

1. Policy Statement

This policy provides guidance in relation to time off work, which includes annual leave; times when you may be able to take special leave, or a career break. NHSBT recognises that there will be times when you will need to take time off e.g. to attend to any urgent domestic circumstances. In most situations, we are flexible in allowing time off work for a variety of reasons, providing reasonable time-off for relatively short periods of time, to help you. This policy applies equally to all permanent and fixed-term employees regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. It also covers all situations where you may need time off work, excluding sickness absence, maternity, maternity support or statutory parental leave. This policy does not cover agency workers.

Our commitment to inclusion across sexual orientation; gender; age; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; disability; religion or belief; race; marriage and civil partnership, identity, all abilities and experience drives us forward every day.

We acknowledge this policy cannot cover every situation, therefore you will need to look at the supporting FAQs and should you need any specific guidance or advice, raise a query with [HR Direct](#)

2. The Process

Talk to your manager

In the first instance discuss your request, the need and background with your manager. This will enable you to explore the options available to you and the operational influences which need to be taken into consideration. These options may include any of the following:

- Use of accrued TOIL
- Use of Flexi time if applicable
- Alter a given shift, day or week – making up the hours
- The use of annual leave
- The use of special leave
- Reasonable paid time off for medical appointments*
- The use of unpaid leave as a last resort

*See FAQ(Knowledge) “Can I request time off work to attend my doctor’s/dentist appointment?”

This should enable you and your manager to agree the most appropriate option for your particular circumstances.

There may be some circumstances where your manager may not be able to approve time off work and this will be discussed and explained.

Annual leave

Annual leave is calculated for all employees in hours. Although it is normal to book a minimum of half day annual leave at any one time, to support you in unusual circumstances such as those set out below, it may be practicable that you book fewer hours to support you. This would be one of the options you would discuss with your manager, depending on the circumstances.

Special leave

Sometimes, short periods away from your place of work may be agreed to allow you to deal with an emergency, to put in place any measures to support you, before returning to work. In addition, should you need to attend planned appointments, normally medical, for yourself, your child or someone you have caring responsibility for (this would apply to both First and Second parents regardless of gender).

You may wish to discuss with your manager the possibility of making up the time you have taken within a reasonable period of time, to limit the impact on you financially. Unpaid leave may also be considered if you have used up all of your annual leave, and you wish to request an extended period of leave for personal reasons e.g. an extended holiday to celebrate a life event. However, operational requirements and the impact on others in your work area will always be considered by your manager in making their decision. Sometimes, you may need to take a whole day, shift or more, and not be able to make up the time you need to take.

Therefore, normally, you will be able to request up to **no more than 5 working days** paid 'Special Leave' (pro rata) per rolling 12 months to support you with such times. This may be used in hours, if appropriate to your situation.

Should you develop a pattern of regularly using Special Leave, your manager may explore with you the issues you have so that you may consider flexible working options.

You should be aware that Special Leave is granted by exception and is not a yearly entitlement. This is normally to cover emergencies and some planned events, should you need to attend planned appointments, normally medical, for yourself, your child or someone you have caring responsibility for and can be requested in the following circumstances:

Examples of when Special leave may be taken

- Urgent Domestic Circumstance
- Carers/Dependant Leave
- Bereavement
- Medical/Dental Appointment
- Unavoidable Transport Difficulties
- Adverse Weather conditions

Paid time away from work may also be granted with reasonable notice in the following circumstances:

- NHS interviews
- Attendance at court as a witness/due to Jury Service
- Investiture with an Honour or Decoration
- Relocation
- Coaching or mentoring
- Giving blood

Carer's Leave

Carer's leave is also available to employees so that you can provide or arrange care for a dependant with a "long-term care need". You can take up to one week of leave every 12 months (pro rata). The Carer's leave will be unpaid. Employees are eligible to take unpaid leave to give or arrange care for a 'dependant' who has:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than 3 months
- a disability (as [defined in the Equality Act 2010](#))
- care needs because of their old age

Should you wish to take Carer's leave you should discuss with your manager and provide reasonable notice of your intention to take the leave.

Child Bereavement Leave

As a bereaved parent, you are eligible for two weeks of child bereavement paid leave. Taking child bereavement leave is an individual choice and is not compulsory. You do not have to take the two weeks of leave in a continuous block.

Should you wish to take child bereavement leave, you may take this:

- immediately following the death of your child
- at any point up to 56 weeks following the death of your child at another time.

You should discuss your manager and if delaying your leave, provide reasonable notice of your intention to take the leave.

Leave for Public Duties

Legislation entitles you to request time of work to support some public duties. We recognise our public responsibility to support the work of other public sector organisations and appreciate the contribution to the greater public good made by you, our employees who, by the use of your own time and reasonable time granted by us, volunteer to undertake public duties.

Prior to taking up any such duties, you will need to discuss any ongoing time commitment with your manager. Such duties are normally voluntary and therefore you must be willing to give some of your own time. In addition, we recognise that the acquisition of any new skills could be beneficial to the organisation. Therefore, should you require any additional support, your manager will consider this in line with operational requirements, and you must provide reasonable notice. This will be over and above the maximum days allowed for special leave.

Time away from work for Jury Service

Should you be required to attend court on jury service, or as a witness, you will receive your basic pay.

Leave for Training with Reserves and Cadet Forces

NHSBT will not unreasonably withhold support for employees who are currently in the reserve or cadet forces. If you are a member at the time of appointment, you must have declared this in your application and received confirmation that this is acceptable to continue. Should you apply later, this must be discussed with your manager to ensure that they are able to support your application and the duties expected. You will receive one week's additional paid leave for attendance at annual camp. This will be over and above the maximum days allowed for special leave.

You are free to choose whether the 2nd week at camp should be taken as either special leave, as outlined above; OR as part of your annual leave entitlement OR as unpaid leave.

Support for Development Activity

Should you make such an application e.g. a development activity, any time off work you may need to take, will be considered in your application, and will be agreed with you as part of your application. This will be over and above the maximum days allowed for special leave. Please see the NHSBT Support for Development Activity Policy.

If you are an NHSBT Coach or mentor, or are receiving any of these services, you will be granted time away from your normal workplace to attend such sessions. However, full consideration will be given to operational requirements before granting such requests. Should you be providing or accessing such services externally to NHSBT or one of our partner organisations providing development activity, you may wish to consider requesting time off (see list above) or as special leave.

Medical Study Leave

Medical employees are required to carry out regular continuous professional development to maintain their Licence to practise through the Revalidation process. To support this, Doctors have an entitlement as part of their Terms and Conditions of employment to study leave based on a maximum of 30 days (pro-rata for part-time employees/joint post holders) in a rolling 3 year period.

If you are a doctor wishing to take study leave on days when you are not normally at work you should discuss with your manager **before** submitting your application. Where time off in lieu is requested and agreed, this time will count towards your study leave entitlement. Where time off in lieu is not requested or agreed, the time will not be deducted from your study leave entitlement. Payment cannot be made for study leave taken on days when not normally at work, but expenses can be claimed.

This only applies to our medical employees and should be read in conjunction with the relevant medical Terms and Conditions.

All medical study leave for Medical colleagues must be requested to: [Medical Development Support and Study Leave](#), and where appropriate this must be supported by the Personal and Professional Development Application Form. Should your application fall within the criteria for OWD support for development, your application will be sent to OWD and will follow the normal process set out within the Support for personal and Professional Policy and FAQ's.

Any application for funding must be made using the Support for Personal and Professional Development Policy.

Career Break

You need to have a minimum of 12 months continuous NHSBT service to be able to request a career break and should be a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 5 years. Should you require this, you will need to discuss your reasons in detail with your manager, who will consider your application in line with operational requirements. All aspects of your discussions including dates, notice, your job, how it will be back filled, contact arrangements etc, should be noted and confirmed in writing to you by your manager.

For a career break you need to complete a 'Career Break Application Form' (See 'Forms' under this policy in People First)

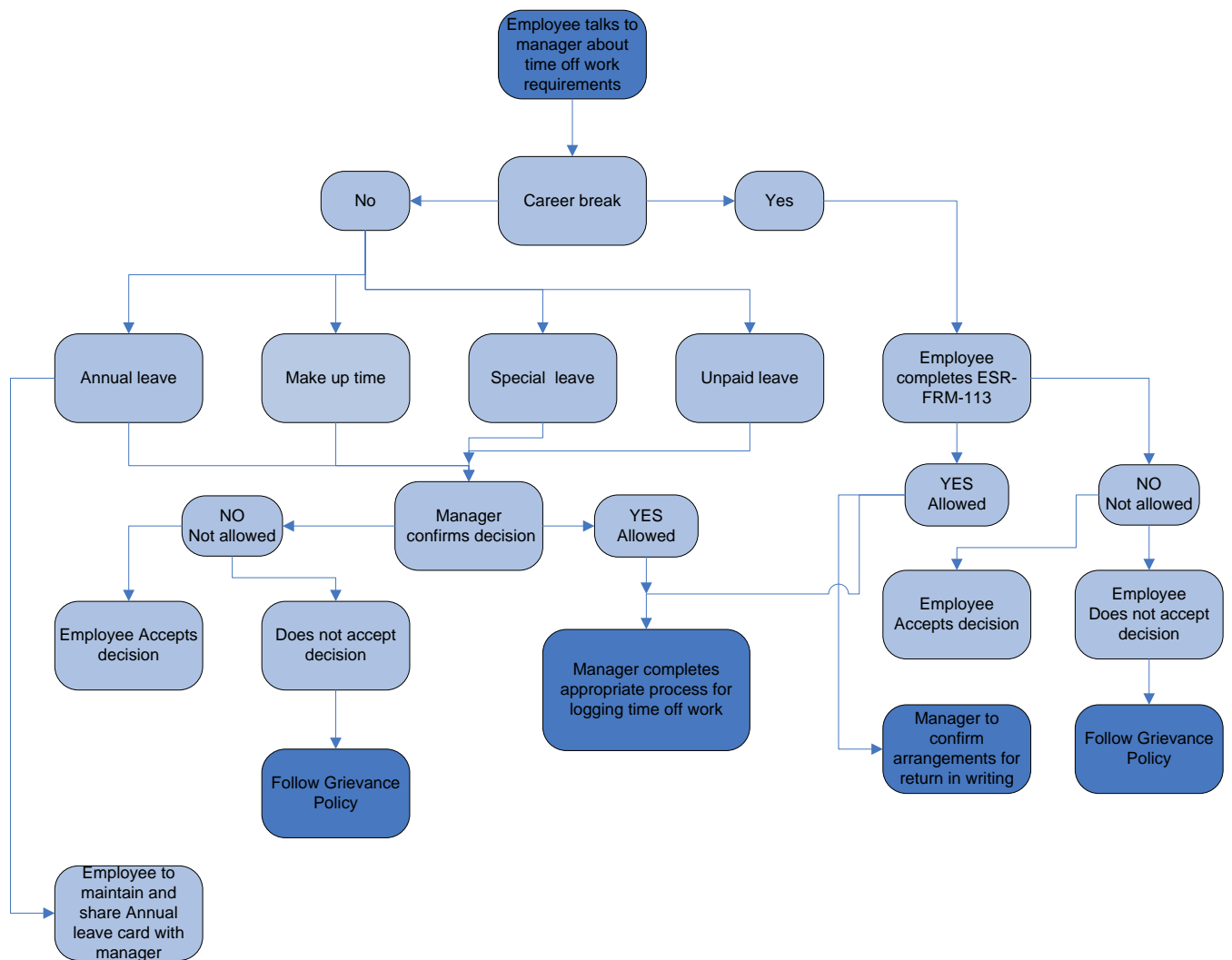
Administration

Following discussions with your manager, if you agree to make up the time, this will be arranged locally and agreed between you both as appropriate. If paid leave is agreed by your manager, your manager will need to record in 'EASY'. For all agreed annual leave, you are responsible for ensuring your own annual leave card is updated and shared with your manager.

Appeal

If your request has been refused and you are unhappy with the decision you should discuss this with your manager or your manager's manager. If you are unable to resolve your concerns, you have access to the Grievance Policy which explains the process that you will need to follow.

3. Flowchart



4. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	UCD/People/TimeOffWork/006v3.2
Title	Time Off Work Policy
Approved by SPC	October 2020
Equality Impact Assessment completed	16 th October 2020
Counter Fraud Check	20 th October 2020
This document replaces	UCD/People/TimeOffWork/006v3.1
Effective Release Date	April 2024
Review Date	April 2025
Author	Mike Lovett
Filepath	G/HR/HR/Everyone/Policies
Distribution	Available on People First

Amendment/changes to Policy	<p>Legislative change - Carers Leave - From 6 April 2024, employees will be entitled to unpaid leave to give or arrange care for a 'dependant' who has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than 3 months• a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010)• care needs because of their old age <p>The dependant does not have to be a family member. It can be anyone who relies on them for care.</p> <p>Employees are entitled to carer's leave from their first day of work for their employer.</p>
-----------------------------	---