



## **Bereavement/Compassionate Leave Policy**

Aldingbourne Parish Council acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways.

### **1. Leave Entitlements**

#### **Paid Leave**

Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their family dies.

Aldingbourne Parish Council acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances.

Aldingbourne Parish Council acknowledges that not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

In the event of the death of an immediate relative up to 10 working days paid leave may be granted. An immediate relative includes a spouse, civil partner or partner (including same sex partners)\* child\*\* parent, step-parent, sibling or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.

\* Partner includes someone with whom the employee is co-habiting but is not the employee's spouse or civil partner.

\*\*Child includes children in respect of whom the employee is the adoptive parent, legal guardian or carer.

At the discretion of the Clerk, 1-3 days leave will be allowed on the death of someone outside the immediate family e.g a mother/father-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, son/daughter-in-law.

These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements or has to travel to attend the funeral.

### **Unpaid Leave**

Depending on the circumstances an additional further five days' unpaid compassionate leave may be granted. The following circumstances should be taken into consideration. • The distance the employee has to travel to attend the funeral.

- If the employee **is required** to organise the funeral arrangements.
- If the individual **is the duly appointed Executor of the will of the Deceased** .
- **Any personal or exceptional circumstances that may warrant additional compassionate unpaid leave.**

An employee must **apply and be granted unpaid leave by the Clerk before such period commences**. An employee should notify the Clerk of their **intention to** take leave as soon as possible or, at the latest, on the first day of absence. In exceptional circumstances applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence. . **Alternatively, in addition to any unpaid leave the Employee may with the Clerk's agreement take annual leave at short notice.** .

**Where an employee suffers a family bereavement while on annual leave such a period can be requested to be taken as bereavement leave with the Clerk's consent who will then make the necessary adjustments to the Employee's annual leave entitlement.**

**Any other request for compassionate leave which does not fall within the criteria set out above will be solely at the discretion of the Aldingbourne Parish Council .**

## **2. Return to Work**

In certain circumstances, a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative **-e.g.** when the employee's grief is likely to impact **upon his/her** ability to perform **his/her** role, or where new child care

arrangements have to **be implemented** or **the employee becomes solely responsible for the care of an elderly parent** .

In such instances Aldingbourne Parish Council will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours' basis where **possible** . Alternative duties may **be an option to be** considered. Any such arrangement would need to be agreed in advance by the Clerk/Council and subject to an agreed maximum number of days and would be managed in line with the Flexible Time Working Regulations (Employment Act 2002)

### **3. Employee Support**

Aldingbourne Parish Council acknowledges that bereavement leave is intended to support employees in the immediate period around the death of a relative. However, the process of grief, the natural reaction and adjustment to loss and change may take a significant time and will **depend on** each individual.

An employee with any concerns about the grieving process impacting on **his/her** work performance should discuss this in confidence with the Clerk to ensure that any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary **are implemented** and **that** the employee is supported **on his/her** return to the full range of duties and responsibilities that **he/she** had prior to the bereavement or **his/herr** duties and responsibilities are adjusted (as necessary) with prior agreement with the Clerk.

### **4. Health and Safety**

Bereavement can have an impact on concentration, sleep, and decision making. The health and safety assessment of the workplace will include consideration of the impact of bereavement on employees, their duties and responsibilities, and the context in which they are working, e.g. do they operate machinery?

Any employee who is concerned about their ability to conduct their duties safely in the weeks following a bereavement must discuss this with the Clerk. Aldingbourne Parish Council reserves the right to request that an employee visit a doctor before resuming full duties.

### **5. Culture and Diversity**

Aldingbourne Parish Council recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways. The Clerk will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time.

Employees should not assume that the Clerk is aware of any such requirements and

should draw this to the Clerks attention as soon as possible. The Clerk if unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

In the event that it is the Clerk requesting leave, consultation and notification should take place with the Chairman of the Staffing Committee who will liaise with the Chairman of Full Council.

Adopted on:.....

At:.....

Review date:.....