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1 Scope

This policy applies to all Bupa employees in the UK and Ireland (excluding Bupa Dental Care employees not on Bupa terms and conditions) and excludes all non-employees e.g. bank, self-employed, contractors, agency workers.

This policy will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it reflects our legal obligations and business needs.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment.

2 Purpose

We want people to love working for Bupa so we're committed to working practices and policies that reward loyalty, increase employee engagement and support our purpose of helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives.

The Bupa Code means we're ready for anything so we're prepared for unexpected demands.

We understand that there may be occasions when you may need to take time off from work at short notice to deal with these demands. In order to promote fairness and consistency this policy outlines how Bupa will manage planned and unplanned time out from work and includes guidance on pay and how we will manage any perceived unreasonable requests or patterns of leave.

3 Responsibilities

You are responsible for:-

- Making your manager aware at the earliest opportunity of any anticipated requirements so that they can support you
- Communicating openly and honestly with your line manager with regards to the reason for your request, or anticipated need, for leave
- Exploring reasonable alternative solutions to taking time off from work before requesting additional leave to minimise the impact on our customers and our business
- Complying with the specific requirements in this policy
- Using your annual leave entitlement wherever possible to minimise the need to request additional unpaid leave

Your manager is responsible for:-

- Complying with the specific requirements in this policy
- Applying this policy fairly across all areas of the business

- Responding to your request promptly
- Taking account of the business needs whilst giving fair and reasonable consideration to the request
- Recording your request for other leave and the reason
- Discussing any patterns or unreasonable levels of leave
- Investigating suspected misuse / abuse of this policy

4 Key points

The following types of leave are addressed within this policy.

- Compassionate leave
- Parental bereavement leave
- Emergency leave
- Time off for dependants
- Medical appointments
- Cosmetic surgery
- Jury service
- Witness in civil or criminal proceedings
- Public duties
- Military service (including Territorial Army)
- Sports leave
- Severe weather conditions
- Trade Union duties
- Wedding Day (UKMU and Centre only)

5 Compassionate Leave

We understand there are times when our people may need to spend time away from work for compassionate reasons. These could be due to the death, serious or terminal illness of a close relative (for example parent, spouse, partner, guardian, sibling).

For a bereavement relating to a child, please see Parental Bereavement Leave.

Up to 5 days paid leave can be supported and, dependant on your individual situation, your manager may be able to authorise an additional 5 days to be taken as annual leave or unpaid. In the event of a bereavement, leave should be taken within 4 weeks of the death.

For more support during difficult times Bupa Healthy Minds provides a free, confidential telephone counselling service. The service can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 0345 600 2007 if you're in the UK. If you're a BG EEA employee based in Ireland, download the LifeWorks App and use 'ILH-' followed by your member number as your invitation code, e.g. ILH-1234567 to access the Healthy Minds service provided by Irish Life.

6 Parental bereavement leave

We recognise how hard it can be when we're faced with a bereavement and that dealing with the death of a child is exceptionally difficult.

Parental bereavement leave applies to anyone who suffers the loss of a child under the age of 18 on or after 6 April 2020. This includes parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Whatever your length of service, you can take this type of leave if you're the parent of the child who has passed away, the partner of the child's parent, or have parental responsibility e.g. adoption.

You can take two weeks of parental bereavement leave as either:

- a single block of two weeks
- two separate blocks of one week, at different times.

You can take the leave at the time(s) you choose within the 56 weeks after your bereavement.

If you have lost more than one child, you have a separate entitlement to bereavement leave for each child.

If you need to take parental bereavement leave within the first 56 days after your bereavement, you can take the leave straight away and you don't need to give any notice before starting your leave. Please let your manager know no later than when you are due to start work on the first day on which you wish to take leave or, if you feel unable to do so, you can ask someone to call them on your behalf.

To take leave more than 56 days after your bereavement, you'll need to give your manager one week's notice.

If you change your mind about when to take your planned leave, you can cancel your leave and take it at a different time (within the 56 weeks after your bereavement). You can tell your manager at any time before the leave starts in the first 56 days, but you must give a week's notice of the cancellation if your leave is due to start after the first 56 days. If you've begun a week of parental bereavement you can no longer cancel that week of leave.

We aim to provide bereaved parents with as much support as possible and we'll continue to pay you your full pay during your leave (inclusive of any entitlement you may have to statutory parental bereavement pay).

Where Parental Bereavement Leave is not applicable, please see Compassionate Leave.

7 Emergency Leave

We appreciate things can go wrong and will allow reasonable time for you to make contingency arrangements to deal with unplanned events such as a fire, flood or burglary. You are expected to make alternative arrangements in advance of any pre-planned disruptions such as industrial action affecting public services/transport as these will not be considered as unplanned events.

You must inform your line manager within at least an hour of your planned start time and explain the reason for your request and how much time you think you will need to deal with the initial emergency. This will usually be no more than 1 – 2 days and once the immediate emergency has been taken care of you are expected to return to work. If a shift swap isn't possible the time should be taken as annual leave. In the event that you have used your annual leave entitlement your manager may agree to the time off and require you to work the time back or take unpaid leave.

8 Time off for dependants

We understand that at times unexpected events occur relating to a dependant (for example parent, spouse, partner, guardian, child, sibling, someone who lives with you (excluding tenants, lodgers, boarders and employees). Examples of this could be:

- Providing assistance when a dependant falls ill
- Dealing with the unexpected disruption, termination or breakdown of arrangements for the care of a dependant
- Dealing with an unexpected incident involving your child during school hours

You are responsible for minimising the impact such events will have on your ability to attend work by exhausting other means of support before requesting time off. We understand however that this is not always possible and you can take a reasonable amount of time to allow you to deal with the initial impact. Your manager will try and support any request for a shift swap in the first instance where this is practical. If this is not possible any time taken will be regarded as unpaid. Your manager will meet with you to discuss what steps you have in place to mitigate the need for you to request time off in the future and discuss any support you may need.

9 Force Majeure Leave (Bupa Global EEA employees based in Ireland)

Bupa Global employees based in Ireland are entitled to Force Majeure Leave where a sudden injury or illness affects a member of your immediate family and where your presence with that ill or injured person is indispensable. Under such circumstances, you are entitled to paid leave of up to three days in a year, or five days over three consecutive years. Where you are absent on Force Majeure leave for part of a day, you will be deemed to have been absent on Force Majeure leave for a full day.

Under this policy 'immediate family members' for the purposes of Force Majeure Leave are defined as follows:

- child or adoptive child;
- spouse/person with whom you are living as husband or wife;
- person to whom you are in loco parentis;
- brother or sister;
- parent;
- grandparent.

By its very nature, foreseeable absence is not covered by Force Majeure leave. If you take what you believe to be Force Majeure leave, you must, on your return to work, complete the Force Majeure Leave application form on which you must confirm the dates involved and the reasons for the leave. Your completed form should then be sent to your Manager. In certain circumstances, you may be asked to provide appropriate independent evidence, for example, a medical certificate, to support your application for Force Majeure leave. Your manager, with advice from the People team, will confirm whether your application has been accepted or rejected.

10 Specific appointments (including IVF treatment)

Personal, medical, or dental appointments should be made outside of your working hours. There may be occasions when this is not possible and your manager will try and support your request for a shift swap in the first instance. If this is not possible any time off must be worked back at a time agreed with your manager and normally within 14 days. We will support reasonable requests for time to attend Bupa Health Assessments. You must inform your manager at the earliest opportunity of any appointments that will impact your attendance at work and provide any supporting documents if requested.

Medical appointments do not fall under the Sickness Absence Policy. We recognise that some individuals may need a course of several appointments to support their recovery and/or maintain their attendance and wellbeing at work. You should discuss such instances with your manager.

9.1 – Time off for IVF

Whilst there is no statutory right to take time off for IVF appointments your manager will support these in line with our approach to other medical appointments. Any sickness absence related to your treatment will be managed in accordance with our Sickness Absence Policy with the exception of the two week protected period following implantation. Any appointments or absence during this period will be managed in the same way as ante-natal appointments and pregnancy related absence. Further details on how we support individuals through IVF treatment can be found on People Place.

11 Elective Surgery

An elective surgery is a planned, non-emergency surgical procedure. It may be either medically required (e.g., cataract surgery), or optional (e.g., breast augmentation or implant) surgery. Elective surgeries may extend or improve the quality of life physically and/or psychologically. Cosmetic and reconstructive procedures may not be medically essential, but we understand that they may benefit an individual psychologically. Time off for surgery and any subsequent absence arising from it will be paid in line with your sick pay entitlement and managed in line with our Sickness Absence Policy.

12 Jury Service

If you are called for Jury Service you must notify your manager immediately and provide them with a copy of the letter confirming your jury service. You must return to the business as soon as you are no longer required at court. You will receive your usual pay and should claim for any expenses and/or loss of earnings through the court. Any loss of earnings claimed must then be paid back to Bupa.

13 Witness or Defendant in Civil or Criminal Proceedings

If you are asked to attend court you must inform your line manager immediately and provide any documentation received from the court.

If you are a witness on behalf of Bupa you will receive your usual pay and can claim back any appropriate expenses through the usual process. If you are asked to attend as a witness for any other case you should claim for any expenses and/or loss of earnings through the court. Bupa will make up any difference to your usual salary.

If you are asked to attend court as a defendant you must request annual leave or unpaid leave through your manager. Costs and loss of earnings should be claimed through the court.

14 Public Duties

We recognise that there is value in undertaking public duties and that this can be effective development. You are expected to arrange this for outside of your usual working hours in the first instance. If this is not possible Bupa will, dependant on business needs, support a reasonable amount of time off to perform duties in relation to the following;

- a magistrate (also known as a justice of the peace)
- a local councillor
- a school governor
- a member of any statutory tribunal (eg an employment tribunal)
- a member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment
- a member of a health authority
- a member of a school council or board in Scotland
- a member of a school board of management in Ireland
- a member of the General Teaching Councils for England and Wales

- a member of the Environment Agency or the Scottish Environment Protection agency
- a member of the prison independent monitoring boards (England or Wales) or a member of the prison visiting committees (Scotland)
- a member of Scottish Water or a Water Customer Consultation Panel
- a non-directorship position

Your manager has the right to ask you for evidence of participation in such events and any time off granted is at their discretion.

15 Military Service

If you are a member of the reserve forces and are “called up” for active service, you must present your call up papers to your manager. Your manager will complete a “Military Service Leave Request” form. You will be paid by the Ministry of Defence and Bupa will make up any difference in salary during this period. You have the right to be reinstated within 6 months of your military service coming to an end to the same job with the same terms and conditions as before your military leave. Your manager will ensure that payroll and pensions have been informed of your military leave dates. This leave should not be used for military training or other military commitments, but only when you are “called up” for active service.

If you are a member of the Territorial Army or any other of the armed forces and need to attend a two week residential course during the year, up to five days additional holiday may be granted per year and any additional time must be taken as annual leave. Your manager has the right to ask you for evidence of participation in such events and any leave granted is at their discretion.

16 Sports Leave

If you represent your country nationally or internationally in sport, up to five days additional holiday may be granted per year and any additional time must be taken as annual leave. Your manager has the right to ask you for evidence of participation in such events and any leave granted is at their discretion.

17 Severe Weather Conditions

In the event of extreme adverse weather conditions, e.g. heavy snow, flooding, hurricanes etc, you are expected to make every attempt to arrive at work at your normal starting time as long as it is safe to do so. If you decide that the weather conditions will prevent you from travelling to work you should contact your manager within an hour of your scheduled start time to let them know about your absence and the reasons. Your manager may propose a shift swap in the first instance. If not the time should be taken as either annual leave, unpaid leave, time in lieu or worked back within a reasonable period and in line with business requirements. Operational requirements may impact which of these options is offered.

Where the business has prior knowledge of expected adverse weather conditions it will normally send an internal communication to all employees reconfirming the notification process and how time off will be treated. You must make sure your contact details are up to date in the relevant HR system and ensure that you are aware of your responsibilities in line with our Business Continuity Management training module which is available on Grow.

18 Trade Union duties

Bupa does not officially recognise any trade union however if you are a trade union representative, and/or are requested to act as a companion by a colleague, we will allow you reasonable paid time off work to support employees at a disciplinary or grievance hearing.

19 Wedding Day (UKMU and Group only)

In line with our purpose of wanting people to love working for Bupa we want to share your celebration of this special event we will award you with one additional day to help you celebrate the occasion. This must be agreed with your manager and can only be taken once during your time working for Bupa.

20 Consequences

In the event that an individual abuses this policy or fails to comply with the specific requirements this will be addressed through the disciplinary policy

21 Appendices	
Bupa documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Bupa CodeOther Leave Policy Appendix – OverviewForce majeure leave form – For Ireland onlyDisciplinary Policy

22 Document details

Document name	Other leave policy – BG&UK
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