



SPECIAL TYPES OF LEAVE POLICY

Policy Number 14
March 2018

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The Society recognises that employees will have important commitments in their lives outside work which they wish to meet, and which will mean taking time away from work. These commitments may involve events associated with families, partners or those who have caring responsibilities. It is expected that employees will use some of their annual leave to deal with certain types of personal situations, and on some occasions unpaid leave may be offered; there may also be some situations where special paid leave is granted. The types of leave available are detailed below.

Bereavement / Compassionate Leave

The Society acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways. We have an Employee Assistance Program, provided by the 'Retail Trust', which is free for you to use and offers confidential advice and support by professionals trained in emotional counselling. Further information can be found at www.retailtrust.org.uk or call the free helpline on 0808 801 0808.

Bereavement leave allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements when a member of their family or a close friend dies. The Society acknowledges that bereavement will impact on individuals differently and the guidelines below show the paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances.

- In the event of the death of an immediate relative, up to 5 days paid leave will be granted. An immediate relative includes a spouse, civil partner or partner, child, parent, step-parent, sibling or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency. Immediate family may also include a more distant relative who may have fulfilled the role of formal or informal parent/guardian or for whom the employee had a direct responsibility of care.
- One day's paid leave will normally be allowed for attending the funeral of extended family members and close friends

This policy is not intended to be overly prescriptive. It is recognised that the death of a family member or close friend is a difficult and emotional time for employees and due consideration will be given to this. Discretion will be exercised, appropriate to individual circumstances, where it may become necessary to consider either further paid leave, annual leave or unpaid leave.

An employee should notify their line manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at the latest, on the first day of absence.

Religious Observance

Where possible the Society will enable employees to take time off for religious festivals. Employees should use their annual leave allocation in the first instance. Unpaid leave or an alteration in working hours may also be considered.

Employees need to discuss their request with their manager in good time so that cover can be arranged.

Medical / Dental / Hospital Arrangements

Employees should endeavour to arrange any appointments outside working hours. However, unpaid time off may be granted for emergency appointments and where it is not possible to arrange outside working hours.

You may be asked to produce proof of the appointment by your line manager.

Study / Exam Leave

Employees who have school, college or other exams are will be permitted to have the day of the exam off and a day prior to this. Employees should use their annual leave or, if agreed with their line manager, a period of unpaid leave may be granted. This must be discussed at the earliest opportunity with the line manager to allow cover to be arranged.

Ante-Natal Care

Employees are entitled to reasonable paid time off for ante-natal care. Where possible, employees should schedule appointments as close to the end, or the start, of the working day as possible. Please see the relevant section in the maternity policy for further information or contact the People & Performance Department.

Redundancy

Employees may take a reasonable amount of paid time-off to look for alternative work/re-training opportunities, where they are under notice of dismissal for redundancy. This must be scheduled in agreement with management and will not be unreasonably refused.

Safety Representatives

Appointed safety representatives are entitled to a reasonable amount of time off during their normal working hours to carry out relevant health and safety activities.

Jury Duty / Court Attendance

Employees called for Jury Duty or Court Attendance must inform their line manager as soon as they are in receipt of a citation as a Witness or Juror.

The original or photocopy of the court citation should be passed on to the Wages department so that they can complete the relevant section with regard to 'loss of earnings'.

Time off is normally unpaid; however, in regards to Jury Duty, employees are entitled to receive payment from the Court for some or all of their lost earnings.

Trade Union Duties

Employees who are recognised USDAW Trade Union Representatives will be given paid time off in order to undertake the duties associated with the role in

their geographic area, or in another geographic area where cover is required, in line with the Scotmid/USDAW Facilities Agreement .

All time off will be agreed between representatives and their Manager/regional manager.

Where previously authorised by People & Performance and the appropriate Operations Manager, time off with pay will be provided for USDAW training, as per the Scotmid/USDAW Facilities Agreement.

Public Duties

Employees are also entitled to reasonable unpaid time off from work where they carry out the following public duties or are members of the relevant bodies:

- justice of the peace;
- local authority;
- statutory tribunal;
- police authority;
- board of prison visitors or prison visiting committee;
- relevant health body;
- relevant education body; or
- Environment Agency or Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Other Unpaid Time Off

There may be times where an employee needs time off for reason that does not fall into the above categories. In this case employees should discuss this request with their manager who will then consider if a period of unpaid leave can be granted.