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# Time Off Policy

# 1. Policy Statement

At some point you may need to take time off work, you'll be able to plan for most occasions but some you won't. This policy tells you about the different occasions that you may ask for time off. We have a separate policy for holidays, family leave, study leave or if you're sick. We also have our giving back policy for community (volunteering) days.

It's non contractual and may be changed in the future. If you have any questions about it, please contact HR Services.

## 2. Policy Owner

The policy is owned by the Director of Reward & HR Services, Kevin Blake.

## 3. Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to anyone with a GB contract of employment.

## 4. Policy Detail - What do I need to know or do?

### Planned Time Off

It's important that you speak to your manager as early as possible to discuss your plans. There may be times when your manager has to say no due to business reasons; if they do you should talk about other options.

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Medical appointments	<p>You can take paid time off to go to medical appointments that are advised by your Medical Practitioner.</p> <p>Please try and minimise your time away from work by organising your appointments at the start or end of the day or around your specific working time or schedule, however we appreciate this isn't always possible. You need to let your manager know and evidence of the appointment may be requested and needs to be available.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
IVF appointments	<p>You can take paid time off to go to IVF related appointments that are advised by your Medical Practitioner or Consultant.</p> <p>Please try and minimise your time away from work by organising your appointments at the start or end of the day or around your specific working time or schedule, however we appreciate this isn't always possible. You need to let your manager know and evidence of the appointment may be requested and needs to be available.</p>
Disability related appointments	<p>You can take paid time off to go to disability related appointments that are advised by your Medical Practitioner or Consultant.</p> <p>Please try and minimise your time away from work by organising your appointments at the start or end of the day or around your specific working time or schedule, however we appreciate this isn't always possible. You need to let your manager know and evidence of the appointment may be requested and needs to be available.</p>
myLife Days	<p>As part of our myLife framework we give you 3 paid days off per holiday year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 myGiving-community days (volunteering) – this is so you can take part in activities during your normal working time for any registered charity/community event of your choice. See Giving-Back Policy for more information.</li> <li>• 1 myJoy day (wellbeing) – which is for your own wellbeing to participate in whatever wellbeing means for you. It could be a day at the spa or playing golf, just some time out or even another day volunteering for your registered charity of choice.</li> </ul> <p>You need to agree your myLife days in advance with your manager by booking on myHR. You need to give at least 2-weeks of notice prior to your planned time off.</p> <p>Please bear in mind that your myJoy day (wellbeing) is a standalone day and cannot be added on as part of your annual holiday or be taken on a last-minute basis.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Attending court	<p>If you need to attend court as a defendant or witness, you'll need to discuss this with your manager as soon as you find out the court date(s). Your manager will agree how to manage your time away from work; you may need to book the time off as holiday or unpaid leave. You must record your time off on your myHR record. If you're a witness and receive normal pay from us, we may ask you to pay us back any loss of earnings expenses that you may be able to claim from the court.</p>
Jury service	<p>As soon as you get your letter about jury service let your manager know. You need to confirm the dates on your myHR time off record and upload a copy of the letter. We'll normally allow you time off to attend jury service; the only exception is if your absence will have a serious effect on the business. If it does, we can ask you to delay your jury service.</p> <p>We'll continue to pay you as normal whilst you're on jury service. We may ask you to pay us back any loss of earnings expenses that you may be able to claim from the court. We won't pay for any related expenses. You'll need to claim these back from the court - make sure you understand their rules on what's claimable.</p> <p>If you're told by the court that you're not needed for jury service, you must let your manager know that you're available for work.</p>
Public duties	<p>This means having a role that acts in the public interests, such as a school governor, magistrate, local councillor or a member of a public body (listed on UK government's website). If you decide to get involved in public duties, you must let us know and get our agreement before you start.</p> <p>You'll need to speak to your manager about what time off you're likely to need and over what time period, they'll agree with you how to manage this around your work commitments. You can use your mygiving-community days or holiday to take paid time off work, otherwise this will be unpaid. Your time off must be recorded on your myHR record.</p> <p>If your public duties are something we've encouraged or asked you to do as it's connected to your role and our 2020 vision, your manager will agree in advance how to manage your time away from work.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Reserve forces	<p>If you're a member of the reserve forces you're allowed to take up to 2 weeks each year to go on training. This is in addition to your holiday entitlement and we'll top up your military salary to your normal level of earnings. You need to provide us your statement of salary and deductions from the services so we can calculate the difference payable to you.</p> <p>Your time away from work on training or mobilisation must be recorded on your myHR record.</p> <p>If your mobilisation is compulsory, you need to give your manager the official letter and mobilisation papers as soon as you can. You will also need to update your myHR time off record. If you're volunteering for mobilisation you need to get your manager's consent to do this beforehand. If your mobilisation will seriously impact the business, then we can ask for you not to go.</p> <p>Normally all contractual benefits, apart from your pay, will stay in place during your mobilisation. You'll receive a military salary instead and can make a claim for additional financial support from the forces. You need to be aware that your bonusable pay will change as we don't include your military salary in our calculations.</p> <p>We may suspend some of the benefits you normally receive as the insurance companies may not provide full coverage of these benefits e.g. life assurance. We'll discuss this with you before your mobilisation and how we'll collect your personal contributions for any continuing benefits that you have. You can usually claim additional financial support from the forces for any benefits that are suspended.</p> <p>You'll continue to accrue your holiday in the normal way. If your mobilisation falls over our holiday year you can carry over all your untaken holiday entitlement providing that it is all taken at the end of your mobilisation. You'll normally come back to your same job on the same terms and conditions, if there's some reason why this can't happen then we'll talk to you.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Sabbatical leave	<p>There might be a time when you may wish or need to take extended time off for personal reasons; a sabbatical gives you the chance to do this whilst staying in employment. You can ask for a period of between 1 and 6 months off (maximum) if you have worked for us for 3 years or more and not taken sabbatical leave before. You must submit your request on our Sabbatical Leave Request Form, giving at least 3 months' notice.</p> <p>We'll consider the length and reasons for your request as well as your performance, disciplinary record, current work commitments, future business activity and the availability of existing resources; this will normally be done by your manager and will need approval from a Band E manager or above.</p> <p>If we agree to your request this will need to be recorded on your myHR time off record by you and your manager. Normally all contractual benefits, apart from your pay, pension contributions and company car (if eligible), will stay in place. Your sabbatical will be treated as unpaid leave and you need to be aware that this changes your bonusable pay. We'll need to discuss how we'll collect your personal contributions to any benefits that you may have. Company pension contributions will only be made if you make up your individual contributions before or after your sabbatical.</p> <p>Your company car will normally need to be returned whilst you're on sabbatical, or if you get trade out payments these will stop. You'll need to look at what you want to do with your flexible benefits. There may be limitations on some of the benefits payable such as life assurance as the insurance companies may not provide full cover of the benefits. If you have private healthcare, it only covers treatments in the UK. You'll continue to accrue your holiday in the normal way and normal rules about you being able to flex your holiday entitlement apply. You should agree with your manager how you'll keep in touch whilst you're off.</p> <p>We'll expect you back in work on the date agreed unless you tell us otherwise. You'll normally come back to your same job on the same terms and conditions, if there is some reason why this can't happen then we'll talk to you. If you want to change your return date (it must not go over the 6-month maximum period) you'll need to tell us in writing at least 4 weeks before your original return date.</p>

## Unplanned Time Off

We know that everything can't be planned and sometimes you may need to take time off work at short notice. Your manager will try to support your request and will need to look at other options if more time off is needed. If they have to say no due to business reasons you should talk about other options. We also have our Employee Assistance Programme which gives you free and confidential advice and support.

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Travel restrictions	<p>You should be aware and put in place alternative plans when travel disruptions are known in advance (e.g. road closures, public transport strikes) to minimise the impact on your working time.</p> <p>If something happens on your journey to work that means you can't continue as planned you should make all efforts to find another route or, if possible, work from a different location. When it's safe for you to do so you need to let your manager know and get their agreement if you plan to work elsewhere. If a situation is avoidable your manager may ask you to make the time up.</p>
Severe weather	<p>You should be aware and put in place alternative plans when severe weather is known in advance. We want you to be safe when travelling so we encourage you to take steps to avoid unnecessary or long distances journeys. If it's possible for you to travel to work safely then you should make every effort to do so. If you're not sure you should discuss this with your manager. Where you're unable to work or need to start later or finish earlier you must discuss this with your manager, you would normally be expected to take this as holiday or make up the time later.</p> <p>If it's because of your dependents (e.g. school closure) you should take time off for dependents instead.</p>
Time off for dependants	<p>You may ask your manager for time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant (child, grandchild, parent, partner, or someone who depends on you for care). An emergency is an unexpected and sudden problem, this could be due to a disruption of care arrangements, illness, injury or assault, going into labour (if parent to be is relying on you for transport) or your child is involved in an incident at school. An emergency doesn't include planned events such as medical appointments.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Time off for dependants (continued)	<p>You need to tell or get a message to your manager as quickly as possible about your need for time off, what it's for and how long you think you'll need off, this doesn't have to be in writing. You need to record your time off on your myHR record when you return to work.</p> <p>Time off for dependants is unpaid and is specifically for you to deal with the emergency and organise other arrangements if they're needed. You need to be aware that this will change your bonusable pay. If you need more time off this must be taken as holiday, unpaid leave, parental (if you're eligible for it) or carers leave and must be agreed with your manager. You must keep in regular contact with your manager whilst you're off.</p>
Carer support	<p>There may be a time when you need time off or flexibility so you can care for a dependent who is in hospital, recovering from surgery or a hospital stay, terminally ill or diagnosed with cancer, or when you need to provide respite care.</p> <p>To enable you to provide carer support, you can ask for up to 6 months off over a 12-month period, this could be taken in one go or in smaller blocks throughout the year.</p> <p>If you need time off to care for a close family member (parent, partner, child, brother or sister) your manager will usually look to give you paid time off work up to one working week. This paid entitlement is limited to one week per holiday calendar year (1 April to 31st March). If you need time off to care for someone who is not a close family member (as listed above), this will be treated as unpaid leave. Please talk to your manager about what support you need. You need to make and submit your request on your myHR time off record.</p> <p>As an alternative you could request a change in your working hours or pattern, take holidays or extended time off. If you submit a request for carer leave your manager will review your request and then decide upon approval. If you're requesting more than 1 month off this will need approval from a Band E manager or above. Managers will take in to account previous periods of carer leave and when these were. If we agree to your request, this will need to be recorded, and you may need to sign a declaration.</p>



Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Carer support (continued)	<p>All contractual benefits, apart from your pay, pension contributions and company car (if eligible), will stay in place. Apart from the one week of paid carer leave detailed above, all other carer leave will be treated as unpaid leave and you need to be aware that this changes your bonusable pay. We'll need to discuss how we'll collect your personal contributions and any benefits that you may have. Company pension contributions will only be made if you make up your individual contributions before or after your time off.</p> <p>Your company car will not need to be returned whilst you're on carer leave, but your trade out payments will stop. You'll need to look at what you want to do with your flexible benefits. You'll continue to accrue your holiday in the normal way and normal rules about you being able to flex your holiday entitlement apply. You should agree with your manager how you'll keep in touch whilst you're off.</p> <p>We'll expect you back in work on the date agreed unless you tell us otherwise. You'll normally come back to your same job on the same terms and conditions, if there is some reason why this can't happen then we'll talk to you. If you want to change your return date, then you'll need to let us know as soon as possible.</p>
Bereavement leave	<p>We understand that losing someone close to you can be very difficult, and that everyone deals with grief differently.</p> <p>On our intranet, you have access to the myLife Wellbeing portal which is a resource to support you. Through myLife, counselling is available to you on a 24/7 basis. You have the option of talking to a trained professional over the phone or via the on-line chat facility. This service is free and any advice and support you receive is private and totally confidential. If you've opted into our private healthcare, we also have our AXA Healthcare Plan providing access to private medical treatment and counselling, and our AXA Doctor at Hand which gives you a fast, easy way to see a GP.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Bereavement leave (continued)	<p>Your manager will usually look to give you paid time off work up to 1 working week following the death of a close family member (parent, partner, child, brother or sister). You will also be entitled to 1 day to attend the funeral. If it's the death of any other relative or friend your manager will usually agree to 1 day for you to attend the funeral. If you need more time to organise arrangements, then you may consider taking holiday or unpaid leave. If you need more time off for your bereavement this should be treated as sickness absence.</p> <p>If your bereavement is related to early pregnancy loss (up to 24 weeks gestation) or failed fertility please see specific section below.</p> <p>It's a manager's decision to give bereavement leave so please talk to them and keep them updated so they can do their best to support you during this difficult time. You should agree with each other how often this will be. Manager's should consider the closeness of the relationship, the impact of the death, geographical and transport considerations and your responsibilities at the time of the bereavement. If you have concerns about your manager's decision you may ask your manager's manager to review it, this is not a formal right of appeal.</p> <p>For payroll purposes we will need to record your bereavement leave on your myHR time off record. This can be input by either yourself or your line manager.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss this entitlement or your wellbeing please reach out to your line manager or HR Services.</p>
Parental Bereavement leave	<p>We understand that the loss of a child, of any age, brings heartbreak and devastation and we are here to support you through this very difficult time.</p> <p>On our intranet, you have access to the myLife Wellbeing portal which is a resource to support you through these types of loss. Through myLife, counselling is available to you on a 24/7 basis. You have the option of talking to a trained professional over the phone or via the on-line chat facility. This service is free and any advice and support you receive is private and totally confidential. If you've opted into our private healthcare, we also have our AXA Healthcare Plan providing access to private medical treatment and counselling, and our AXA Doctor at Hand which gives you a fast, easy way to see a GP.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Parental Bereavement leave (continued)	<p>We know that this experience will bring with it undescrivable sadness, and we want to provide you with the right support regarding taking time out to allow you to start grieving for your child. You should be aware that as a bereaved parent (including foster parents, adopters and guardians), following the loss of a child below the age of 18 (including a still-birth after 24 weeks), you're entitled to an additional week of statutory bereavement leave.</p> <p>As we know the bereavement journey will take some time, you are able to take this leave within 56 weeks of the child's death. In addition, if you have at least 26 weeks of service, you will be eligible for statutory bereavement pay at the lower of the statutory rate or 90% of your average earnings.</p> <p>In order to ensure that you receive the correct pay during this period of leave, your bereavement leave needs to be placed on to your myHR time off record. This can be input by either yourself or your line manager. If a bereaved parent is taking statutory bereavement leave, either you or your line manager should also notify HR Services via askHR.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss this entitlement or your wellbeing please reach out to your line manager or HR Services and we will do all that we can to support you during this difficult time.</p>
Early Pregnancy Loss and Failed Fertility Bereavement leave	<p>Early pregnancy loss either by miscarriage or termination (up to 24 weeks gestation) can be an emotionally and physically draining experience for parents to endure, as can failed fertility, and we recognise you may need time off to cope with the emotional impact of your loss.</p> <p>On our intranet, you have access to the myLife Wellbeing portal which is a resource to support you. Through myLife, counselling is available to you on a 24/7 basis. You have the option of talking to a trained professional over the phone or via the on-line chat facility. This service is free and any advice and support you receive is private and totally confidential. If you've opted into our private healthcare, we also have our AXA Healthcare Plan providing access to private medical treatment and counselling, and our AXA Doctor at Hand which gives you a fast, easy way to see a GP.</p> <p>Your manager will usually look to give you paid time off work up to 1 working week following the loss of an early pregnancy or failed fertility. If you need more time off for your loss this should be treated as sickness absence.</p>

Time off reason	What do I need to know or do?
Early Pregnancy Loss and Failed Fertility Bereavement leave (continued)	<p>It's a manager's decision to give this leave so please talk to them and keep them updated so they can do their best to support you during this difficult time. You should agree with each other how often this will be.</p> <p>Early pregnancy loss and failed fertility leave will need to be recorded as bereavement leave on your myHR time off record by your manager or yourself.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss this entitlement or your wellbeing please reach out to your line manager or HR Services and we will do all that we can to support you during this difficult time.</p>

## 5. Policy breach and consequences - What happens if I don't follow it?

If you take time off without your manager's approval this will be treated as unauthorised absence. If you do not meet the obligations we've set out in this policy, it could affect your Britvic Values and Ways of Working rating on myPerformance and if not resolved, could become a disciplinary matter.

## 6. Related Documents

The following related documents can be found on our [Policies and Disclosure](#) page on Focus

- Family Leave Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Holiday Policy
- Giving Back Policy
- Flexible Working Guidance
- Professional Qualification & Membership Policy
- Britvic Standard Terms and Conditions of Employment