



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Carer's Leave Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Carer's Leave Policy
Owner	Human Resources
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DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
CDC Personnel Committee	27 November 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 28 November 2027 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

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1 Entitlement to carer's leave

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the Council may amend it at any time.

This policy applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.

All employees are eligible to request carer's leave.

Carer's leave is unpaid and can be taken to help a dependent who needs long term care.

2 Who counts as a dependent

An employee's dependents can include:

- Their husband, wife, civil partner or partner
- Their child
- Their parent
- A person who lives in their household (but not tenants, lodgers or an employee)
- A person who relies on them for care, such as an elderly neighbour.

3 What counts as a long-term care need

A dependent has a long-term care need if they have any of the following:

- A disability as defined under the Equality Act 2010
- An illness or injury that is likely to need care for a least three months
- A care need related to old age.

4 What carer's leave can be used for

Examples of when an employee could request carer's leave include:

- Taking their disabled child to a hospital appointment
- Moving their parent who has dementia to a care home
- Accompanying a housebound dependent on a day trip
- Providing meals and company for an elderly neighbour while their main carer is away with work for the day.

5 How much carer's leave can be requested

Employees can take up to one week of carer's leave every twelve months.

They can choose to request leave as half days, full days or one whole week.

An employee is entitled to a period of carer's leave that is equal to their usual working week. For example, if someone works 4 days a week, they can take request 4 days carer's leave.

An employee might need to care for more than one dependent. In these circumstances, they can still only take the equivalent of one week of carer's leave.

6 Pay during a period of carer's leave

Carer's leave is unpaid.

7 Local government pension scheme

Any absence, which is unpaid, will be treated as a break in service for occupational pension purposes unless you choose to pay voluntary contributions.

You must write to Payroll and state your intention to pay voluntary contributions no later than 30 days after your return to work. You may pay these contributions as a lump sum or in instalments. For further advice, please contact Payroll.

10 Giving notice to take carer's leave

Employees must give notice before the start of any period of carer's leave.

The minimum notice depends on how many days of leave you wish to take:

Number of days requested	Minimum notice period
0.5 to 1 day	3 days' notice
1.5 to 2 days	4 days' notice
2.5 to 3 days	6 days' notice
3.5 to 4 days	8 days' notice
4.5 to 5 days	10 days' notice

Employees should request carer's leave through iTrent. They are not required to provide evidence of their dependents care needs.

If an employee needs to take time off at short notice to care for a dependent, they could consider the 'time off for dependents' policy as an alternative.

11 When an employer can decline a request for carer's leave

Employers cannot refuse an employee's request for carer's leave but they can ask them to take it at a different time.

CDC would only do this if the employee's absence would cause serious disruption to the organisation.

If this is the case we will:

- Agree another date within one month of the date the employee originally requested
- Within seven days of the request or before the leave starts (whichever is the earlier), explain in writing why we need to delay the leave.

12 Rights following a period of carer's leave

Employees taking carer's leave have the right to return to the same role, on the same terms and conditions.