

Special Leave Policy and Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Special Leave can be defined as arrangements granted when staff need to be absent for short term from work in circumstances not covered by sick leave, annual leave, compassionate / bereavement leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, dependants leave or flexible working arrangements.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff regardless of grade, length of service or hours worked.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 NHS 24 recognises the requirement for special leave to help employees balance the demands of domestic and work responsibilities at times of urgent and unforeseen need through the provision of paid or unpaid leave according to circumstances.
- 3.2 Leave granted under these arrangements is not intended for long term domestic and family needs, but rather to give employees specific time off when it is needed urgently.
- 3.3 Special leave is therefore of a short term nature to help staff deal with unforeseen domestic emergencies (e.g. fire, flood, house break-in).
- 3.4 This type of leave can be used when emergency circumstances do not fit under parental or dependants leave policies.
- 3.5 Line managers must consider that the policy is intended to assist staff with short term emergencies rather than long term domestic needs.
- 3.6 NHS 24 expects employees to use such leave not only to allow them to be available in an urgent domestic situation, but also to make arrangements where necessary to allow them to return to work within a reasonable time.
- 3.7 Special leave is also available for other circumstances as outlined in Section 6.

4. LENGTH OF SPECIAL LEAVE

- 4.1 Full time employees will be entitled to up to three consecutive working days' paid leave in each circumstance where an example of special leave arises.

- 4.2** Part time employee should similarly be give time off at the time it is urgently needed, and if, for example, an employee working two days per week can reasonably deal with the crisis in the space of a calendar week, then, only two days leave from work should be given. It would certainly not be reasonable to give a part time employee working one day per week, three days special leave equating to three working weeks. The overriding principle is to give sufficient time off to deal with the problem.
- 4.3** In cases of exceptional difficulty, the leave can be extended by a further five consecutive working days (pro rata for part time employees). The relevant Director or Associate Director of Nursing will be required to authorise any extended periods of special leave whether paid or unpaid. Annual leave can also be utilised at this point.
- 4.4** If an employee is facing long term difficulties, the line manager may consider other options to enable the member of staff to meet their domestic and work responsibilities. This may include a longer period of unpaid leave, reduced working hours or a different shift pattern. Discussion with the local Human Resource Department will normally take place, prior to any decision being reached. The relevant Director or Associate Director of Nursing will be required to authorise any further periods of special leave whether paid or unpaid. (See Management Guidelines)

5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1** It is accepted that advanced notice will be unlikely due to the nature of the situation. In order to ensure that the granting of special leave is fair to all employees in all parts of the organisation, the following procedure should be followed:
- The employee should make a request for Special Leave to their appropriate line manager/team leader or, if unavailable, duty line manager/team leader. The "Approved Leave Pro Forma" see Appendix A should then be completed. If the employee is not at work at the time of request, the team leader or line manager will complete and obtain the employee's signature retrospectively. In cases where unpaid leave has been granted, the employee's signature will normally be required prior to granting any such leave.
 - The line manager must ascertain the full circumstances relating to the request and determine the amount of leave to grant. (See Management Guidelines). The employee should be advised in writing, using the Approved Authorised Leave Form, of the duration of the leave granted and details as to whether it is paid or unpaid. The line manager must obtain authorisation from the relevant Associate Director of Nursing or Director where further periods of extended leave is being sought, whether paid or unpaid.
- 5.2** Line managers should record the granting of Special Leave using the Approved Authorised Leave Pro Forma, obtaining any further authorisation from the relevant Director or Associate Director of Nursing, and email a copy immediately to Central Resource Team (CRT) and the Human Resources Department. In turn, the Human Resources Department will update the Personnel Management Information System (CIPHR). Any periods of unpaid

leave granted will require payroll notification: for front line staff this will be completed by the Service Support Team and for non front line staff by the Human Resource Department. See Appendix B for 'Request for Authorised Leave – Process Flow'.

- 5.3** Once the employee has signed off the Approved Authorised Leave Pro Forma, which in certain circumstances may be retrospective of the leave taken, Part B should then be sent to the Human Resource Department.

6. OTHER FORMS OF SPECIAL LEAVE

Special Leave for other purposes may include:

6.1 Leave for Jury Service

Employees who are cited to attend court as a witness or juror shall be granted Special Leave. Staff will continue to receive their normal salary during their jury service. Any other expenses such as travel should be claimed from the Court. Employees are required to give their line manager a copy of the court citation form.

6.2 Civic and Public Duties

Special Leave, with pay may be granted, subject to service requirements, for staff who are required to attend essential civic or public duties as provided for under the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended). In this respect, 15 working paid days in any twelve month period will be granted in respect of the following duties:

- Serving as a Justice of the Peace
- Membership of a Local Authority
- Membership of any Statutory Tribunal
- Membership of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment maintained by a local Education Authority

6.3 Leave for Training with the Reserve or Cadet Forces

Employees, who with the consent of their line manager, volunteer for service with the Reserve Forces (or who at the time of appointment declare their membership and their Manager does not object) may be granted five days special leave for attendance at annual camp. This will normally be unpaid leave. Should any further leave be required, annual leave or further periods of unpaid leave would be required to be taken.

Employees who are required to undergo further short periods of additional training, and are unable to arrange for such training in off duty times, may be granted additional unpaid time off for this purpose, subject to the discretion of their line manager who will take into account the amount of time off which is reasonable in the circumstances and previous time off permitted.

- 6.4 Leave for Activities with Emergency Services**
(e.g. Auxiliary Fire Service, Coastguard Service, Mountain Rescue)

NHS 24 recognises that the auxiliary emergencies services rely on volunteer input and play a valuable role in the local community. Leave (paid or unpaid) for these purposes may be granted at the discretion of line managers taking into account the needs of the service. (See Management Guidelines)

The same procedure for leave approval should be followed as detailed in 5.1

7. REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed on a 2 year basis by the Partnership Forum.

APPROVED AUTHORISED LEAVE

Part A: To Be Completed By Employee

Where an employee is requesting any form of leave other than annual leave. , i.e., leave for off line activities, study leave or facilities time, compassionate leave, unpaid leave, dependents leave, parental leave etc.

Please complete Part A indicating the category of leave requested and pass to your TL / Line Manager for approval

The Team Leader/Line Manager should then complete Part B of the form and submit to CRT for updating in Q-Max and HR Services for filing and the actioning of any unpaid leave.

All requests whether approved or NOT approved must be returned to HR Services for monitoring in accordance with Equal Opportunities Legislation.

Name Of Employee			
Location		Employee Payroll Number:	
	Dates Requested	From	To Paid/Unpaid*
Half Shift	Dates Requested	From	To Paid/Unpaid*
Total Hours Requested(Front Line)		Total days Requested (Non frontline)	

* Delete As Appropriate

CATEGORY OF LEAVE

Category of Authorised Leave Approved	Please indicate
Parental Leave	
Compassionate Leave/Bereavement Leave	
Dependants Leave	
Fostering Leave	
Adoption Leave	
Paternity leave	
Unpaid Leave	
Special Leave: Domestic Situation Jury Service Civic and Public Duties Voluntary Emergency Services Reserve Services	

Comments: *(please give as much detail regarding the reason for request)*

Part B: Line Manager Authorisation

Having considered the above request for leave:

I Approve * / Do not approve (please circle your decision) this request.

If approval is declined, please state the reasons for this.

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Authorising Team Leader / Line Manager:	
Signature:	
Print Name:	Date
Authorising ADON/Director in cases where extended periods of leave is requested, whether paid or unpaid:	
Signature:	
Print Name	Date

RETURN APPROVED REQUESTS TO CRT & HR SERVICES

RETURN NON-APPROVED REQUESTS TO HR SERVICES