



Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE)

Absence policy (PDSE staff only) Version 1.0

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Approved by: The Board

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Policy will be updated as required in response to a change in national policy or evidence-based guideline.

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Miscellaneous Absence

1. Principles

- 1.1 All staff are expected to attend work in accordance with their contract of employment, which includes details of standard authorised absence for holidays and sickness. There may also be occasions when an employee is unable to carry out their duties. In this case, consideration will be given to granting leave of absence, paid or unpaid, depending on the circumstances.
- 1.2 It is intended that reasonable support will be given to all employees in cases of domestic emergencies. Any absence, paid or unpaid, **MUST** be agreed with the employee's line manager prior to being taken.
- 1.3 All scheduled absences must be notified and approved by the line manager in advance. The procedures for miscellaneous absences are detailed below.

2. Unpaid Absence

- 2.1 In certain circumstances, management may exercise their discretion to allow an employee to take unpaid leave. Each case should be considered on its merits and where appropriate, managers should contact the relevant Human Resources Advisor for advice. Written confirmation will be required from the Manager using the discretionary leave form which must be sent to HR. In the case of newly appointed staff, we will honour holiday commitments previously arranged, which may include unpaid absence.

3. Payment in Lieu of holiday

- 3.1 Other than on leaving employment, payment in lieu of an employee's annual holiday is not normally granted. Full details of holiday entitlement on leaving service are in the Contract of Employment. Employees are encouraged to take their holiday entitlement in the year in which it is due.

4. Paid leave for Domestic Emergencies

- 4.1 In certain circumstances, such as the death of a dependant, the management may allow up to 5 days leave with pay (bereavement leave). A dependant could be a spouse, partner, child, parent or someone who depends on you for care. There is no set provision for compassionate leave, for example in the case of family illness. Each case will be treated on its merits and consideration will include employment record and length of service. Unpaid leave for domestic emergencies will be granted in line with legislation.

5. Public Service

5.1 Jury Service

Individuals who are summoned to serve on a jury should advise their manager as soon as they are notified of their attendance. Normally employees must attend jury service when summoned, although in exceptional circumstances, individuals can apply to the Clerk of the Court for exemption from or deferment of jury service.

The Court will issue a form to jurors, which should be sent to the Human Resources Department. The Court will make a payment to the employee based on their attendance on jury service, and PDSE will deduct that amount from the employee's salary.

5.2 Public Duties

Whilst PDSE encourages its employees to participate in public duties, individuals must seek agreement from their manager before formally taking up such offices. Agreement will be subject to the requirements of the service. Currently public duties include membership of the following bodies:

- Local authorities
- Police authorities
- Governing bodies of local authority or grant-maintained schools, and
- Justices of the Peace

Where membership is being sought for other bodies, managers are advised to contact the Human Resources Department before considering applications for time off.

If agreement is given to become a member of a recognised body, the duties for which unpaid leave must be given are:

- Attending meetings of the body or any of its committees
- Carrying out other duties in order to enable the body to discharge its functions

5.3 Staff Representative Duties

Staff Representatives are entitled to time for relevant duties. Such duties will include, attendance at the staff consultative committee and supporting individuals in line with relevant policies eg. Disciplinary

5.5 Volunteers of Non-Regular Forces

As for public duties, individuals must seek agreement from their manager before taking up membership of an organisation. The requirements of the service will be the overriding factor in deciding if permission can be given.

Where permission has been granted, the time off allowed is:

- Two weeks unpaid leave for Summer Camp in addition to normal annual leave.
- Under the Reserve Forces Act 1966, volunteers are required to undertake training for up to 16 days per annum (usually on Saturdays and Sundays). Unpaid leave should be granted where individuals are unable to arrange for the necessary training to be on days when they would not normally be working.
- In the event of a National conflict where Non-Regular Forces are required to supplement Regular Forces, volunteer members will be expected to be released from their work for whatever duration is required. Normally employees will not be paid for these absences.

Where Permission is Not Granted: Where the requirements of the service prevent permission being given to take up membership of an organisation, individuals may continue with membership on the understanding that no time off will be granted. Individuals will be expected to use their annual leave for this purpose, and they must not assume that annual leave will automatically be granted at the time they require. The needs of the service will take precedence in all cases.

There is no automatic right to take time off on every occasion, the amount of time off taken and the number of occasions on which absence is permitted must be reasonable in all circumstances. Managers should come to a prior agreement with the employee on the amount of time off which is likely to be permitted, subject to operational requirements. Where considerable time off is required, an individual may be expected to take a part of that as annual leave.

6. Doctor, Dentist and Hospital appointments

6.1 Time off for Medical appointments (including dental)

Employees are expected to minimise the disruption to their work and arrange appointments accordingly, eg at the beginning or end of the working day. Reasonable time off to attend appointments during the working day will be allowed where it is not possible to arrange appointments at other times. An employee may be requested to provide evidence of any medical appointments. Where appointments last for half of the employee's working day or more, this will be counted against their sickness entitlement and a "report of absence" form should be submitted.

Where appointments last for less than half of the employee's working day, they will be expected to agree with their line manager to make up any time lost.

6.2 Ante-natal appointments

Expectant mothers are entitled to paid time off to attend ante-natal appointments. Additional entitlements associated with pregnancy will be detailed in the Maternity Leave Policy.

Expectant fathers are entitled to unpaid time off to attend two ante-natal appointments.

An employee may be requested to provide evidence of any appointments.

7. Carer's Leave

- 7.1 PDSE acknowledges that on occasions, our dependents have an urgent need for us to support them. Dependents are defined as those living in the same house as family (not lodgers) or members of our family who have particular health needs (such as elderly parents). In order to accommodate the needs of our staff to be available in an emergency situation, we recognise our obligations under the emergency domestic leave legislation.

Some of our staff who transferred from other NHS organisations have retained a limited amount of paid carer's leave, and after that is used in a 12 month period, any additional leave is unpaid. PDSE terms and conditions acknowledge carer's leave, but it is unpaid. On occasions, an individual may have a domestic emergency and request to use annual leave to attend to that emergency if unpaid leave will cause a problem for them.

It is anticipated that all carer's leave, whether paid or unpaid, is used for domestic emergencies only. Such leave is in place to enable an employee to put plans in place to enable the dependent to be looked after in another way – e.g. if a child cannot attend nursery due to being ill, another relative may be asked to look after them on the second day, or two parents may share the care.

Carer's leave should not be used as an extension of annual leave or to look after a dependent for an extended period of time. It is usually anticipated to be for a 24 hour period.

8. Cosmetic / Non-essential surgery

- 8.1 A Cosmetic Surgery procedure is non-essential treatment that an employee had chosen to undergo for personal reasons. Eg. Breast enhancement or Laser Eye Treatment. Where this is the case, the following procedure applies.
- 8.2 Cosmetic surgery which has been medically advised or prescribed by a doctor or consultant, eg. Reconstructive surgery, skin grafts, etc. will not be considered under this section of the policy surgery and the normal sickness absence policy will apply.
- 8.3 An employee may request leave to accommodate time-off to undergo a non - essential procedure. Leave should be requested via the line manager as detailed in the Annual Leave policy giving as much notice as possible. This period of leave must cover the time for the procedure and the recovery time as advised by the medical practitioner.
- 8.4 If an employee is unable to return to work at the end of the period of leave due to unforeseen medical complications, any additional absence will be recorded as sickness absence and where appropriate must be covered by a medical certificate (FitNote). During this period of absence staff will receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) only.
- 8.5 If you have been advised of any recommendations of reduced work on your return by the medical practitioner these would need to be included on your FitNote.