

CITIZENS ADVICE REIGATE AND BANSTEAD SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent and effective framework for agreeing requests for special leave.

The term "special leave" refers to leave which is requested by an employee in addition to their annual leave entitlement. Some such leave is regulated by statute whilst some is non-statutory and is granted at management discretion taking into account the particular circumstances.

This policy applies to all paid staff.

This policy is non-contractual.

2. Time off for dependants

Employees are entitled to exercise their statutory right to take reasonable unpaid time off to deal with emergencies which are related to their dependants.

"Dependant" means spouse, partner, child or parent, a person who lives in the same household as the employee (but does not include tenants, lodgers and boarders) or any other person who reasonably relies on the employee for care.

The amount of time off the employee can take is only a reasonable amount of time to deal with an actual emergency. This will normally mean only a few hours, or a day or two at most. This leave must not be taken to provide ongoing support for dependants.

This leave is not available for events or circumstances that were known about in advance – annual leave should be booked instead.

3. Time off for public duties

Employees have a statutory right to take a reasonable amount of time off work in order to perform certain public duties. If an employee wishes to take time off to perform these duties, they must obtain prior written agreement from Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO. Public duties include sitting as a magistrate or on a tribunal.

The statutory right to time off for public duties is unpaid.

4. Jury service

If an employee is required to take time off work for jury service, they will be expected to claim juror's expenses.

If an employee is on jury service but is not required to attend court on any particular day, they must attend work as normal. Failure to do so will be treated as unauthorised absence.

5. Time off for domestic emergencies

Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead recognise that employees will from time to time experience domestic emergencies at home, such as a flood, fire or burglary. In such circumstances Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead will allow employees to take a reasonable amount of paid time off work to deal with the immediate emergency.

In the event of an emergency arising, the employee should notify their manager as soon as it is reasonably practicable explaining the nature of the emergency and how much time off work they think they will need.

It is Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's policy to pay employees their normal rate of basic pay when they are absent from work as a direct result of a genuine domestic emergency. Once the immediate emergency has been taken care of, the employee is expected to return to work or, if further time off is necessary, to arrange to take it as holiday or unpaid leave, subject to the agreement of their line manager.

If an employee takes frequent or regular time off on account of domestic problems, Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead has the discretion either to require the employee to make up for the time off by working extra time on another occasion, or to grant any further time off as unpaid leave.

This policy applies to genuine domestic emergencies only and does not apply to circumstances that were known about in advance.

6. Compassionate leave

If an employee experiences the serious illness or death of a member of their immediate family (parent, partner, child or sibling) they will be granted an amount of paid compassionate leave. It is unlikely that this would exceed five days although consideration will be given to allowing the employee to supplement this with annual leave or unpaid leave.

In considering the amount of leave to grant Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO will consider the closeness of the relationship, distance and any travelling time involved and, in the case of bereavement, whether the employee is responsible for making the funeral arrangements.

Employees will normally be granted one day's paid compassionate leave to attend the funeral of an immediate family member (as listed above, plus other close relatives such as grandparents and in-laws). Attendance at a funeral in any other case will normally be taken out of annual leave or, where annual leave has been exhausted, may be granted as unpaid leave.

7. Discretionary special leave

Special leave in other circumstances can be granted at the discretion of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO, who will take guidance from the trustee board if necessary. This leave may be paid or unpaid. When considering granting

special leave Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO will balance the employee's personal situation with the needs of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead and arrive at a reasonable decision. In making the decision the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO will take account of the reason for the request, the effect of the employee's absence on Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's operations, the amount of special leave they have previously taken, their general attendance record and the amount of annual leave outstanding.

Any leave granted under such circumstances remains at the discretion of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead CEO and allowing such a request will not be regarded as setting a precedent for any subsequent requests for leave.

All employees taking discretionary special leave will be given a letter and asked to sign it confirming their agreement to return no later than a specified date. An employee may return at an earlier date than is specified in the letter by giving Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's a minimum of one week's notice.

Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead reserves the right to discipline (including dismiss) anyone who fails to return by the agreed date without an acceptable reason. Illness or injury will be accepted as a reason for late return, but only if it is supported by a doctor's certificate.

Anyone who abuses this scheme will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.