



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

# Special Leave Scheme

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## 1. Introduction

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is committed to helping its employees balance the demands of domestic and work responsibilities at times of urgent and/or unforeseen circumstances by the provision of paid or unpaid leave according to the circumstances.

The Special Leave Scheme endeavours to support employees to deal with emergency and unexpected situations by avoiding the need for unauthorised absence or inappropriate Sickness Absence. It also includes Maternity and Paternity Leave and other planned leave to assist employees with managing their work life balance.

## 2. Aim

The aim of this scheme is to provide a fair and compassionate response to immediate short-term needs. Leave granted under this policy is not intended for long-term domestic and family needs.

## 3. Scope

This scheme procedure applies to all employees of the County Borough Council other than those directly employed by the schools and those employed on Chief Officer's Conditions of Service.

The following scheme of Special Leave is to apply:-

## 4. Public Duties

Paid time off work will be granted for public duties. The full classification of public duties can be found on [DirectGov](#)

Up to 18 contractual days per annum with pay will be granted unless otherwise stated.

Examples of public duties include:-

- (i) Member of a Unitary Authority
- (ii) Magistrates
- (iii) School Governors – paid leave of up to 5 working days per annum to attend School Governing Body meetings.

[Note - The maximum individual entitlement for paid time off for public duties will be 30 contractual days per annum. Where an allowance is claimable for loss of earnings the employee must claim and pay the allowance to the Authority].

- (iv) Member of Community Council - leave without pay, to be determined by the Accountable Manager;

- (v) Jury Service - leave with pay, subject to the employee reimbursing to the Authority the employee's claim for loss of earnings;

[Note: Employees will receive a loss of earnings form from the Court and must forward this to payroll BEFORE they attend jury service. Payroll will complete and return to the employee to take to the Court with them. The Court will then give them a Remittance Advice Note which they must copy and send to Payroll.

Managers must report jury service on the staff return for the relevant days attended.]

- (vi) Service in the non-regular Reserve Forces\* and Cadets Associations (RFCAs) - 2 weeks unpaid leave to attend summer camp.

Where it is confirmed by the relevant Volunteer Reserve Force that the amount of pay, allowances and bounty claimable for the 2 week period is less than the employee's normal pay for that period, the difference shall be reimbursed by the Authority.

\*comprising the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), the Royal Marines Reserve (RMR), the Army Reserves (AR) and the RAF Reserves (RAFR).

- (vii) Special Constables - Up to 18 contractual days per annum with pay will be granted for Special Constables in line with the Council's [Employer Supported Policing Scheme](#).

## 5. Maternity Support Leave

Maternity support leave of 5 days with pay shall be granted to the child's father or the partner or nominated carer of an expectant mother at or around the time of birth, **or during the ante-natal period if considered by the employee to be more appropriate**. A nominated carer is the person nominated by the mother to assist in the care of the child and to provide support to the mother at or around the time of the birth. For full details on this please see the Council's [Maternity Leave Scheme](#).

## 6. Ante Natal Care

Any pregnant employee, regardless of length of service or number of hours worked, has the right to reasonable paid time off, during working hours, for antenatal care. Antenatal care covers not just medical examinations but also relaxation and parent-craft classes. An appointment card must be produced, when requested. This entitlement ends once the maternity leave has commenced.

From 1 October 2014, an expectant father or the partner (including same sex) of a pregnant woman will be entitled to take unpaid time off work to accompany the woman to up to 2 of her ante-natal appointments. Employees accompanying the expectant mother to her ante-natal appointments are entitled to unpaid leave for 1 or 2 appointments. The time off is capped at six and a half hours for each appointment. For full details on this please see the Council's [Maternity Leave Scheme](#).

## 7. Neo Natal Care

Any employee who has the main responsibility for caring for a baby who is admitted into hospital as a neonate (28 days old or less), if the admission lasts for a continuous period of 7 days or more, will be entitled to 12 weeks unpaid leave. This leave is restricted to parents whose children have spent a minimum of two weeks in neonatal care. Entitlement to leave will be a day one employment right. The leave must be taken in a continuous block of one or more weeks. Where possible, notice should be provided to accountable managers.

## 8. In Vitro Fertilisation Treatment (IVF)

There is no statutory right for employees to take time off for IVF treatment. Medical appointments related to IVF will be treated the same as any other medical appointment under the terms and conditions of the contract of employment. In cases where an employee is unable to work due to the effects of the IVF treatment and is signed off by the GP, the Council will treat this as sickness absence in the same way as sickness for other reasons in accordance with the normal Council policy and procedures.

Paid time off for the partner of the employee undergoing fertility treatment will also be granted paid leave for up to one programme of treatment. Partners wishing to take leave under this policy must produce written evidence of the appointments to their manager to show that they are attending fertility treatment appointments.

Following implantation a pregnancy may or may not occur, but the employee is regarded as being pregnant from the point of the implantation, and is protected from dismissal or adverse treatment under the Equality Act 2010 pregnancy legislation. Employees should notify their line manager they have reached this stage.

The Pregnancy test is usually taken 2 weeks after implantation. If the treatment is successful and the employee remains pregnant the employee will remain protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy until the end of her maternity leave. At this point an employee should refer to the Authority's Maternity Policy. If the treatment is unsuccessful and test is negative the protected period extends for a further 2 weeks, meaning the protected period ends 2 weeks after the date the employee was informed that the implantation was not successful.

## 9. Time off for Medical Screening

Reasonable paid time off will be granted for the purpose of medical screening.

## 10. Blood Donation

Reasonable paid time-off will be granted for the purpose of donating blood.

## 11. Hospital Appointments/Medical Appointments (Including Doctor's Surgery, Opticians and Dentists)

Management approval for any appointment must be obtained in advance of any appointment, and as soon as is reasonably possible.

The amount of time that can be claimed is shown in [Flexitime Scheme](#)

## 12. Adoption Leave

Details are available in the Council's [Adoptive Parents Leave and Pay Scheme](#).

## 13. Parental Leave

Details are available in the Council's [Flexible Working Policy & Procedure](#)

## 14. Foster Carer Leave

An employee of Neath Port Talbot CBC who is applying to become an approved foster carer for the Council may be granted up to 5 days paid leave per annum (pro rata for part time employees) to attend pre approval training, home assessment visits or to attend foster panel as part of the preparation and assessment process. This leave can be taken as half days where appropriate.

Where a couple are applying to become foster carers, and both are employees of the Council, the leave entitlement will apply to each partner.

An employee who is already an approved foster carer for Neath Port Talbot CBC may be granted 5 days paid leave per annum (pro rata for part time employees) to attend meetings, training or to deal with an unexpected/emergency situation in respect of the child.

Employees wishing to take leave under this policy must produce written evidence to their manager to show that they are approved foster carers with Neath Port Talbot CBC or actively applying to become foster carers with Neath Port Talbot CBC.

## 15. Carers Leave

Employees who have caring responsibilities outside of work are entitled to emergency leave to deal with unexpected situations involving a dependant. For more information please see our [Carers Policy](#).

## 16. Leave for Victims of Domestic Abuse and/or Sexual Violence

Employees experiencing domestic abuse and/or sexual violence should contact their line manager who will keep all information provided to them confidential. The Domestic Abuse in the Workplace Policy can be found [here](#) and will signpost employees to all the available help and support that they can access.

Up to 5 days paid leave per annum (pro rata for part time employees) will be granted for appointments with support agencies or solicitors, to arrange re-housing, to change childcare arrangements and for court appearances. This leave can be taken in half days or hours where appropriate allowing employees to match the leave to the times they need it most.

Additional unpaid leave can also be agreed.

## 17. Other Leave

- (i) **Domestic** - serious illness of a close relative, i.e. spouse, partner, parent or child. Up to 5 days unpaid leave may be granted by the Accountable Manager.  
  
Any additional period of leave will be unpaid, and must be approved by the Accountable Manager.
- (ii) **Bereavement** - death of an **immediate relative**, i.e. parent/stepparent, spouse, partner or sibling. Leave with pay will be granted by the Accountable Manager from the date of death to the date of the funeral, up to a maximum of 5 working days.
- (iii) **Bereavement** – under Jack’s Law, parents who suffer the loss of a child under the age of 18 or suffer a stillbirth from 24 weeks of pregnancy will be entitled to 2 weeks statutory leave irrespective of how long they have worked for the Council. Parents will be able to take the leave as either a single block of 2 weeks or as 2 separate blocks of one week each taken at different times within 56 weeks of the child’s death.
- (iv) **Bereavement** - Death of a close relative, i.e. grand-parents, parents-in-law. One day leave with pay will be granted by the Accountable Manager to attend the funeral. If the deceased relative lives with the employee, or the employee is solely responsible for all funeral arrangements, leave with pay will be granted by the Accountable Manager from the date of death to the date of the funeral, up to a maximum of 5 working days.
- (v) **Funeral Attendance** - time off with pay to attend a funeral as a nominated staff representative may be granted by the Accountable Manager. In other cases, employees will attend in their own time.
- (vi) **Court Appearance** – attendance as an officer, as part of their paid employment - leave with pay. Attendance as a witness for the police - leave with pay subject to the reimbursement of any allowances received by the employee. Attendance in all other cases - leave without pay, unless for exceptional reasons the Accountable Manager approves the absence with pay.
- (vii) **Employment Tribunals** - paid time off will be granted to employees who are required to attend an Employment Tribunal hearing which is directly associated with this Authority, subject to the reimbursement of any attendance allowances payable.
- (viii) **Participation in Elections as a Candidate** - applicable to an employee who is a candidate for the UK or European Parliament, the Welsh Assembly or a Unitary Authority. Leave without pay may be granted by the Accountable Manager from the date of the valid nomination to the date of the poll. (The same provisions would apply to an employee who acts as an official agent of a candidate at the above elections).



- (viii) **Participation in Election duties** – paid special leave will be granted to those staff who need to be away from their job during normal working hours to undertake election work. This includes Polling day duties, postal vote duties etc., and any consequential training/briefing sessions. Staff will **not** be entitled to be paid for any additional hours worked over their normal contracted hours. Similarly, if polling day falls on an employee’s non-working day, then **no paid special leave** is applicable because the employee was not scheduled to be in work.
- (ix) **“Representative” Sport** - the employee’s Accountable Manager may grant reasonable time off with and/or without pay to employees who are representing their country at national, regional or county level as an amateur either in a “playing” or administrative capacity.
- (x) **Attendance at an Interview** – Employees will be allowed paid time off for any internal (within NPTCBC) interviews. Employees who are considered at risk of redundancy with the Council have a statutory entitlement to reasonable paid time off to attend an interview on production of appropriate evidence.

## 18. Deduction of Pay

Deduction for any unpaid Special Leave will be deducted from salary in the month the leave is taken.

Salary will be reduced by the value of the number of hours taken as Special Leave multiplied by the hourly rate at the time of absence. If the Special Leave is taken on a contracted weekend, 30% weekend enhancement will also be deducted.

Pensionable pay will be reduced by the value as set out above. Should employees wish to, they can purchase Additional Pension Contributions in respect of this in accordance with Local Government Pension Scheme rules, i.e. if the purchase of Additional Pension Contributions is made within 30 days of the first deduction, the Council will pay the employer’s contribution. Employees should contact the Pensions Section on telephone number: 01792 636655 or email: [pensions@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@swansea.gov.uk) to arrange this, and should do so as soon as the Special Leave arrangement has been agreed to ensure that pensionable pay and service records are correct. Further guidance can be obtained from the Swansea Pension Fund website [www.swanseapensionfund.org.uk](http://www.swanseapensionfund.org.uk).

Line managers must inform Payroll Section of any unpaid absence.