

# SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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## COMPASSIONATE LEAVE POLICY



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## 1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to extend sympathy, compassion and understanding should employees suffer a bereavement. At all times, the Council will try to assist employees to come to terms with their loss.

This policy considers the granting of compassionate leave in the sad event that an employee suffers the death or serious injury of a Close Relative (*See 8. Definitions*).

## 2. When the Policy Applies

This policy applies to all employees.

## 3. Principles of the Policy

Southwater Parish Council wishes to regulate the consideration given to the granting of paid compassionate (bereavement) leave.

## 4. Eligibility

All employees are entitled to request compassionate (leave, regardless of length of service. Leave is granted at the Executive Officer's discretion (or in the case of the Executive Officer their line manager) as outlined below. The Council will not unreasonably refuse such requests.

## 5. Length of Paid Compassionate Leave

The length of paid compassionate leave will be determined by employee's manager taking into account the circumstances and rules stipulated below. Further advice may be found on the ACAS website.

In the event of a severe accident/bereavement of a Close Relative listed below, an employee will be granted up to five days paid leave, with a paid day of leave for attendance to the funeral, this may be extended at the discretion and agreement of the Executive Officer (or in the case of the Executive Officer their line manager). This extended period would be unpaid or taken as annual leave entitlement.

These provisions are not intended to limit the Executive Officer's discretion and each request for such leave should be judged on the circumstances of the case. For

instance, if an employee has been raised by their grandparents, a longer period of leave should be granted but again this may be unpaid.

If an employee needs to travel to the country where their family or relative lived, the Executive Officer (or in the case of the Executive Officer their line manager) may consider paid compassionate leave on discussion with the employee. A set number of days will be agreed but shall not exceed 10 working days. The Executive Officer will consider cases individually according to the distance to be travelled and other relevant circumstances.

Where appropriate, an employee may be granted up to one day of paid compassionate leave to attend a funeral of a close friend or other relative.

## 6. Additional Leave Requirements

Where a member of staff requires leave in circumstances not outlined above in Section 5, the Executive Officer may be sympathetic to requests for annual leave or unpaid leave to cover other contingencies relating to compassionate/bereavement leave.

If an employee requires further time off work in addition to the paid compassionate leave granted by their manager under Section 5 above, then this should be taken as annual leave or unpaid leave (subject to the normal provision of Southwater Parish Council's policy on such leave).

## 7. Notification of Leave

Where bereavement leave is granted, this should be notified to the employee in writing (electronic means acceptable) by the Executive Officer (or in the case of the Executive Officer their line manager).

Employees abusing the right to time off may be liable for disciplinary action.

## 8. Definitions

Southwater Parish Council defines a **Close Relative** as follows:

- Children – (son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, fostered child)
- Parents
- Stepparents
- Spouse / partner

- Spouse / partner's parents
- Spouse / partner's children
- Grandparents
- Next of kin or nominated next of kin
- Sibling (brother / sister)
- Dependents living in the same household