

Wiltshire Council Human Resources

Time Off for Fostering

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats such as large print and audio on [request](#).

What is it?

The policy details the time off you are entitled to have from work if you are a prospective/approved foster carer in addition to your substantive role with Wiltshire council. This policy also provides links to other flexible working and time off policies which may be of assistance to foster carers.

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Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to all Wiltshire Council employees, with the exception of those on TUPE terms and conditions and teaching and non-teaching staff employed in maintained schools or academies.

When does it apply?

It applies to employees who:

- have applied to become Wiltshire Council foster carers and are in the process of being formally assessed
- are approved Wiltshire Council foster carers and are actively fostering
- have 26 weeks continuous service with the council.

The council actively supports its employees who take on fostering roles but employees must obtain the approval of their managers before taking time off under this policy.

When does it not apply?

The policy does not apply if you do not meet the eligibility criteria above.

What are the main points?

1. Wiltshire Council recognises and values the contribution that foster carers make to society and especially the lives of children in care. The council understands that foster carers who do other work in addition to fostering need some flexibility in their working arrangements, to meet the needs of their fostered child. The council is committed to supporting any employee who is/is applying to be a foster carer through this policy and other flexible working options where possible.
2. The process of becoming approved as a foster carer is a lengthy one and places a number of reasonable but demanding expectations upon prospective foster carers, particularly in relation to training and the assessment and approval process.
3. Wiltshire Council offers employees the opportunity to work flexibly where this is compatible with the demands of their job. All current policies regarding flexible working, including [family emergencies and compassionate leave](#) for dependents and [ordinary parental leave](#), apply to approved foster carers.
4. If you are eligible for the fostering time off policy as detailed above, you will be entitled to the following paid time off in any 12 month period as follows:
 - Up to three days in total to attend assessment and initial training prior to approval as a foster carer
 - Up to one day to attend the approving foster panel
 - Up to five days in total to attend a child's in care review, annual foster carer review, health and education related meetings associated with the child you care for, foster carer training, foster panel and other associated meetings
5. The entitlements above represent the maximum total amount of time off which can be granted under this policy, if you are involved in the specific fostering activities outlined above. It is recognised that not all of these activities will occur in a 12 month period and some are one off events. You should only claim for the actual fostering activities which you are involved in during any 12 month period and this may be below the total amounts specified for each purpose.
6. You will need to obtain the approval of your line manager for leave under this policy. The leave will be considered and approved on a pro rata basis for part time employees.
7. If you require time off which is additional to the entitlement set out in this policy you should discuss this further with your line manager and consider other options which may be available to you including, annual leave, time off in lieu or unpaid leave.

Roles and responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

8. You must obtain the prior approval of your manager for time off work under this policy. It is your responsibility to discuss this with your manager providing as much notice as possible.

Line manager responsibilities

9. You need to consider requests from employees for time off from work for fostering fairly. If leave is approved employees are entitled to paid leave as set out in this policy and you should record this in SAP.

Frequently Asked Questions:

10. I am an approved foster carer. What other policies are available which offer me flexible working opportunities to assist me with my fostering responsibilities?

You may find it helpful to have a look at the range of options available in the flexible working and time off section in HR direct as follows:

- [Flexible working policy and procedure](#)
- [Flexi-time policy](#)
- [Time off in lieu policy](#)
- [Term time working policy](#)
- [Part time working policy](#)
- [Compressed hours policy](#)
- [Job share policy](#)
- [Annualised hours policy](#)
- [Home working policy](#)
- [Family emergencies and compassionate leave policy](#)
- [Time off for family emergencies and compassionate leave](#)
- [Ordinary parental leave](#)
- [Career break scheme policy](#)
- [Purchase of annual leave](#)
- [Annual leave and bank holiday entitlement policy](#)

Equal Opportunities

This policy was screened for an Equality Impact Assessment on (date)

Managers will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all employees are treated fairly.

Advice and guidance

If you require help in accessing or understanding this policy you should contact your line manager or trade union representative if you are a member.

If, due to the nature of your query, it is not appropriate to contact your line manager you should contact your head of service who will nominate an appropriate manager or colleague to help you.

See [guidance for managers – giving advice on policies](#).

For further information please speak to your supervisor, manager, service director or contact your HR advisor.

Policy author	HR Policy and Reward Team – CC
Policy implemented	
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