



Barrowby Parish Council

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Family Leave and Dependents Leave Policy

Document control

- **Owner:** Staffing Committee
- **Responsible officer:** Clerk / Proper Officer
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- **Review:** Annually or earlier if legislation/guidance changes
- **Next review due:** January-March 2027 at Staffing for formal adoption at Parish Council
May 2027

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the Council's approach to family-related leave and time off for dependants. It is intended to ensure that employees are treated fairly, consistently and in accordance with current legislation and good practice.

This policy should be read alongside the employee's contract of employment and any other relevant Council policies, including sickness absence, flexible working, probation and annual leave arrangements. Where there is any conflict between this policy and the contract of employment, the contract will take precedence.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Council.

The Council recognises that employees may need time away from work for family-related reasons, including pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, caring responsibilities, emergencies involving dependants and bereavement.

3. General principles

The Council will comply with statutory rights relating to family-related leave and time off for dependants. These include maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave, unpaid parental leave, carer's leave and the statutory right to time off for dependants in emergencies.

Employees should notify the Clerk, or the Chair of the Staffing Committee where the matter relates to the Clerk, as soon as reasonably practicable if they need to take family-related leave or urgent time off.

The Council recognises that some types of leave are planned and some arise unexpectedly. Requests and notifications will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Employees will not be subjected to detriment for seeking to take or taking statutory family-related leave.

4. Time off for dependants

Employees are entitled to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off during working hours where action is necessary because of an emergency involving a dependant. This right is set out in section 57A of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

A dependant may include:

- a. a spouse, civil partner, child or parent;
- b. a person who lives in the same household as the employee, other than as a tenant, lodger, boarder or employee; or
- c. a person who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance or care.

Time off for dependants is intended for unexpected or sudden situations, for example:

- a. where a dependant falls ill, is injured or assaulted;
- b. where care arrangements break down unexpectedly;
- c. where there is an incident involving a child during school hours; or
- d. to make immediate arrangements following the death of a dependant.

Employees should tell the Council as soon as reasonably practicable:

- a. the reason for the absence; and
- b. how long they expect to be away.

Where further time off is needed beyond the immediate emergency, the employee should discuss with the Council whether another type of leave or adjustment is more appropriate.

5. Carer's leave

Eligible employees are entitled to up to **one week of unpaid carer's leave in any rolling 12-month period** in order to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long-term care need. A week means the length of time the employee usually works over 7 days, so for part-time staff it is pro-rated to their normal working week. The leave may be taken as a block or in individual days or half days.

Carer's leave is separate from time off for dependants. Time off for dependants is for emergencies; carer's leave is for planned caring arrangements.

Employees should give the required statutory notice, or as much notice as reasonably possible. The Council may postpone carer's leave where the law allows and where this is reasonably necessary for operational reasons.

6. Paternity leave

Eligible employees have a **day-one right to paternity leave** under the post-6 April 2026 rules, subject to the relevant statutory conditions and notice requirements.

The Council will apply the statutory rules in force at the time in relation to:

- a. eligibility;
- b. notice;
- c. timing of leave; and
- d. any entitlement to statutory paternity pay.

7. Unpaid parental leave

Eligible employees have a **day-one right to unpaid parental leave** under the post-6 April 2026 rules, subject to the relevant statutory notice and eligibility requirements.

The Council will apply the statutory provisions in force at the time in relation to:

- a. eligibility;
- b. notice;
- c. the amount of leave available; and
- d. any rules about postponement.

8. Other family-related leave

Employees may also be entitled to other statutory family-related leave, including:

- a. maternity leave;
- b. adoption leave;
- c. shared parental leave;
- d. leave for antenatal or adoption appointments, where eligible;
- e. parental bereavement leave; and
- f. any other statutory family-related leave introduced or amended by legislation.

The Council will apply the relevant statutory provisions and any applicable contractual or Green Book terms in force at the time.

9. Pay during leave

Whether leave is paid or unpaid will depend on:

- a. the type of leave;
- b. the employee's eligibility under statute;
- c. the contract of employment;

Time off for dependants is normally unpaid. Carer's leave is also unpaid under the current statutory scheme.

10. Notification and evidence

Employees should give notice and provide information in accordance with the relevant statutory scheme and as early as reasonably practicable.

For planned family-related leave, the Council may ask for reasonable evidence where the law allows, for example where confirmation of entitlement is needed.

Employees should keep the Council updated if the expected duration of absence changes or if further leave may be required.

11. Alternative or additional arrangements

Where a family circumstance does not fall neatly within a specific statutory entitlement, the Council may consider other appropriate arrangements, including:

- a. annual leave;
- b. unpaid leave by agreement;
- c. TOIL, where available and appropriate; or
- d. a temporary or permanent flexible working arrangement under the Council's Flexible Working Policy.

This does not remove or limit any statutory rights.

12. Confidentiality and support

The Council will handle requests and related personal information sensitively and, where possible, confidentially.

Employees are encouraged to raise family-related issues early so that support and practical arrangements can be considered.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains consistent with current legislation and parish council best practice.