

New Carers Leave Regulation from April 2024

Will this affect your business?

Studies show 1 in 7 employees are caring for someone outside of work.

Do you know how many unpaid and family carers you employ?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a family member or friend who could not always manage without their support.

It makes good business sense to recognise and support carers in your workforce. Benefits include:

- Retention of experienced workers
- Reduced absences.
- Lower recruitment costs as decreased staff turnover.
- Improved staff morale, which leads to improved job performance.
- Enhanced reputation.

A quick and easy way for you to provide support to employees, who may be carers, is to share details of the [Carer Register](#), developed by the Shropshire Carer Support team. By enrolling, they will receive emails with information regarding their caring role and a Carer ID/Emergency card. Employee carers who join the register and receive advice and support from the Carer Support team may potentially be better able to juggle and organise caring and work e.g. knowing what to do if there is a crisis. The aim of the Carer Support team is to assist carers to build resilience and we offer information via many different formats. Employee carers can also contact the [Carer Support](#) team directly for advice and support on 01743 341995 – open Mon/Weds/Thurs/Fri 9.00am till 5.00pm – late night Tuesday until 7.30pm and Saturday between 9.30am and 12.00pm.

The new Carer Leave Regulation (*which amends S.80 Employment Rights Act 1996*) is due to be enforced from 6th April 2024 and gives all employees, who are caring for a dependent with long term care needs, a day one right to one week of unpaid leave per rolling 12 months. Please note a qualifying period is not required.



This regulation applies to any business who has employees, whatever the size of organisation.

What we know about the Regulation

- There is no qualifying period for employees, it is a day one right.
- A dependent is classed as: a spouse, civil partner, child or parent of the employee, someone living in the same household (apart from a lodger or tenant), someone who could reasonably rely on the employee to provide or arrange care e.g. grandparent who has no other family support.
- A dependent has long term needs if: they have an injury or illness that requires/is likely to require care for more than three months, has a disability under the Equality Act 2010 or requires care for a reason connected with their age.
- Employees are not required to provide evidence they are a carer - they would self-certify that they are eligible.
- The leave can be taken flexibly, either in one block of one continuous week or in days/parts of days in non- consecutive order. The minimum period of carers leave that can be taken is half a working day and the maximum is one continuous week.
- Working day/week means the period the employee is normally expected or required to work on the day/week the leave is taken.
- The leave is unpaid, although employers can decide to pay for this time.
- Notice must be given by the employee to their employer before taking carers leave specifying they are entitled to the leave. The required notice period is twice as many days as the period of leave required, in advance of the earliest day of the leave and does not need to be in writing.
- Employers can postpone the carers leave if they reasonably consider the operation of the business would be unduly disrupted at the time requested. A written notice of postponement must be given to the employee within 7 days of the request for carers leave, explaining the reason and giving revised dates the leave can be taken. The employee must be allowed to take the leave within one month of the original request.
- Employees are protected from detriment or dismissal in relation to requests for carers leave.



What can YOU do now to prepare?

- Consider updating your policies and handbooks.
- Consider creating a self-certification form for employees to complete declaring they meet the criteria under the Act.



- Consider a record keeping process to track the number of day/part days of Carers Leave taken by employees.
- Inform and educate managers about the new entitlement – how it will operate in practice and the protections offered to employees who intend to or do use it.
- Consider nominating a key contact in the workplace.

If you would like further information, advice and help regarding the Carers Leave 2024 regulation or on supporting your employees who are carers please contact Margarete Davies, Carers Lead and Shropshire Carer Manager, Shropshire Council - email: Margarete.Davies@shropshire.gov.uk or telephone: 01743 255776.