

University Supporting Carers Statement

Reviewed: Feb 2017.

Introduction

The University of St Andrews is committed to providing equality of opportunity and developing work practices and policies that support work-life balance. This institutional statement signposts the support available to staff who may have a caring responsibility in order to manage their work-life balance.

Definition of a carer

A carer can be a partner, parent, sibling, child or other dependant and could be living in the same home as the person being cared for or further away.

Support

Caring can sometimes place demands on staff and at times it may be difficult for them to combine work and caring responsibilities. Therefore the University has adopted the following principles:

- To give sympathetic consideration to requests for support from those who have caring responsibilities, based on a shared understanding of the situation and its impact at work.
- To ensure that staff with caring responsibilities are treated fairly.
- To handle requests for support with discretion and tact.

Provision to support carers

The following are a range of inclusive University policies which can be used to help support staff who require time off for a caring responsibility:

1. Flexible Working: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/hr/flexibleworkingpolicy>

The policy has been developed to support flexible working arrangements to help employees achieve, if possible, more balance between their working and non-working lives. Flexible Working allows employees to vary their working arrangements to provide more flexibility. Employees may request a change in the hours they work, a change in the times they work or request temporarily to work from home.

2. Special Leave Policy: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/hr/specialleavepolicy>

In certain circumstances employees may apply for special leave to cope with difficult or unusual situations not covered by other policies. This might include:

Time Off for Dependants/Carer's Leave

All employees will be allowed reasonable time off of up to three days per rolling year to provide care and attention to dependants or to deal with an unexpected event involving a dependant. This may include:

- caring for ill dependants or accompanying them during an unexpected appointment/stay at hospital
- making longer term care arrangements for the ill or injured
- breakdown or unexpected disruption in care arrangements
- incidents at school

Compassionate Leave

The University recognises that employees may be faced with difficult personal circumstances involving the serious illness or death of a dependant. The University understands that, during these situations, employees may need to take time away from work and may require additional support. Individual circumstances, the nature of relationships and the required observances of different religions may vary.

Hospital/Clinic Appointments

When it is not possible to make appointments with GPs, Dentists and Opticians out with work time, then these appointments should be made at the start or end of the working day in order to minimise disruption. On occasion, employees should make arrangements with their manager to make this time up if a longer appointment is required.

3. Parental Leave Policy: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/hr/parentalleavepolicy>

Parental Leave gives parents the right to unpaid time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare.

4. Carer's Fund: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/human-resources/new-policy-section-documents/caringfund/Caring%20Fund%20January%202016.pdf>

University established fund supporting staff with child minding or other caring responsibilities associated with attending events as part of their role. For example, the fund could be used in order to pay for respite care, childminder costs, travel costs of dependants, accommodation costs of dependants.

5. University Chaplaincy: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/chaplaincy>

The multi-faith team of chaplains and belief contacts offers sensitive and impartial support.

6. University Wellbeing and Engagement Group: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing>

Through our membership of the *Healthy Working Lives* initiative, the group holds events to advance and promote staff wellbeing.

7. Occupational Health: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ehss/occupationalhealth>

Occupational Health is an advisory service providing a wide range of services, such as counselling, to protect the health of staff at work. The role of Occupational Health is to provide impartial advice and support to all staff.

8. Fife Carers Centre organisation: <http://www.fifecarerscentre.org>

Work with carers or with common interest groups to help them to deal with some of the difficulties that often arise. Represent carers' interests to local and national government and work hard to raise awareness of carers and the issues associated with caring.

9. Carers Scotland: <http://www.carersuk.org/scotland>

Working as part of Carers UK, providing expert advice; information; connecting carers so no-one has to care alone; and support carers through the **Online Forum:** <https://www.carersuk.org/forum>

10. Online carer support weblinks:

Childcare/Nurseries/Support Groups/School term dates: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/carers>

UK Government Carers Allowance: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

UK Government Carers Credit: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-credit>

Scottish Government: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Unpaid-Carers>

Carers Trust Scotland online blogs: <https://www.carers.org/carers-space>