

# Time Off for Dependants Policy

## Document Control Table

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Time Off for Dependants Policy</b>
<b>DocumentReference</b>	<b>ORG/HR/010</b>
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<b>Next Review Date</b>	

## 2.0 Purpose and Legal Basis

This section establishes the fundamental purpose of the policy and anchors it within the relevant legal framework, which is crucial for ensuring compliance and clarity. While **the charity** does not currently employ staff, its constitution provides the power to do so. This policy has been adopted to ensure a legally compliant and supportive framework is in place before any future employment commences. Its purpose is to provide a clear structure for future employees to request reasonable, unpaid time off for unforeseen emergencies involving a dependant, ensuring the charity's procedures are fair, consistently applied, and fully compliant with UK law.

**Legal Basis:** This policy is grounded in the following UK legislation:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010

This legal foundation informs the application of this policy to all individuals associated with the charity, as detailed in the scope.

## 3.0 Scope

The strategic importance of a clearly defined scope is to ensure the fair and consistent application of this policy to all personnel associated with **the charity**. As the statutory right to time off for dependants is an employment right, this policy applies primarily to employees. This section also clarifies the charity's position for other personnel who contribute to its mission.

<b>PersonnelCategory</b>	<b>Applicability</b>
<b>Employees</b>	The policy and the statutory rights it describes apply to all individuals employed by <b>the charity</b> , regardless of their role or length of service.
<b>Volunteers</b>	While volunteers do not have a statutory right to this leave, <b>the charity</b> will, where reasonably practicable, apply the spirit of this policy to support volunteers facing genuine emergencies.
<b>Charity Trustees</b>	This policy does not apply to Trustees when they are acting in their governance capacity, in line with the CIO's constitution, which prohibits remuneration for such duties.
<b>Contractors &amp;Service Providers</b>	This policy does not apply to independent contractors or third-party service providers, who are governed by the terms of their own contracts.

This scope provides the foundation for the charity's formal commitment, as detailed in the policy statement below.

#### **4.0 Policy Statement**

The policy statement serves as the charity's core commitment, reflecting its organisational values and its future legal obligations as a prospective employer.

**The charity** is committed to providing a supportive environment for its personnel. **The charity** will grant reasonable, unpaid time off for employees to manage unexpected or sudden emergencies involving a dependant, in accordance with the provisions of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

To apply this commitment consistently, it is essential to understand the key legal terms involved, which are defined in the next section.

## 5.0 Definitions

Clear, legally-grounded definitions are essential for the consistent and fair application of this policy, removing ambiguity for both employees and management. The definitions below are based on their meaning in UK employment law and provide the basis for decision-making under this policy.

- **Dependant:** A dependant is a spouse, civil partner, child, parent, or a person who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as a tenant or lodger). It can also be someone who does not live with the employee but reasonably relies on them for assistance in an emergency, such as an elderly relative who lives elsewhere.
- **Emergency:** An emergency is an unexpected or sudden event requiring an employee's immediate attention. Examples derived from the statutory right include:
  - A dependent falling ill, giving birth, being injured or assaulted.
  - The need to make care arrangements for a dependent who is ill or injured.
  - The death of a dependant.
  - The unexpected disruption or termination of care arrangements for a dependent.
  - An unexpected incident involving an employee's child during school hours.
- **Reasonable Time Off:** The amount of time off must be reasonable to deal with the immediate emergency. This right is intended to allow an employee to manage the initial crisis (e.g., make alternative, longer-term care arrangements) and is not intended to cover the subsequent period of providing ongoing care. For most cases, the amount of time off required will likely be one or two days at most.

These definitions inform the practical, step-by-step procedures that must be followed when an emergency occurs.

## 6.0 Procedures

These procedures provide a clear, step-by-step guide for employees to follow in an emergency, ensuring that requests are handled efficiently, sensitively, and with minimal operational disruption. Open and timely communication is essential for both the employee needing support and the charity in managing its operational requirements.

1. **Initial Notification** The employee must notify their designated point of contact (e.g., [The Designated Manager / Chair of the Board]) by telephone as soon as is reasonably practicable.
2. **Required Information** During the notification, the employee must provide the reason for their absence and give an indication of how long they expect to be away from work.

3. **Record Keeping** The designated contact will confidentially record the details of the absence and confirm that it has been authorised under the Time Off for Dependants Policy.
4. **Paid** time off for dependants is a statutory right to unpaid leave.

These procedures ensure that requests are handled efficiently and sensitively, with accountability clarified in the roles and responsibilities that follow.

## 7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are fundamental to good governance, ensuring the policy is implemented effectively and consistently with clear lines of accountability. This section establishes these clear lines of accountability for the management of this policy.

- **The Board of Trustees** is responsible for:
  - Formally approving and adopting this policy.
  - Ensuring adequate processes are in place for its future implementation.
  - Reviewing the policy annually, or as required by legislative changes, to ensure its ongoing compliance and effectiveness.
- **The [Designated Manager / Chair of the Board]** is responsible for:
  - Receiving and responding to requests for emergency leave in a timely and sensitive manner.
  - Ensuring leave is applied fairly and consistently in line with this policy.
  - Maintaining confidential records of all leave taken under this policy.
- **Employees** are responsible for:
  - Familiarising themselves with this policy.
  - Following the notification procedures as soon as is reasonably practicable when an emergency occurs.

These responsibilities are put into effect through the implementation plan detailed below.

## 8.0 Implementation

This section outlines the practical steps for embedding the policy into the charity's governance framework, ensuring it is understood and consistently applied from its effective date and is ready for activation upon the employment of staff.

- **Effective Date:** This policy is effective immediately upon formal adoption by the Board of Trustees.
- **Communication:** The policy will be communicated to all current volunteers and will be included in the induction pack for all new personnel, including any future employees, to ensure awareness from the outset of their engagement with **the charity**.

- **Training and Resources** Designated managers or points of contact will be briefed on the policy's procedures to ensure they can handle requests confidently and consistently. No significant financial resources are required for the implementation of this policy.

Effective implementation must be supported by a structured approach to monitoring and review to ensure ongoing compliance.

## 9.0 Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring and regular review are critical governance functions that ensure the policy remains legally compliant, fit for purpose, and aligned with best practice. This process ensures policies remain current and effective.

- **Monitoring:** The application of this policy will be monitored by the [Designated Manager / Chair of the Board] to ensure fairness and consistency. Confidential records will be maintained for reporting purposes.
- A summary report on the application of HR policies, including any issues arising from this one, will be provided to the Board of Trustees annually to ensure appropriate oversight.
- **Review Schedule** This policy will be formally reviewed by the Board of Trustees annually, or in response to any changes in relevant UK legislation, whichever is sooner.

This policy operates within a wider, integrated framework of related organisational documents.

## 10.0 Related Policies and Documents

An integrated policy framework is essential for good governance, and this policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the charity's procedures and commitments.

- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy

The formal adoption of this policy demonstrates the Board's proactive approach to establishing a compliant and supportive operational environment, ensuring **the charity** is fully prepared for future growth while fulfilling its duty of care to all who contribute to its vital mission.