

TIME OFF FOR DEPENDANTS



Introduction.

Under the Employment Relations Act 1999 full and part time employees, regardless of length of service, are entitled to reasonable time off for the care of dependants. This right allows employees to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies.

Examples include:

- if a dependant fails ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- making longer term arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured
- making arrangements after the death of a dependant
- dealing with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant
- dealing with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child during school hours
- partner having a baby

Who is a Dependent?

A dependent is the husband, wife, child, parent or someone who lives in the same household as the employee. It does not cover tenants or boarders or someone who lives in the household as an employee.

Amount of Leave.

An employee may take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with the above emergencies and to make arrangements to deal with the emergency. For most cases, one or two days should be sufficient to deal with the problem.

Pay During Leave.

Any leave taken will be unpaid.

How to Exercise Your Right to Unpaid Time Off for Dependents Leave.

You must, as soon as reasonably practicable, inform the Students' Union of the reason for your absence and how long your absence will last. In some circumstances it may be reasonable for you to inform the Students' Union

upon you return to work, when it was not practical for you to inform the Students' Union earlier and only for a short period of leave.

Rights During Dependents Leave.

You are entitled to return to the same job following dependents leave. You are also protected from dismissal or unfair treatment on grounds that you took or intended to take dependents leave.

Right of Appeal.

If you qualify for time off, see above, and this is refused by the Students' Union you may make an application to an Employment Tribunal for a compensatory award in respect of any losses incurred by the employee as a result of the refusal.