



**Policy covering  
Emergency time off for Dependants  
(incorporating Carer's Leave)**

## Emergency time off for Dependants

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### What is emergency time off for dependants

All employees are entitled to take reasonable time off during working hours to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies and to make any necessary longer term arrangements involving a dependant. It is the intention of the University to help alleviate any anxiety caused by unforeseen problems where the nature of the circumstances requires the employee to be present. The University will endeavour to accommodate all reasonable requests made.

If you require further advice please contact Human Resources on ext. 3096 or e-mail: humres.

### What you need to do

As this right is intended to cover unforeseen circumstances it will normally not be possible to inform the University of an absence in advance. However, you should inform your Head of School/Unit as soon as possible of your absence, the reason for the absence and how long you expect to be away from work.

There may be exceptional circumstances where you return to work before it was possible to contact your Head of School/Unit – you should therefore inform them immediately regarding your absence on your return to work.

Your Head of School/Unit will confirm to you whether the time taken will be paid or unpaid depending on the circumstances. The absence should be recorded in the same way as annual leave but it will not be deducted from your entitlement unless it is unauthorised or outwith *Carer's Leave* (where the University will pay up to a maximum of 3 days per academic leave year).

The right to time-off under this procedure is applicable to unforeseen circumstances only. If you know in advance that you will require time off then you should follow the normal annual leave procedure. Or, if the reason relates to your child, you may be entitled to take Parental Leave under the University's Parental Leave Policy (unpaid leave).

**Please note** – you are only entitled to time off for emergencies involving dependants. You are not entitled to take time off for other domestic emergencies i.e. boiler bursting or washing machine leaking. Time off for such activities should be at the Head of School/Unit's discretion and should be taken from annual leave entitlement.

There may also be times when both parents may require time off, for example when a child has a serious accident, however it would not be necessary for both parents to be absent should a child minder fail to turn up.

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### Who can take emergency dependants leave

All employees, regardless of length of service are eligible for the right to take time off during working hours in order to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.

### Who is classed as a dependant

A dependant is defined as:

- Your spouse
- Your child
- Your parent
- Someone who lives in the same household as you such as partner or elderly relative. *Specifically excluded are those who live in the same household as you as a tenant, lodger or boarder.*
- You may also include someone who reasonably relies on you for assistance when they are ill, injured or assaulted.

### How much time can you take off in emergency

The entitlement is to a “reasonable” amount of time off. It is intended to cover the time needed to deal with the immediate problem and to arrange alternative longer-term care where applicable.

The amount of time-off, which is reasonable, will vary according to the circumstances but in most cases time off should not exceed 1 or 2 days. There is no limit on the number of times you can be absent from work under this right.

For time off to be “justifiable”, your presence or attendance must be crucial to resolving the problem or where the incident affects someone other than you to the welfare and/or recovery of that person.

### EXAMPLES OF WHERE TIME OFF MAY BE NECESSARY

- To provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted
- To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured
- Due to an unexpected disruption or termination of the arrangements for the care of a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving your child during school hours

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*This list is not exhaustive. The right enables you to take action, which is necessary to deal with any unexpected or sudden emergency involving a dependant.*

### **Will I be paid for any emergency time off that I take**

Previously this was detailed under the University's '*Carer's Leave Policy*' but has now been incorporated into this policy - Emergency Time Off For Dependants.

The University will continue to give a period of *paid* emergency time off, up to a maximum of **3 days** per academic leave year (pro-rata for employees who are part-time). Any leave outwith this period will be unpaid or may be taken from annual leave entitlement.

### **What happens if I abuse the policy**

If you are found to be abusing the policy then you will be subject to the normal University Disciplinary Procedure.

### **What if I have a grievance to raise**

If you are dissatisfied with any decision made in respect of this policy, you should instigate the University's formal Grievance Procedure. You can obtain a copy of the Grievance Procedure either from Human Resources or downloaded from <http://goliath.st-andrews.ac.uk:28080/HR/policies/home>

Human Resources  
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