per 1000 members will be permitted to attend.</p> <p>Facility Time Reasonable paid time off work will be given to represent members on negotiations, disciplinary, grievance, capability, reviews and redundancies and similar trade union activities. Advice on what is considered to be 'reasonable' can be sought from HR.</p>	<p>One conference per year</p> <p>Reasonable amount subject to demands of the service</p>	<p>PAID</p> <p>PAID</p>
VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS		
The Council will consider applications for Voluntary Service Overseas.	Discretionary - reasonable amount subject to service requirements	UNPAID
VOLUNTEERING		
The Council encourages its employees to volunteer in the wider community in their own time but in some circumstances it may be appropriate to provide unpaid leave.	Discretionary - reasonable amount subject to service requirements	UNPAID
WEATHER		
On occasions where weather conditions prevent employees getting to work and all reasonable attempts to get to work have failed any absence should be unpaid.	As required	UNPAID
WITNESSES		
<p>If employees are required to attend court as a witness, paid time off will be approved where a copy of the court summons is provided.</p> <p>Where employees attend Court through their own choice, such as to support a relative or friend.</p>	As required	<p>PAID (Subject to the deduction of any loss of earnings received from the court) UNPAID</p>

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM

Leave of Absence Forms only need to be completed for:

- Paid Leave of absence of more than 1 week
- Any periods of Unpaid Leave of Absence (in order that payroll are notified)
- Jury Service leave
- Reserve Forces leave

Managers and employees should consider the Leave A-Z Guidance detailed in Appendix 1 of the Leave Policy when requesting or determining any request for paid and unpaid leave. **Advice from HR can be sought and must be obtained when considering periods of paid leave in excess of 1 week and unpaid leave of more than 2 weeks**

PART A – CURRENT DETAILS (to be completed by Employee)								
Directorate/ Service Area / Team _____								
Surname: _____	Forename(s): _____							
Employee ID: _____	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> </tr> </table>							

PART B – Details of Request (to be completed by Employee)							
Reason for Leave							
(If the reason for the request is bereavement please state the person deceased ie mother, father)							
<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%; padding: 2px;">Date from</td> <td style="width: 15%;"></td> <td style="width: 15%; padding: 2px;">Date to</td> <td style="width: 15%;"></td> <td style="width: 15%; padding: 2px;">Number of Hours</td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>	Date from		Date to		Number of Hours		
Date from		Date to		Number of Hours			
Time to be deducted must be stated in hours for all absences. Please note a standard day for whole time 37 hours employee working 5 days a week would be or 7.24 hours .							
Signed							
Date							

PART C – AUTHORISATION (to be completed by Line Manager – authorised to approve leave requests)	
Line Managers Name	
Line Managers Contact Email Address	
Please state whether Paid or Unpaid	
Please state whether Supported or Not Supported	
Comments	
Date	

Please return this form to:

HR Team

1st Floor, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1LD

Or by email:

HRGeneralEnquiries@stockton.gov.uk