

LEAVE AND TIME OFF (STAFF) POLICY

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NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY



SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY

LEAVE AND TIME OFF (STAFF)

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Legal Basis

Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document:

- Employment Right Act 1996

Other relevant legislation which you must check this document against (required by law)

- Human Rights Act 1998 (in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination)
- Employment Rights Act 2025
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Pensions Schemes Act 1993
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated Regulations
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom Of Information Act 2000

Other documentation which you must check this document against:

- College of Policing – Code of Ethics
- Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies' Standards of Professional Behaviour
- College of Policing – Authorised Professional Practice

1. Statement of Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and information on the different types of leave and time-off available to police staff, who are eligible for it, how to request it, relevant considerations and who can approve requests.
- 1.2 There are separate policies that cover Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, and Shared Parental Leave.
- 1.3 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies (together the Constabularies) are committed to ensuring this policy complies with relevant legislation and that consultation has been undertaken with all relevant staff groups. We may update this policy at any time following consultation with UNISON on any changes proposed.
- 1.4 The Constabularies will review this policy periodically to ensure that it reflects appropriate standards and continues to meet our needs, and to reflect any changes in legislation.
- 1.5 All our policies promote equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and actively promote good relations regardless of a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, economic or family status. Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair

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application of this policy and all staff have a shared responsibility to contribute to its success.

- 1.6 The Director of People has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. Day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review has been delegated to the HR Managers, HR Delivery.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 This policy applies to all police staff employees.
- 2.2 Police officers please refer to the Leave and Time Off (Officer) Policy.

3. Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement

- 3.1 The minimum paid annual leave entitlement for full-time employees is 24 days (pro rata for part-time employees). If you have five years or more continuous service your entitlement will be 29 days. These entitlements apply to police staff of all pay bands except for those on HAY grades. The entitlement for HAY grade roles is 30 days per annum for full-time employees, pro-rata for part-time, on appointment and does not increase with service.
- 3.2 Your period of continuous service will be from the date you started employment with the Constabulary and will be confirmed in your employment contract. For the purpose of annual leave entitlement, continuous service will include continuous previous employment with an employer as listed in the PSC Handbook. Previous service as a police officer is not reckonable for police staff entitlements, nor vice versa.
- 3.3 Where the leave entitlement is expressed in days, a day is the average working day of seven hours 24 minutes. All annual leave entitlements are taken in hours and are therefore converted into hours in force systems for administration and ease of use. This also applies to public holiday leave entitlement.
- 3.4 The table below shows the conversion from days to hours for a full-time employee.

Continuous service	Full-time entitlement excluding public holidays (excluding HAY Grades)
< 5 years	24 days = 177 hours & 36 mins
5 + years	29 days = 214 hours & 36 mins

- 3.5 If you are part-time your leave entitlement will be calculated on a pro-rata basis depending on the number of hours that you work. This will also apply to your public holiday leave entitlement.

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- 3.6 The annual leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March. Annual leave accrues on a daily basis. If your employment starts or finishes part way through the annual leave year, your holiday entitlement during that year shall be calculated on a pro-rata basis.
- 3.7 The increase in entitlement from 24 days to 29 days will be granted on a pro-rata basis from the point in the leave year that your five year service anniversary falls.
- 3.8 Annual leave continues to accrue during periods of maternity leave, sickness absence and other types of leave unless expressly stated otherwise.

Carrying over annual leave

- 3.9 In order to ensure that you achieve a good work/life balance, annual leave should be planned and taken throughout the year, unless your circumstances prevent this owing to either maternity, shared parental or adoption leave or long-term sickness absence. Line managers must support their staff in managing their leave and ensuring they have the opportunity to take their full entitlement and make arrangements to request and book this.
- 3.10 If you do not take your full entitlement in any leave year, five days/37 hours (pro-rata for part-time staff) will be carried over automatically for you to the next leave year. This should be taken by 30th June of the next leave year.
- 3.11 In exceptional circumstances you may apply to the Head of Resourcing (with the support of your line manager) for authorisation of any additional leave to carry over.
- 3.12 Any other outstanding amounts not approved for carry-over will be lost, save for the circumstances below:
- **Sickness absence:** Annual leave continues to accrue during sickness absence. If you are unable to take all or some of your annual leave in the relevant leave year due to sickness absence, you can carry over the difference between the total amount of annual leave and public holidays already taken, and the statutory leave entitlement of 28 days (which includes public holidays).
 - However, it is expected that annual leave which is reclaimed in relation to short periods of sick leave will be rescheduled at another time within the relevant leave year and as such, should not need to be carried over. Any such reclaimed annual leave which is not reasonably rescheduled may therefore be lost.
 - You should email details of any leave you are unable to take and need to carry over to RMU via your line manager, for updating and management of your DMS leave account.

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- Any individual who is on sickness absence for the entire leave year will be entitled to carry over the full statutory entitlement of 28 days to the next leave year.
- Any leave carried forward due to sickness absence should be taken within 18 months.
- Staff may be requested to use any carried over leave due to sickness absence against a phased return to work. If applicable, the line manager will discuss this with their member of staff and in consultation with their HR Advisor, agree it on an individual basis.
- **Family leave:** Annual leave continues to accrue during maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave, parental bereavement leave, carer's leave and shared parental leave. If it is not possible to take all your annual leave and public holiday leave entitlement in the applicable leave year, for example where your maternity leave period straddles two leave years, you may carry forward the full amount of any remaining entitlement into the appropriate leave year. The usual limit of five days carry forward will not apply.
- You should email details of any leave you have been unable to take and need to carry over to RMU via your line manager, for updating and management of your DMS leave account.

Requesting annual leave

- 3.13 Annual leave may only be taken at times as previously arranged with and authorised by your line manager. When authorising leave requests, operational requirements, fairness of allocation and leave thresholds (see below) will be taken into account. Requests for annual leave should be made with as much notice as possible and you should follow any departmental guidance (as confirmed by your line manager) as to the specific process for making requests. All requests need to be recorded and authorised on DMS.
- 3.14 Requests for extended periods of annual leave of three weeks or more must be approved by your Head of Department as well as your line manager.

Leave thresholds

- 3.15 Threshold levels for leave provide guidance for RMU for staff whose duties are rostered through the RMU. Where duties are not rostered through the RMU, leave thresholds will be held locally by the relevant Head of Department. Threshold decisions take into account annual leave, TOIL, rest days and free days.

Sickness during annual leave

- 3.16 If you are ill and unfit for work during a pre-planned period of annual leave you can make a request in writing to your line manager to claim your leave back. You need to follow the Sickness Absence Management Policy for

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reporting your sickness absence and provide a fit note for the period of absence if it is outside the self-certification period, i.e., more than 7 consecutive days (unless this is not practicable). If the sickness is during the self-certification period a fit note is not required. Your record will then be updated to show sickness absence and the relevant annual leave days will then be reinstated. This provision also applies to pre-planned flexi-time/leave.

Returning late from annual leave

- 3.17 If you become aware that your return to work following a period of leave will be delayed, you must notify your line manager as soon as possible of the reason for this, the steps you are taking to resolve the situation, and when you anticipate your return. Upon your return you must make arrangements to cover the additional period of absence using the appropriate leave in agreement with your line manager, e.g. additional annual leave, use of flexi time, to work additional hours on return, as appropriate.

Leaving the Constabulary and annual leave

- 3.18 If you are leaving the Constabulary, we will confirm to you your remaining annual leave and public holiday leave entitlement and any other balances in your DMS account up to your last date of employment. Positive balances should be taken prior to leaving. If, however, it is not possible to use all your outstanding annual leave, public holiday leave or time off in lieu (TOIL) due to operational or other legitimate reasons, your Head of Department can authorise payment in lieu of this to be paid in your final salary. Any flexi-time, free days in lieu or rest days in lieu however, if not used for any reason will not be payable and will be lost. If any of your final balances are in debit, we will deduct the equivalent amount from your final salary payment.

Annual leave during suspension

- 3.19 Where a member of staff is suspended from work due to a disciplinary investigation, it is expected that they will continue to manage and book their annual leave as if they were at work. Before approving individual leave requests, however, line managers should check with HR that this will not impede the progress of the disciplinary investigation.

4. Public Holidays

Entitlement

- 4.1 All members of staff are entitled to paid time off for each public holiday, at the rate of their average working day.
- 4.2 To calculate your average working day, divide your contracted weekly hours by five. Your contracted weekly hours are those which you work on average rather than actual, as actual weekly hours vary significantly for staff who work on shift patterns.

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- 4.3 Full time members of staff are contracted to work 37 hours per week, so the average working day will therefore be $37 \div 5$, giving all full-time staff 7.4 hours paid time off for each public holiday.
- 4.4 A part time worker contracted to work 32 hours per week will have an average working day of $32 \div 5$, giving an entitlement of 6.4 hours paid time off for each public holiday.
- 4.5 Any difference between your public holiday paid leave entitlement and the hours you work or do not work on each public holiday will be carried forward as a credit or debit which will be shown on your DMS public holiday account. All hours in debit should be 'repaid' by the end of the leave year. This can be achieved by a number of options: working extra hours to cover the shortfall (with line manager agreement); using annual leave, flexi-time accrued or TOIL hours; changing your free day to the public holiday when a public holiday falls in a week and is not your free day (with line manager agreement). Any hours in credit can be taken at another date during the annual leave year, at the member of staff's request (subject to line management authorisation).
- 4.6 Where Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and/or New Year's Day fall on a Saturday or a Sunday, the public holiday is reallocated to the next Monday or Tuesday as applicable.

Nominating alternative public holiday dates

Applicable only to staff whose work patterns include weekend working.

- 4.7 In a year where a public holiday is due to fall on a weekend day, staff whose working pattern includes Saturdays and/or Sundays are able to choose either the actual holiday dates (25th, 26th December, 1st January) or the reallocated public holiday dates, as the dates they would like to receive enhanced pay and compensation, should they be required to work on those dates.

5. TOIL, Free Days, Rest Days

Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)

- 5.1 TOIL will be accrued for working on a day not originally scheduled, or a public holiday, in accordance with the PSC Handbook and/or any formalised local agreements.
- 5.2 TOIL should usually be taken within a two-week period of the day(s) worked. If TOIL accrued for working on a day not originally scheduled is not taken within three months, a payment in lieu will be made automatically. TOIL accrued as a result of working a public holiday will not be paid automatically, but if not taken within three months, the individual may request payment in lieu.

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Free Days

- 5.3 A free day is when it has been agreed that a member of staff will not work, and where it is neither a public holiday nor a rest day. Free days normally only apply to part-time staff who have a flexible working agreement in place. If you are requested and agree to work on one of your free days, the day will be reallocated as a free day in lieu.

Rest Days

- 5.3 Rest days are the scheduled days of rest in every member of staff's work pattern, e.g. for staff who work Monday to Friday, Saturday and Sunday are their rest days. Rest days for staff whose normal pattern includes weekend working will vary dependent upon their roster. Three months' notice of work patterns including the rest days will be provided. Three months' notice will also be given for any changes, unless mutually agreed with the member of staff. If you are requested and agree to work on a rest day, the day will be reallocated as a rest day in lieu.

6. Time Off for Study/Training Courses

Work-related courses

- 6.1 If you attend a work-related course necessary to fulfil the duties of your role, attendance and any necessary travel time will be considered working time. If you work part-time or work condensed hours and attend a course on a free day, attendance and necessary travel time will be working time for which you will receive full pay and any additional compensation due for working on a day not originally scheduled (please see the Pay and Allowance Policy (Police Staff) for information).

Further study leading to a role related qualification

- 6.2 If you wish to pursue an approved period of further study leading to a qualification directly relevant to your role, which has been agreed within your PDR, then you should discuss a solution with your line manager which does not require paid time off, e.g. flexible working, shift change etc. If time off is unavoidable, a maximum of half a day per week paid leave will be granted for the duration of the period of study. Paid time off in addition to this may be granted at management discretion. This provision will be pro rata for part-time staff.

Right to request unpaid time off for training

- 6.3 All staff with at least 26 weeks' continuous service have the right to request unpaid time off for any training they believe will improve their own effectiveness and the performance of the organisation, under the Employee Study and Training Regulations 2010. This may include either accredited programmes leading to a recognised qualification or shorter unaccredited training to develop specific skills relevant to the job or area of work. There is no limit on the amount of time off you can request, however only one request can be made in any 12-month period.

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- 6.4 Requests should be submitted in writing to your line manager and must include details of the training and how it will benefit you and the organisation, noting that you are making the request under section 63D of the Employment Rights Act 1996. If you have made a previous request, you should include details of how and when this was submitted.
- 6.5 The line manager will consider your request and will either confirm acceptance or you will be asked to attend a meeting with your line manager to discuss it within 28 days. You have the right to be accompanied to this meeting by a UNISON representative or a colleague. The decision will then be confirmed to you within 14 days.
- 6.6 If your request is declined, for one of the permissible reasons under the legislation, you can appeal to your second line manager within 14 days. Within a further 14 days you will either be notified in writing of the decision to uphold your appeal, or a further meeting will be held with you to discuss the appeal.
- 6.7 Within 14 days of the appeal meeting, your second line manager will notify you in writing of their decision.

Apprenticeships

- 6.7 If you are undertaking a formal apprenticeship you will be eligible to have some paid time away from work for your studies. This will be stipulated within your individual apprenticeship agreement.

7. Time Off – Formal Duties

Accompanying a colleague at formal proceedings

- 7.1 All staff have a right to be accompanied at formal internal meetings and hearings, such as disciplinary or grievance, by either a UNISON representative (if a member), or by a colleague. If you have been asked to accompany a colleague you are entitled to receive reasonable paid time for attending the meeting or hearing, plus time necessary for familiarisation with the case and discussions with your colleague before and after the meeting and hearing.
- 7.2 Please let your line manager know of any time you require before confirming arrangements with your colleague.

Time-off for staff association and network support group activities

- 7.3 If you are a chair-person or a representative of a staff association or a network support group you are permitted to take reasonable work time to attend meetings and other activities related to your role. This needs to be agreed with your line manager in advance. Further detail is given in the Staff Support Network Groups policy.

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Time-off for UNISON representatives

- 7.4 If you are a representative of UNISON you are permitted to take paid-time off for activities related to your role as per the formal UNISON recognition agreement (held by HR). Staff and line managers may seek information and advice on time-off from their HR Advisor.

Jury service

- 7.5 If you are notified of the requirement to attend jury service, you should immediately notify your line manager of the dates and provide them with a copy of the summons. The line manager should then notify the People Customer Services and make the appropriate cover arrangements. In exceptional circumstances, where your absence is likely to cause substantial injury to the Constabulary's undertaking, you could be asked to apply to be excused or defer your jury service. Your full normal pay including any allowances will continue during jury service.
- 7.6 During the periods immediately before, during and after your jury service, your working pattern will remain unchanged except if we need to make a change to ensure you have sufficient rest breaks in accordance with the Working Time Regulations (WTR), such as if you are scheduled to work on any of the following:
- the day immediately before you start jury service
 - on a Saturday or Sunday in the middle of jury service
 - on the day immediately following jury service
- 7.7 Consideration will also be given to any night work falling within the 48 hours before you start jury service. Rest days will only be rescheduled in order to comply with WTR.
- 7.8 If you are released early from jury service on any day, you will not be required to make up any hours that you would have been due to work. Likewise, if you are on jury service longer on any day than you would have worked you will not be due any compensation for this.
- 7.9 If you are completely released from jury service for a day or number of days towards the end, you should notify your line manager and you will be expected to return to work on your next scheduled working day. The same applies if you become ineligible, deferred or excused. Please also keep your line manager updated if your jury service is, or is likely to be, extended.
- 7.10 If you are required to attend jury service during a period of annual leave which you have already had agreed, you can request to have that leave reinstated.

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Public duties

- 7.12 If you wish to undertake any public duties you must firstly obtain approval through a Business Interest Application to PSD. Please see the Business Interests and Additional Occupations Policy for further information.
- 7.13 You may take reasonable paid time off to fulfil public duties such as a magistrate, school governor, local councillor and any other body as listed in the PSC Handbook. You must submit a letter confirming your public duties to your line manager, and the line manager must ensure that the business interest has been registered and approved by PSD before authorising time off.
- 7.14 Where possible, you should ensure that your public duties fall outside your normal working time, however if this is not possible, up to six days paid leave (pro-rata for part-time staff) in any 12-month period may be authorised by your line manager.
- 7.15 If your public duty falls on a rest day you are not entitled to compensation or reallocation of your rest day, nor are you not permitted to change a rest day in order to maximise entitlement.
- 7.16 If you receive any payment (above basic expenses) from any public duty and have also received Constabulary pay for the time taken off, you must notify the Constabulary so the necessary deduction from your pay can be made.

Trustees of Occupational Pension Schemes

- 7.17 If you are a Trustee of an occupational pension scheme (as defined in the Pension Schemes Act 1993) or a director of a trustee company you are entitled to reasonable paid time off to carry out trustee duties or be trained for those duties.

Reserve Forces training

- 7.18 If you are member of the reserve forces you may be granted special leave to undertake training for up to a total of 12 days in any leave year (on a pro-rata basis (in days)) for part-time staff. Approval is subject to operational resilience and is at the discretion of your Head of Department. Should you require this special leave, please make your request with as much notice as possible to your line manager and Head of Department, submitting with this a letter from your Commanding Officer confirming the dates of training.
- 7.19 If you require any additional time off to cover any further training commitments throughout the year, you should request annual leave.
- 7.20 You must have approval from the Constabulary to be a member of the reserve forces, via a business interest application. Line managers should check this has been registered and authorised by PSD, and notify the Head of Department accordingly, before time off is authorised.

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Volunteer Cadet Leaders – Military Organisations

7.21 If you are a volunteer leader in a military cadet organisation you may be granted up to six days' special leave in any leave year to attend annual training camps and courses. For part-time staff this should be calculated on a pro-rata basis (in days). Approval of this special leave is subject to operational resilience and at the discretion of your Head of Department.

7.22 Staff who are volunteer military cadet leaders must have an approved business interest in place.

Leave requests by armed forces spouses and partners

7.23 Line managers should be flexible in granting leave requests for armed forces spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment.

8. Family and Domestic

Time off for Dependants (TOD)

8.1 This leave is intended to deal with unexpected short-term difficulties or to make arrangements to deal with long-term difficulties, involving a dependant. It will normally be restricted to one or two days' duration and will be at your normal full pay. A dependant could be a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent, or someone who depends on you for care.

8.2 Examples of when TOD could be used include:

- Sudden illness, accident, assault or death of a dependant.
- Making longer term care arrangements for an ill or injured dependant.
- Dealing with arrangements following the death of a dependant – TOD is in addition to any compassionate leave granted.
- Dealing with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant.
- Dealing with an incident involving a child, for whom you are responsible, during school hours.

8.3 The above are examples only and other similar types of unexpected occurrence may fall within this.

8.4 Whilst TOD can be used when there is disruption to care plans in place, it is not an alternative to having long-term solutions in place. Some staff have caring responsibilities for a dependant and this should be managed through a flexible working agreement or other bespoke arrangements.

8.5 You should tell your line manager/duty supervisor of your need to take TOD as soon as reasonably practicable, the reasons why you need the leave and how long you expect to be absent. The duration of TOD should be only

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as long as it takes to deal with the immediate situation at hand, usually no more than one or two days.

- 8.6 There is no limit to the amount of times TOD can be taken however your line manager may wish to talk to you if they think time off is affecting your work.

Compassionate leave

- 8.7 Compassionate leave may be granted to provide support to a member of staff to help them cope with a traumatic event or circumstances, to be used when more appropriate than other types of leave or time off, such as TOD or sickness absence.
- 8.8 Examples of circumstances where paid compassionate leave may be granted include severe illness, injury, hospitalisation or the death of a person close to you, that causes you distress or grief. It can also be granted to support staff who have become the victims of crime, especially domestic abuse. Line managers are encouraged to speak to their staff regarding their individual circumstances so that compassionate leave can be granted if appropriate.
- 8.9 The member of staff should contact their line manager as soon as possible to inform them of the event or circumstances and the line manager should discuss with them what support they can provide.
- 8.10 Management discretion should be used to agree the amount of compassionate leave. Up to three days' paid leave may be granted by the line manager, with a further four days' extension subject to the approval of the Head of Department. Where additional time off is required, the member of staff can request annual leave or unpaid leave.
- 8.11 However, in exceptional circumstances special leave not exceeding four weeks (in addition to the seven days), may be applied at the discretion of the Director of People, including payment thereof. In considering whether to grant additional compassionate leave, consideration will be given to personal circumstances, faith or family makeup and organisational requirements.
- 8.12 In such instances the line manager should also consider a referral to Workplace Health, having regard to the member of staff's welfare. The line manager should also ensure that the member of staff is aware of support through the EAP, and the Constabularies' bereavement peer support groups, if appropriate – details are on the intranet.

Parental leave

- 8.14 Parental leave is the right for parents or those with legal responsibility for a child to take unpaid time off work to look after their child or make arrangements for their welfare, such as settling them into new care arrangements, looking at new schools, visiting grandparents or other family.

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- 8.15 You are entitled to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child, up to their 18th birthday. The entitlement is for 18 weeks for the whole of their childhood, not each year, and no more than four weeks leave may be taken in a year.
- 8.16 With effect from 6th April 2026, parental leave is a day-one entitlement, meaning there is no minimum service criteria to take the leave. Until 6th April 2026, you must have a minimum one year's continuous service. The exception to this is if your child is entitled to disability living allowance, in which case there is no minimum continuous service criteria.
- 8.17 The leave can be taken in blocks of a week or multiples of one day. A 'week' equals the length of time you would normally work over seven days. A week's leave can start on any day of the week.
- 8.18 Any requests for parental leave should be submitted to your line manager giving at least 21 days' notice before your intended start date.
- 8.19 You are entitled to buy back, for pension purposes, any period taken as parental leave. Please contact Payroll department for details.

Parental bereavement leave

- 8.20 Parental bereavement leave is the entitlement of two weeks' paid leave available to all staff who suffer a still-birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy or lose a child under the age of 18. This entitlement is in addition to, and not a replacement for, any other leave a parent may be entitled to, including time off for dependants, compassionate leave, or other types of family or domestic leave. There is no qualifying period of service in order to take parental bereavement leave. If more than one child has died the parent is entitled to a period of parental bereavement leave for each child.
- 8.21 The member of staff is still entitled to their full maternity leave if they have a still-birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy or their child dies soon after birth, or continuation of adoption leave for up to eight weeks if their child dies whilst they are on adoption leave. Please see the Maternity Leave (Police Staff) and Adoption Leave (Police Staff) policies for further information.
- 8.22 Parental bereavement leave applies equally to parents and to a parent's partner. A parent for these purposes is any of the following:
- natural parents, adoptive parents or those who have become parents through surrogacy or fertility treatment;
 - a natural parent of a child who has been adopted but has a court order giving contact with the child;
 - a person with whom a child has been placed for adoption, as long as the adoption has not been disrupted;
 - a prospective adopter who is living with the child following entry into the UK from overseas and has official notification of eligibility to adopt;
 - an intended parent under a surrogacy arrangement;

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- foster carers, guardians or others who are the child's main carer;
 - a partner of any of the above.
- 8.23 The leave can be taken at any time in the 56 weeks from the date of loss and either in a single block or as two separate weeks at different times. A 'week' is seven calendar days and the leave must be taken as whole weeks.
- 8.24 The member of staff must notify their line manager to take the leave, but this can be informal, e.g. a phone call and does not need to be in writing.
- 8.25 For leave starting within 56 days of the loss, notice should be given no later than when you would normally start work, or as soon as possible afterwards. For leave to start later than 56 days following the loss, one week's notice, or as soon as is possible, is required.
- 8.26 There is no need to provide any documentation, i.e. a death certificate in order to take parental bereavement leave.

Carer's Leave

- 8.27 From 6 April 2024, all employees are entitled to unpaid leave to give or arrange care for a dependant who has:
- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they are expected to need care for more than three months or;
 - a disability as defined by the Equality Act or;
 - care needs because of their old age.
- 8.28 The dependant does not have to be a family member but can be anyone who relies on you for care. The entitlement is for one week of leave in each rolling 12 month period, a 'week' being the length of time you normally work over seven days, e.g. if you work three days a week, you can take three days leave. If your working hours vary each week the amount of leave you can take is calculated by adding the total number of hours worked in 12 months and dividing by 52. The leave can be taken as a whole week or individual days or half days.
- 8.29 If you need to care for more than one person, you cannot take a week's leave for each dependant. The leave can be used on more than one dependant.
- 8.30 If you are a parent, you can take up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave. This is separate to carer's leave. See 8.14 to 8.18 above.
- 8.31 Notice to take leave needs to be given to your line manager. It does not need to be in writing. The required notice period is either twice as many days as the period of leave required, or three days, whichever is the greater. You do not need to give evidence of your dependant's care needs.

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- 8.32 If you need to take time off in an emergency or unplanned you can take time off for dependants (TOD) without giving notice. See 8.1 to 8.6 above.
- 8.33 Managers cannot refuse a request for carers' leave. However, if the absence would cause serious disruption to the organisation you can be asked to delay it, but your manager must allow you to take a period of carer's leave of the same duration within one month of the original date requested and confirm the reason for the delay and new date in writing within seven days of the original request.

9. Time Off – Medical

Medical appointments

- 9.1 You are entitled to paid time off to attend preventative medical treatments and medical screening appointments. Time off required will include reasonable travel time to attend the appointment. Where possible, routine medical appointments should be made outside of working hours, or as near as possible to the start/end of your working day/shift to minimise disruption to work. It is appreciated, however, that you will not always be able to control or influence the timing of your appointments. You should give your line manager as much notice as possible of time-off required and provide proof of appointment if requested. In relation to night workers, managers should give consideration to flexibility in finish times to allow attendance for medical appointments.

Surgical and medical procedures

- 9.2 If you require time off from work of one whole day or more for a surgical or medical procedure which is considered essential or as a consequence of medical advice resulting from your physical or mental health, this will be recorded as sickness absence.
- 9.3 If you need a procedure that will last less than one day, this will be recorded as 'paid time for medical appointments'.
- 9.4 You should give your line manager as much notice as possible of any planned time off you need for a medical procedure.

Elective surgery and procedures

- 9.5 Elective surgery is defined as surgery or a procedure which is not linked to treatment of an illness, accident or injury, disease, condition or genetic or birth defect or a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or is recommended by a medical professional for psychological or health reasons.
- 9.6 Paid time off will not be given for elective surgery, (other than for psychological/health reasons), unless complications arise requiring additional time off beyond the normal recovery period, in which case you should follow normal sickness absence reporting procedures. If you wish to request time off for any elective surgery or procedure, you must therefore

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request this from your own annual leave entitlement or other type of accrued time off e.g. flexi-time.

- 9.7 You will need to give as much notice as possible of appointments or planned absence. For all requests for leave for elective surgery or procedures, consideration to the impact on organisational needs as well as the member of staff will be given.

Organ and tissue donating

- 9.8 In this context 'donating' is defined as the donation of a whole organ (such as a kidney) or part of an organ (such as liver), or tissue (such as bone marrow) which is needed by another person in order to improve or save their life. This procedure would either be via an official donor register or to a person known to the donor. Paid time off required for the operation or procedure, will be granted. You should discuss the time off required with your line manager with as much advance notice as possible. Appointments for assessments or pre-operative tests required are covered under 'time off for medical appointments' above. If complications arise and you are not fit to return to work, you should follow sickness absence reporting procedures.

Fertility treatment

- 9.9 Staff undergoing fertility treatment, and partners of individuals undergoing treatment, will be supported with paid time off and flexibility in working patterns/arrangements. There is no minimum length of service required to be eligible for this.
- 9.10 For the member of staff undergoing treatment, reasonable paid time off (special leave) for appointments and treatment can be granted by the line manager. The amount of time off required will vary from one individual to another, depending on personal circumstances including the type of treatment and the nature of the individual's role. Reasonable time off depending on the individual's circumstances should be granted. Line managers can contact their HRA for further guidance on time-off if required.
- 9.11 If you are the partner of an individual undergoing treatment, your line manager may authorise up to ten hours paid special leave (pro-rata for part-time staff) for each fertility treatment cycle. A treatment cycle is defined as starting from a consultation appointment through to a positive/negative pregnancy test at the end of the treatment. The partner can allocate their special leave to appointments/procedures of their choice.
- 9.12 Any member of staff who wishes to take the above time off will be required to provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that fertility treatment has been recommended and approved. This can be provided to the line manager, or to HR or Workplace Health. Staff do not need to share any information with their line manager regarding their fertility treatment.
- 9.13 You should try to arrange appointments outside your working hours where possible, or at times that will cause the minimum amount of inconvenience to the organisation. It is appreciated however that this is not always

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possible, particularly considering the number of appointments and treatments that may be required, which may be at short notice. You should give as much notice as possible of the time off required and, at the request of your line manager, produce evidence of appointment for which time off is requested.

- 9.14 It is also recommended that where possible line managers offer flexibility in working hours or shift changes during the treatment period.
- 9.15 If you are unwell and not fit to work as a result of treatment you should report your absence as sickness in line with the Sickness Absence Management policy.

Rehabilitation – Flint House

- 9.16 PCSOs and designated Detention Officers are eligible for membership of Flint House Police Rehabilitation Centre. Time spent at Flint House will be recorded as working time unless you are absent from work as a result of sickness, in which case it will be recorded as sickness absence. A maximum of two rest days will be re-rostered if attendance at Flint House results in eight consecutive working days. If a stay at Flint House coincides with a period of annual leave already booked, you may request to have this annual leave reinstated.
- 9.17 The arrangements at 9.16 also apply to other rehabilitation/treatment centres recognised by the Constabularies.

10. Leave and time off options in the event of severe weather

- 10.1 If, due to severe weather conditions, you are unable to travel to your normal place of work you should contact your line manager to agree an alternative course of action.
- 10.2 The options in such circumstances may include:
- working at home, subject to the nature of your role and appropriate work being available;
 - working at alternative suitable premises that you can get to and can accommodate you;
 - taking annual leave;
 - taking flexi-time/flexi-day or another type of accrued time-off;
 - changing your rest-day and working the day at a later date – applicable to part-time staff.
- 10.3 If you are unable to work due to severe weather affecting care arrangements for a dependant, e.g. school or nursery closure only, time off for dependants may apply.
- 10.4 At the onset of county-wide severe conditions, central policy direction will be given to management and staff. In extreme localised weather conditions,

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managers should exercise their discretion in a common-sense way taking into consideration individual circumstances.

- 10.5 During severe weather it is still necessary to maintain service levels and it should not be assumed that annual leave or time off will be granted where other alternatives are available.

11. Other

Discretionary special leave requests

- 11.1 If you require time off for reasons which do not fall under any of the categories in this policy, please speak to your line manager. Your line manager may then discuss with your Head of Department and make a written request for special leave on your behalf to the Director of People together with a recommendation from your Head of Department. Consideration should be given to any annual leave or flexi-time outstanding, as well as to the personal circumstances before pursuing a request. The decision on whether to grant special leave, the amount of time and whether this will be paid or unpaid will be made by the Director of People.
- 11.2 Where there is an urgent requirement to take time off, managers may use their discretion to authorise this and report retrospectively to their Head of Department and the Director of People.

Special leave for participation in sporting events

- 11.3 Paid special leave for participation in sporting events will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. For example, where the member of staff is an elite athlete representing their country at international level, such as the Olympics or Para Olympics, or is a carer accompanying a disabled elite athlete representing their country at international level, such as the Para Olympics. Applications for special leave should be made in writing to the Director of People.

12. Unauthorised leave of absence

- 12.1 Unauthorised leave of absence is where a member of staff is absent from work without explanation and/or contact. Immediate action will be taken by the individual's line manager to try to contact them, in order to check upon their welfare and establish the reasons for their absence.
- 12.2 If the line manager is unable to make contact with their member of staff they should contact their HR Advisor without delay for advice on next steps.
- 12.3 Line managers should be aware that unauthorised absence may take various forms. It may be an isolated unplanned absence for a good reason, for example to care for a dependant in the event of an emergency in which case TOD may apply, or they are unwell and unable to make contact. The length and reason for the absence will determine what action may need to be taken. Where unacceptable or unsatisfactory explanation is given or no explanation is forthcoming the matter may be considered a conduct issue.

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12.4 For any advice and guidance relating to unauthorised absence line managers can contact their HR Advisor.

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