



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

# **Carers Policy**

**This document is also available in Welsh.**

## Information sheet

### Information box

For further advice contact: Human Resources

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### Version control

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### Equality impact assessment

A business rationale assessment has been carried out and this policy contributes to Estyn's strategic objectives and delivery principles.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out and this policy is not deemed to adversely impact on any people on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and Welsh language.

This policy may positively impact some people on the grounds of sex, due to the fact that women are more likely than men to shoulder caring responsibilities for sick relatives or friends / neighbours.

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## **Introduction**

Estyn recognises the importance of providing a supportive workplace for employees who have caring responsibilities. Our aim is to enable individuals to undertake their caring responsibilities while at the same time feeling engaged and productive in the work they do.

One of the key factors in getting inclusion right is providing the right support for carers, and ensuring our culture enables them to meet their commitments at work and home.

This policy sets out the support available for employees who have caring responsibilities.

## **Who is a carer?**

A carer is anyone who looks after, or gives any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions, or illnesses, or problems related to old age. The care they give is unpaid.

Becoming a carer can be due to a decline in a dependant's long-term health or an illness, injury or accident. A dependant is someone who relies on an employee for care. This could be, for example, a spouse or civil partner, a partner, a child with a disability, a parent or an elderly neighbour. The role can start suddenly and can be unpredictable in its impact and duration. It can affect all aspects of an individual's physical, mental, emotional, social and financial wellbeing.

Anyone can find themselves in this position at some point in their working lives. Often people do not think of themselves as a carer. However, recognising that you are carrying out a caring role is important if you are to access the support which will help you balance caring and work.

## **The role of work**

For carers, work often represents a lifeline, not only financially, but in providing a life outside of caring. Working is good for our health and wellbeing. Our aim is to support carers wherever possible to combine their caring and work roles.

By having open and honest conversations with carers, managers can enable them to continue contributing their expertise and to remain a valued member of the team.

## **The importance of communication**

Caring can be hard to plan and cope with emotionally, and what is required can vary at different times. Our aim is to promote good communication between carers and their managers focused on finding constructive ways forward.

When you become a carer, it is important to let your manager know as soon as possible and to make them aware of the issues which might arise. Caring responsibilities can be unpredictable and combining work and care can be difficult. Help your manager to understand the challenges you face. The two of you can then explore options to help you balance caring responsibilities with work.

Many employees do not identify themselves as carers. If, as a manager, you think someone is a carer, have an open and honest conversation with them. Encourage them to talk about their caring responsibilities. Work with them to identify ways you can help them manage their caring responsibilities and workload.

## **Internal support available**

### **Carer's leave**

Carers have a statutory right to take up to a week's unpaid leave in any 12-month period to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long-term care need. A week's leave is the same number of days that you normally work in a week. For part time HMI, a week's leave is the equivalent to the percentage of FTE worked. For example, if an HMI is contracted to work 50%, a weeks leave is 2.5 days which can be requested during their working days.

The right to carers leave applies regardless of your length of service. The leave can be taken in half days, full days or as consecutive days.

Dependants are husbands or wives, partners, children, parents, friends or family members. They may live with you (provided they do not pay rent) or they may live elsewhere but rely on you for care. This may include an elderly neighbour, and parents or family members who do not live with you.

The person being cared for has a long-term care need if they:

- have a mental or physical illness or injury needing care for more than three months
- have a disability under the 2010 Equality Act or
- need care for a reason connected with their old age.

To apply for carers' leave, you will need to complete the application form and give:

- at least three days before you take your leave where possible
- if your planned leave is more than a day and a half, a notice period of twice the number of days' leave you plan to take.

This enables managers to plan, manage business needs and arrange cover when needed.

Managers can ask you to delay your leave if the business would be unduly disrupted by your taking leave. However, they must agree that you can take the leave within a month of your request, and they must consult with you before setting the date.

Your manager should let you know in writing why they have delayed your leave and when they have agreed that you can take the leave. They should tell you this within seven days of you asking for the leave or before your leave is due to start if this is in less than seven days.

### **Other types of leave**

There are a number of other types of leave which can be used to support carers. These include emergency leave for dependants and parental leave. Details on such leave can be found in the [family friendly](#) and [special leave policies](#).

### **Employee Assistance Programme**

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a confidential, free service. It can provide carers and their managers with independent support to help explore options and come to the best solution. They can advise on sources of help and advice and can provide counselling to help with the emotional side of caring. Details of the help available can be accessed [here](#).

### **Flexible Working**

Flexible working can be key to enabling carers to combine their work and caring responsibilities. It can include flexible start and/or finish times, compressed hours, homeworking, job-sharing and part-time working. Our flexible working policy, guidance and how to apply for flexible working is set out [here](#).

### **Career Breaks**

A career break is a period of unpaid time away from work which may be requested for a number of reasons, including caring for dependants. Career breaks can last for a minimum of three months and a maximum of two years. Guidance on our career breaks can be found in the [special leave policy and guide](#).

### **Carer's Passport**

Drawing up a carer's passport provides carers and their managers with the opportunity to discuss the carer's needs in the workplace and to identify and record solutions.

The ["How to fill in a Carer's Passport"](#) video helps carers and their managers think about ways of combining work and caring responsibilities.

## External Sources of Support

- [Carers UK](#) is a charity offering advice, information and support for carers. It runs carers groups and volunteer networks and an advice line and online forums.
- [Carers Trust](#) is a charity providing support, information, advice and services for people caring at home. It also provides 24/7 helplines and online forums.
- [Charity for Civil Servants](#) supports civil servants, past and present, throughout their lives, offering practical, financial and emotional support. Their website has a section on carers.
- [NHS guide to care and support](#) provides advice on accessing local authority care services.
- [Age UK](#) provides information and support for the over 50s.
- [Alzheimer's Society](#) gives advice and guidance on all types of dementia, including Alzheimer's.
- [Disabled Living Foundation](#) offers advice and information on equipment for independent living.
- [Mencap](#) provides information and advice for people with a learning disability and their carers.
- [Macmillan Cancer Support](#) provides information and advice for everyone affected by cancer, their family and friends.
- [Marie Curie](#) helps and supports people impacted by terminal illness.
- [Mind](#) provides support, training and consultancy for people of all ages who struggle with mental health problems.
- [National Autistic Society \(NAS\)](#) provides information and support for autistic people and their families.
- [Working Families Helps working parents and carers and their employers find a better](#) balance between responsibilities at home and work.

**Carer's leave request form**

<b>Section 1: To be completed by the employee requesting carers leave</b>	
<b>Personal Details</b>	
<b>Full name:</b> Enter your name	<b>Function:</b> Select your function
<b>Manager:</b> Enter your manager's name	
<b>Eligibility</b>	
<p><b>Please indicate your eligibility to take carers leave:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have a dependant with a long-term care need</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I want to take carer's leave to care for my dependant with a long-term care need or make care arrangements for them</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have not exceeded my entitlement to carer's leave in this rolling 12-month period</p>	
<b>Details of Request</b>	
<b>Dates of proposed leave</b>	
<b>Length of leave</b>	Half day / full day / number of days
<b>Confirmation</b>	
By signing this form, you confirm that knowingly misuse carer's leave, eg request or take carer's leave for a purpose other than that intended, may lead to disciplinary proceedings.	
<b>Signed:</b> Insert signature	<b>Date:</b> Enter date
<b>Once you have completed the form, forward it to your line manager</b>	

<b>Section 2: Manager consideration of request</b>				
<b>Full name:</b> Enter your name				
<b>Consideration given to the following:</b>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Has the individual exceeded their week entitlement in the past rolling 12-month period?				
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the team have sufficient cover for the dates requested?				
If you are asking the individual to delay the request, you can do but will need to meet with the individual and agree another leave date within the next month				
<b>Request accepted</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Date of leave</b>	Enter date	
<b>Request delayed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Individual met with</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>New leave date</b> Enter date
<b>Once you have completed the form, forward it to HR for processing</b>				



