



LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY

# Time Off for Public Duties and Special Leave Policy and Procedure

[leedsbeckett.ac.uk](https://leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

# Policy Statement

## Purpose and Scope

Our University encourages employees to participate in public service, including jury service, and will provide paid and unpaid time off for them to fulfil these commitments, whilst bearing in mind the operational needs of our University. In addition, paid time off is available to support employees with caring responsibilities, during times of bereavement, when faced with unforeseen events, and for medical screening. Annual leave, flexible/hybrid working options and/or unpaid leave may also be appropriate in these circumstances.

This policy and procedure apply to all employees. These arrangements include the statutory rights of employees for time off for care of dependants, carer's leave and statutory bereavement leave.

## Responsibility

### Role of the Employee

Employees are required to notify their manager as soon as they are aware that they wish to apply for time off under this policy and procedure and to submit the application form at the earliest opportunity, either in advance or as soon as possible after the event. When employees are considering taking up voluntary public duties they should discuss the matter with their manager prior to making any commitments.

### Role of the Manager

Managers are required to release employees who need to attend court and to provide reasonable time off when requested for them to perform public duties, bearing in mind the needs of the service.

Managers are responsible for considering and authorising requests for special leave within the parameters of this policy and procedure, taking the circumstances into consideration as these may vary considerably with each case. Managers may also support employees through flexible/hybrid working arrangements, which could be long or short term. An examples and guidance document is provided to support managers with their decisions. Managers should consult Human Resources when they are unsure as to the application of this policy and procedure. In the event of an emergency and/or bereavement it is acceptable for a manager to fill the form in on behalf of the employee either in advance or as soon as possible after the event.

### Role of Human Resources

Human Resources will provide advice and guidance to managers and employees on the application of this policy and procedure. Human Resources are responsible for the proper recording and review of time off under this policy and procedure.

## Review

This policy and procedure do not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time. It will be monitored on an annual basis and reviewed every three years or sooner in light of legislative changes and organisational requirements as appropriate.

# Procedure

## 1. Applications

1.1. All applications for time off under this policy should be discussed first with the appropriate manager and then an application made using the Application form at Appendix 1. More information is provided below as follows:

- Jury service, court and tribunal attendance (Section 2)
- Voluntary public service (Section 3)
- Special Leave (Section 4)
- Bereavement and Funeral Leave (Section 5)

## 2. Jury Service, Court and Tribunal Attendance

2.1. Employees who are called for jury service or as a witness in a court or tribunal case will be granted paid leave for this duty and should inform their manager immediately and provide a copy of the notification.

2.2. If the jury service, court or tribunal attendance is during a pre-arranged holiday, employees may attend and take annual leave at a later date provided that they furnish proof of this.

2.3. Employees who are required to undertake jury service should also contact Human Resources in advance of their attendance, who will liaise with payroll regarding salary payments and reimbursement from the court. Please refer to the Guidance and Examples document for more information (including flow chart of the process).

## 3. Voluntary Public Service

3.1. Employees may be granted paid leave of up to twelve days per rolling year (pro rata for part time employees) to undertake voluntary public service. Additional time off may be granted on an unpaid basis.

3.2. Public Service Duties are defined as:

Tribunal Members  
Magistrates/Justice of the Peace (JP)  
Local Councillors  
Members of a National Health Service Trust  
Prison Visitors  
Lay visitors to police stations  
School Governors  
Territorial Army and Reservist training  
Police Special Constables  
Volunteering during public health emergencies

This is not an exhaustive list. Employees who are unsure as to whether an activity may be considered under this policy and procedure should consult Human Resources.

3.3. Applications for unpaid additional leave will not be denied unreasonably. The amount of time off that is granted shall be determined by:

- the amount of time off needed to perform the duties in question;
- the amount of time off that the employee has already taken and the effects of the employee's absence on the operational needs of our University.

## 4. Special Leave

4.1. Employees may be granted paid special leave of up to five days per rolling year (pro rata for part time employees) to cover circumstances such as those listed below. Annual leave, unpaid leave or other flexible/hybrid working arrangements may also be appropriate.

4.2. Due to the wide range of circumstances of urgent and unforeseen need, it is not practical to provide an exhaustive list of the situations covered by special leave. It is recognised that there may be situations, other than those covered below, where managers may grant special leave (within the parameters of 4.1 above). Where circumstances are not covered below, an individual should discuss the situation with their manager.

- **Dependants Leave** – situations concerning the emergency care of a member of immediate family (spouse, partner, child, parent or anyone living in the household as a member of the family) or someone else for whom the employee has prime carer responsibility. It is expected that the time off requirement would not normally be more than one or two days for each occasion, allowing time for other arrangements to be put in place where necessary.
- **Carer's Leave** – to provide or arrange care for a dependant (spouse, partner, child, parent, anyone living in the household as a member of the family or someone else for whom the employee has prime carer responsibility) with a long-term care need. A long-term care need is an illness/injury which is likely to require care for more than 3 months, a disability under the Equality Act 2010, or issues related to old age.
- **Compassionate Leave** – situations concerning the serious/life threatening illness of a close family member or others for whom there is a prime carer/dependant relationship.
- **Domestic Emergency** – an unexpected household emergency. Up to one day would be granted; if there were continuing problems thereafter, employees would be expected to use annual leave or other flexible/hybrid working options or unpaid leave.
- **Medical Emergency** – unexpected medical or dental appointments (relating to the employee) that occur during working time that cannot be rearranged. This includes explorative and/or diagnostic appointments. Please note, inpatient hospital treatment should be treated as sickness absence. Where an employee has to attend a hospital/clinic/doctor/dentist for a regular check-up or treatment the employee is expected to arrange such visits during their own time using

annual leave or other flexible/hybrid working arrangements or unpaid leave.

- **Medical Screening** – for example, employees attending for cervical smear testing, breast screening, testicular and prostate screening and other related matters. One half day for each type of screening may be granted.
- **Vaccination** – where vaccination is recommended for protection of UK communities from the impact of infectious diseases (e.g. coronavirus, measles), where possible, such vaccination appointments should be arranged outside of working hours or using flexible/hybrid working arrangements. If time off work is needed, this will be paid. Employees should notify their manager of their appointment time on each occasion, giving as much notice as possible.

## 5. Bereavement and Funeral Leave

- 5.1. The University understands that where someone has suffered the loss of someone close to them, individual circumstances, involvement in funeral arrangements, the nature of relationships and the observances of different religions and cultures will vary. Managers will treat all requests with sympathetic consideration, using the guidance below.
- 5.2. **Bereavement and Funeral Leave** – paid leave of up to two weeks may be granted in the event of the death of a close family member, or others for whom there is a prime carer/dependant relationship. In addition, paid leave may be granted for the day of the funeral where this takes place after the period of bereavement leave.
- 5.3. **Other Funeral Leave** – one half day (or full day dependent on location) to attend the funeral of other family members.
- 5.4. **Pregnancy Loss**<sup>1</sup> – we recognise that everyone will experience their loss differently. Paid bereavement leave of up to two weeks may be granted to employees who experience pregnancy loss (e.g. miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy). This includes partners.
- 5.5. It is recognised that the impact of grief may mean that some employees do not feel able to return to work straight after a period of bereavement leave. In such instances, employees should contact their manager in accordance with the University's Sickness Absence Reporting procedures.

*Reviewed April 2024*

---

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the University's Maternity Leave Policy in the event of a still birth after the 24th week of pregnancy.

**APPLICATION FORM FOR TIME OFF FOR PUBLIC DUTIES OR SPECIAL LEAVE**  
(word version available on the [HR and Payroll forms webpage](#))

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Job title:</b>	
<b>School or Service:</b>		<b>Manager:</b>	
<b>Reason for time off:</b>			
1. Court Attendance, Jury Service, Tribunal*		<input type="text"/>	
2. Voluntary Public Service*		<input type="text"/>	
3. Special Leave**		<input type="text"/>	
4. Bereavement and/or funeral leave		<input type="text"/>	
*Evidence required ** Evidence may be requested (e.g. evidence of hospital appointment) (original to be checked by manager and copy attached to form)			
Reason for time off (briefly describe)			
Date From: __/__/__	Period: To: __/__/__	<b>Total number of days requested:</b>	
Where a combination of paid and unpaid leave is requested, please state:			
Number of days paid leave:		Number of days unpaid leave:	
<b>Employee's declaration:</b>			
I request time off as detailed above in accordance with the University's Time Off for Public Duties and Special Leave Policy & Procedure.			
Signed:		Date:	
<b>Manager to complete and sign:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	I authorise the above member of staff to receive time off as outlined above OR		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not authorise the paid time off requested above. This has been discussed, and the below alternative agreed:		
Signed:		Date:	

A copy of this form should be forwarded to Human Resources (HRServicesteam@leedsbeckett.ac.uk). Human Resources will record all leave taken under this policy and procedure on the employee's personal record to ensure consistency of implementation across our University.