

New Somerset Council

Compassionate Leave Policy

Policy Statement

Somerset Council recognises the importance of providing employees with paid time off work to deal with the death or serious illness of a close relative. Therefore, all employees (no minimum length of service necessary) may be granted by their Line Manager, up to a maximum of 10 working days (pro rata for part-time staff) leave with pay for compassionate reasons, in any rolling 12-month period.

An employee is entitled to compassionate leave in the event of the loss or serious illness of a near relative. Near relative means spouse, partner, child, parent, grandparent, brother, sister or parent-in-law of the employee (this is not a definitive list and managers should give sympathetic consideration to all requests made under this policy). Reasons for compassionate leave include the following (again, this is not an exhaustive list);

- To deal with a bereavement, this includes making funeral arrangements and/or attending the funeral
- To spend time with an individual who is taken seriously ill

Circumstances should be considered on an individual basis both in terms of who is defined as a close relative and the reasons for which compassionate leave may be granted. Advice should be sought from HR where a manager is unsure whether compassionate leave applies in a particular situation.

Should an employee require more than 10 working days absence (pro rata for part time staff), their line manager may make a request for a paid or unpaid extension of this period to their Senior Manager using the Compassionate Leave Request Form. In these situations, managers should seek advice from HR.

Process

1. The employee contacts their line manager making them aware of the situation and the need for them to take compassionate leave.
2. The line manager and employee discuss and agree the amount of compassionate leave to be taken and completes the Compassionate Leave Request Form.
3. The line manager and HRAP keep a note of compassionate leave taken by the employee to refer to in case of further need within the 12-month period.

4. When the employee returns to work the line manager will discuss any further support and assistance as required (links to be added).

Version	1
Date	
Relevant Legislation	Employment Rights Act 1996

Add links to relevant policies and guides e.g., Parental Bereavement Leave Policy