



People Matter

Frequently Asked Questions – Special Leave Policy

The revised Special Leave Policy comes in place in January **2020**. Revised Toolkits have been developed including a Toolkit for the mobilisation of Armed Forces.

The Special Leave policy applies to Local Government Employees, Craft Employees and Chief Officers. Teachers and those on SNCT Conditions of Service should refer to the Procedural Statement of written particulars for further guidance (Manual No. 2/11 Special Leave for Teachers and Employees on Scottish Negotiating Committee (SNCT) Conditions of Service).

The Special Leave Policy refers to a **Charter of Commitment** which will also come into effect January 2020. The Charter of Commitment outlines the role and responsibilities for all those involved in the process of the policy including employees of the Council.

This FAQ document aims to provide you with answers to some of the questions you may have in relation to the policy update and what these changes mean for you.

1. What has changed from the Previous Special Leave Policy?

The main changes to the policy are:

- Clearer information in relation to types of leave available to employees and the criteria for Special Leave to be requested and granted;
- Detail on Special Leave for Reserve Forces, including the joining and deployment of Reservists;
- Special Leave for victims of domestic abuse has been extended to up to 10 days leave from 5 days, which can be taken as a block or separately;
- Flexibility has been introduced for bereavement leave where additional Special Leave may be granted depending on the circumstances of the bereavement.

2. What types of special leave are available to me and in what circumstances?

Employees within the Council have Special Leave available to them and can be offered with or without pay. The table on the next page summarises the main types of leave requested and/or required to support employees however further detail around all leave can be found in the policy.

Circumstances	Leave Entitlement
Family Domestic Emergencies	1 day leave with pay at Managers discretion
Emergency hospitalisation of family member & employee advised to stay at the hospital	Leave with pay for up to 5 days normally granted
Care for family member	Leave without pay subject to monthly review

Domestic emergency e.g. floods, fire, burglary	Reasonable leave with pay.
Domestic violence	Leave with pay for up to 5 days with discretion to extend to 10 days
Non-emergency/routine medical treatment e.g. optician, dentist, GP	Appointments should out with normal working hours or alternative agreement including making up lost working or use of annual leave
Hospital appointments (medical examinations/interventions)	Reasonable time off with pay
Physiotherapy	Necessary paid time off if referred by GP or GP supports the treatment
Ante-natal Care	Time off with pay to attend clinics/ appointments
Nursing Mother	Time off with pay during work (up to 60 minutes per day) for breastfeeding/expressing
Fertility Treatment	Time off with pay for appointments
Disabled Family Members	Time off with pay (max of 5 days per year) for hospital appointments subject to employee using annual leave for 50% of leave required
Bereavement	Reasonable time off up to a maximum of 5 working days, including the day of the funeral in cases where the funeral is of a family member. Other relationships may be taken into account or requirement to travel overseas.
All other bereavement cases	Paid time off to attend the ceremony
Reserve Forces	Up to 15 days leave with pay subject to the deduction of service pay received for the period of leave
Jury & Witness Service	Leave with pay to serve on jury. Leave with pay in cases of professional witness. Leave without pay where called as witness by person other than the Council. Leave with pay for attending tribunal involving the Council. Unpaid leave for those taking claims against the council.
Public Duties	Leave without pay for attendance at community council, health council, benefits agency appeals tribunal, college board of management, board of visitors for Prisons and Young Offenders Institution. Leave with pay to attend meetings as members of school boards. Up to 10 days leave with pay for duties with Children's panel or Justice of the Peace.
Election Duties	Paid leave to undertake official duties such as Presiding Officer, Polling Clerk & Enumerator at elections

Interviews	Time off with pay for interviews with local government. Employee who is in a redundancy/redeployment situation paid time off for interviews
Study Leave	Leave with pay for one day for final revision to formal examination, leave with pay granted for employees with approved sponsorship and no leave granted for resitting examinations
Severe Weather/Adverse Conditions	Generally unpaid leave if an employee is unable to report to work. Individual cases will be considered on their own merit and severity of weather conditions

The policy also outlines other entitlements to leave for the following:

- Emergency Services – In the event of a National Emergency or Critical Incident
- International Sporting/Cultural Events
- Youth Organisation Holiday Camps etc.
- Election Candidates & Agents
- Councillor Duties
- Voluntary Service (including overseas)
- Leave for Third Party Claims
- Visiting overseas relatives
- Religious Festivals or Holidays

3. How do I apply for Special Leave?

Employees should submit a special leave form to their line manager before the leave is taken where possible, although it is accepted in a few circumstances this may not be possible. appointment cards or other evidence are available these should be provided along with the special leave form. The Special Leave Form can be found in the Special Leave Toolkit or on the hub under HR Forms.

4. Are you a member of Armed Forces Reservist or participate in Cadet Groups?

The Council offers support and promotes involvement of its employees in the Armed Reserve Forces. This is reflected in the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant in 2018. Therefore if you are a Reservist we request you inform your line manager. We would also like to record under your personal details on iTrent that you are a Reservist and for which Force. This is so the Council is aware of who is participating in such activities and ensure the correct support is provided for training and in the case of mobilisation. If you are a reservist you should apply for special leave when you have training. If you are mobilized you must inform your manager and there is a toolkit to ensure this process and your return is undertaken smoothly.

5. Special Leave can be paid and unpaid. If I take unpaid leave will this affect my continuous service and pension?

If you take unpaid leave this will affect your pension contributions for the period of time of the leave, however if you need more information on what impact this will have and what options you have to repay pension contribution please contact Payroll or the Strathclyde Pension Fund Office (SPFO) directly. Any periods of agreed unpaid Special Leave will not affect your continuous service.

6. Can Special Leave be extended?

Employees can request to extend or substitute special leave by using their annual leave.

7. Where can I seek additional information and support from?

If you have any further queries you can speak to your line manager in the first instance. You can also address any queries to the following contacts in the Workforce Strategy Team:

HR Case Advisers			
Name	Job Title	Email	Ext No
Anne Marie Cunningham	Team leader HR Operations	annemarie_cunningham@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	5535
Nikki Edgar	HR Case Management Adviser	nikki.edgar@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	5647
Lorna McLaughlin	HR Case Adviser Management	lorna.mclaughlin@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	3243
Susie Andrews	HR Case Adviser Management	susie.andrews@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	5608
Susan Hamilton	HR Case Adviser Management	susan.hamilton@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	5628

HR Business Partners			
Name	Job Title	Email	Ext No
Lisa MacGregor	Team Leader Organisational Development	lisa.macgregor@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	3429
Lesley Milligan	HR Business Partner	lesley.milligan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	3429
Caroline Smith	HR Business Partner	caroline.smith@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	3434
Cheryl Silvester	HR Business Partner	cheryl.silvester@eastdunbarton.gov.uk	3216

The SPFO can be contacted at:

www.spfo.org.uk

Tel: 0345 8908999

Email: spfo@glasgow.gov.uk

Address: Strathclyde Pension Fund Office, PO Box 27001, Glasgow, G2 9EW

Your Trade Union representatives are also available for support.