



## Leave Policy

### Purpose

The Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body (“Sponsor Body”) recognises the importance of work-life balance and is committed to providing adequate opportunities for rest and to allow time off for personal or caring responsibilities. This policy sets out employees’ entitlement to annual leave and public holidays, circumstances where special leave may be requested and the underpinning principles for requesting and taking leave.

### Scope

The Working Time Regulations 1998 and subsequent Employment Rights Act 2018 entitle employees to paid annual leave including public holidays of 28 days. This policy only applies to direct employees of the Sponsor Body, and for the avoidance of any doubt does not apply to agency/interim workers and contractors.

### Principles

Full-time employees are entitled to 30 days **annual leave** in addition to the 8 public holidays and other agreed public holidays in any leave year.

- The annual leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March each year.
- There is no increment with length of service, so the entitlement remains the same throughout the employment with the Sponsor Body.
- Annual leave entitlement accrues on a monthly basis, one twelfth of the full year’s entitlement for each completed month of employment for full-time employees and pro rata for part-time employees based on the number of days worked.
- Adjustments will be made to an employee’s annual leave entitlement if their employment starts after 1 April or their employment ends before 31 March.
- Individual entitlement will be recalculated if there are changes to the number of days an employee works.
- Part-time employees’ public holiday entitlement is calculated on a pro rata basis based on the number of days worked in a normal week. If a public holiday falls on a day when the employee normally works, then the employee has to work additional days (which should be agreed with their line manager) or use their annual leave entitlement. Employees who work part-time hours spread equally over five days are entitled to the same number of public holidays as full-time employees.
- Employees who work compressed hours are entitled to the same number of public holidays as full-time employees. However, if a public holiday falls on a day when the employee normally works, then the employee has to work additional days (which should be agreed with their line manager) or use their annual leave entitlement.
- On termination of employment, either by resignation or dismissal, leave entitlement will be calculated on a pro rata basis based on the number of days worked. If an employee has not used up the leave they have accrued, they will be paid for the outstanding leave days. If the employee has used up more than their leave entitlement, the pay for the appropriate number of days will be deducted from the final pay.



Employees should use their best endeavours to use up their annual leave entitlement within the leave year, but we recognise that it may not always be possible for personal and business reasons. Annual leave may be carried forward to the next leave year in these circumstances:

- a maximum of 5 days contractual annual leave with the approval of a line manager;
- long-term sickness absence; and
- adoption, maternity, or shared parental leave.

The purpose of **special leave** is to permit an employee to take additional absence from work for emergencies, bereavement, statutory duties like Jury Service, certain voluntary work and other specific reasons over and above the normal leave (annual leave and public holidays). There is no automatic right to special leave and any requests will be considered by the line manager on their merit. Special leave applies to the day when an employee would normally be at work and may be paid or unpaid as follows: -

- time as required for Jury Service with pay;
- half a day and up to 3 days, with pay, for Bereavement leave;
- up to 5 days with pay to care for dependants, (immediate family members or someone in the same household), in an emergency as Caring leave;
- up to 5 days with pay as Study leave for training funded by the Sponsor Body. Special leave of up to 10 days without pay may be granted for full-time study relevant to the employee's role but will only be allowed once in two years.

## Implementation

Individual annual leave entitlement will be recorded on the HR systems. Employees should request leave via self-service, giving line managers reasonable notice of their leave requests before they are due to take time off work, as line managers will need to balance requests with operational needs. Where requests cannot be immediately authorised, the line manager must reach an agreed solution with the employee but must not unreasonably refuse requests for annual leave.

All leave must be considered by line managers within a week of the employee's request. If more time is required before a decision can be made, the line manager should give the employee a reason for the delay and an estimated time when they will give the decision. Any request or existing arrangements for time off for training or to study should be considered separately from annual leave requests.

Employees are advised not to make holiday plans until their request for annual leave has been authorised, as the Sponsor Body will not be responsible for any costs incurred by an employee whose leave is not authorised.

Employees may request time off for a **religious festival** which does not fall on one of the agreed public holidays. This must be agreed by the line manager well in advance of the day and may be taken as part of the employee's annual leave entitlement or as time off in lieu.

If an employee takes time off work which has not been authorised by the line manager then it will be recorded as **unauthorised absence**. The Sponsor Body reserves the right to withhold salary payment or make salary deductions for all periods of unauthorised absence, and to take appropriate action under the Disciplinary Policy.



Employees who **fall ill** during the whole or part of their annual leave and follow the sickness absence reporting rules may have their leave days classed as sickness absence if they submit a medical certificate to Human Resources. In this circumstance, the whole or part of the authorised annual leave will be added back to their annual entitlement. Employees are not entitled to an additional day off if they fall sick on a public holiday. Annual leave must not be taken as an alternative to sickness absence.

Employees who are absent from work due to a **long-term period of sickness** are entitled to take annual leave and be paid accordingly during their period of absence. Annual leave taken during the period of sickness absence will count towards the limits of sickness absence for unsatisfactory attendance and the absence trigger points for pay and for calculation of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) entitlement. The employee will be paid their normal salary for any period of annual leave entitlement taken during the sickness absence. The line manager may authorise the use of any outstanding annual leave entitlement before the employee returns to work.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, over the life of the Restoration and Renewal Programme, or sooner if there is a specific legislative, regulatory, or service requirement or a change in practice to support the improvement of this policy.

**Sarah Johnson**  
On behalf of the Sponsor Body  
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