

Wiltshire Council Human Resources

Time Off for Elections

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 you are entitled to have from work if you are appointed as a presiding officer, polling clerk or counting clerk to assist at an election held in Wiltshire.

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Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to all Wiltshire Council employees (with the exception of teaching and non-teaching staff employed in locally managed schools).

This is a harmonised policy and applies to both Wiltshire Council and ex-district TUPE employees.

When does it apply?

It applies at election times and is only applicable to those employees who are appointed as presiding officers, polling clerks or counting clerks.

When does it not apply?

The policy does not apply if you assist at an election in another county or geographical area outside of Wiltshire.

What are the main points?

Presiding Officers & Polling Clerks

1. If you are appointed as a presiding officer or polling clerk for elections held in Wiltshire you are entitled to paid time off from work on the election day to perform these duties.
2. This will apply to the following types of elections:
 - parliamentary elections
 - European elections
 - council elections
 - parish elections
 - and any by-elections of the above
3. Your absence from your normal duties to assist at an election is subject to the prior agreement of your manager.
4. You will be expected to return to work the next day as normal and at your usual start time.

Counting Clerks

5. If you are appointed as a counting clerk you are entitled to time off from work without loss to pay or annual leave entitlement.
6. This will apply to:
 - parliamentary elections
 - European elections
 - council elections
 - parish elections
 - and any by-elections of the above
7. You will be expected to return to work the next day as normal and at your usual time unless the count finishes after midnight when you will be allowed to report for work later, at midday, with no loss of pay.
8. If it is announced that the count will take place through the night you will be expected to be at work as normal on polling day but can take the following day as paid leave as you will have been working through the night.
9. You must get the prior approval of your manager to be released for these duties.

Time off for training

10. As a poll clerk or senior counting clerk you may be required to attend a training session in preparation for the election. In Wiltshire the training sessions are generally held in the evenings and as you receive a training allowance no paid time off from work is allowed or any claims for time off in lieu.

Candidates for election

11. If you are adopted as a candidate for British or European parliamentary elections you are permitted to take three weeks (15 days) additional leave in the period immediately preceding polling day. Five days of this will be paid leave and the remaining 10 days will be unpaid leave of absence. Part time employees will be entitled to a pro rata entitlement.
12. If you are a candidate for election to a council, town council, parish council or another similar body you will not be entitled to any additional paid time off from work. You will need to use either annual leave or flexitime to cover any absences in respect of these elections.
13. You may be restricted from standing for election if your post is considered a politically restricted post as set out in section 1 of the local government and housing act 1989 and the local government officers (political restrictions) regulations 1990. Further information on this is available from the politically restricted posts policy. ([link](#))

Roles and responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

14. You must obtain the prior approval of your manager to assist at an election and to take time off work from your normal duties.

Line manager responsibilities

15. You need to consider requests from employees for time off from work to assist at elections fairly taking into account the business needs of the department and the necessity of these posts for the country's democratic processes.

Definitions

Equal Opportunities

This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed ([link to EIA for policy](#)) to identify opportunities to promote equality and mitigate any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups.

If appropriate:

Managers will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all employees are treated fairly. For further information see the guidance on equal opportunities in ([link to equal opps guidance](#))

Legislation

Note any specific pieces of legislation relied on

This policy has been reviewed by an external legal organisation to ensure compliance with (the above legislation and) our statutory duties.

Advice and guidance

If you require help in accessing or understanding this policy [\[or completing any of the associated forms\]](#) 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 – MR
Policy implemented	DD-MM-YYYY
Policy last updated	DD-MM-YYYY