



## **DISCRETIONARY & COMPASSIONATE LEAVE POLICY**

It is Pillar Kincardine policy to assist staff to strike a balance between work and family commitments, and to make staff aware of their rights as employees. We recognise that employees are sometimes faced with difficult domestic or emergency situations not covered by normal leave arrangements. We also accept that employees may on occasion require time off work in order to perform public duties, or to deal with exceptional circumstances outside their control.

In the interest of good working relationships Pillar Kincardine's Service Manager is authorised to balance the requirements of the service with the needs of our employees, and to give prompt and sympathetic consideration to requests from employees for discretionary leave on compassionate grounds, at times of personal stress and/or serious family emergency.

### **Entitlement**

a) Domestic or other emergencies

Leave for domestic or other emergencies is designed to support staff where the emergency is unrelated to children or dependants (for which Dependants leave may be available). There is no automatic entitlement, but the Service Manager has authority to grant appropriate leave in the case of significant emergencies. Any further leave should be taken as flexi, annual or (with the Service Manager's permission) unpaid leave - which should also be used to cover other, less serious, situations.

b) Bereavement

There is no automatic entitlement, but Pillar Kincardine employees may normally expect up to 1 week paid leave to deal with the bereavement or critical illness of a partner or close relative, or to deal with some other major family crisis or emergency. In exceptional circumstances (eg during times of critical illness or where the employee has to make funeral and/or other arrangements or needs to travel a long distance to attend a funeral) the leave may be extended beyond the 1 week but will normally be unpaid. In such situations employees may elect to use part of their annual leave (or flexi-time) entitlement in addition to the discretionary period.

### **Procedure**

There is no formal procedure; however, employees should inform the Service Manager as soon as practicable of the reason for their absence and how long they expect to be away from work. They should provide regular updates if the period of leave has for any reason to be extended beyond that originally envisaged, and record any leave taken on their time sheet.

### **Refusal of leave**

Staff who feel that they have been refused Discretionary or Compassionate leave unreasonably or victimised for requesting such leave should in the first instance raise the matter with the Service Manager. They have the right to pursue the issue if necessary through the Grievance Procedure.