



EMERGENCY DEPENDANTS LEAVE POLICY

DEPENDENCY LEAVE

1. Under the Employment Rights Act (ERA) 1996, an employee is entitled to take a “reasonable amount of time” off during their working hours to care for dependants. This is also known as compassionate leave and falls under the scope of this policy. Examples include unexpected events such as a child’s school related emergencies or disruptions as a result of illness, injury, assault, birth or making arrangements for the provision of care.
2. The statutory provisions do not, however, cover a situation that a staff member knows about in advance, for example, taking a child to a hospital appointment, nor does it allow for time off for a staff member to manage the emotional effects of bereavement of a loved one.
3. Regular absences related to long-term illnesses of dependants do not fall under the scope of this policy and will have to be separately agreed with management.
4. StreetlightUK won’t penalise you for taking the time off, as long as your reasons for taking it are genuine.
5. Contact your line manager as soon as possible if an emergency occurs with one of your dependants.

WHAT COUNTS AS AN EMERGENCY

An emergency could be any unexpected or sudden problem involving someone who depends on your help or care. The right to time off for dependants could apply to a wide range of different circumstances. Examples of common situations where you could be entitled to take time off include:

- if a dependant falls ill
- if a dependant has been injured or assaulted
- if a dependant is having a baby
- issues around a dependant's care arrangements
- unexpected incidents involving children at school
- if a dependant dies.

IF A DEPENDANT FALLS ILL

The illness or injury doesn’t necessarily have to be serious or life-threatening, and may be mental or physical. It could be a result of a deterioration of an existing condition. For example, a dependant may be suffering from a nervous breakdown and may not need full-time care, but there could be occasions when their condition deteriorates and you need to

take unexpected time off work. You could also take time off work to make longer-term care arrangements for the dependant.

IF A DEPENDANT HAS BEEN INJURED OR ASSAULTED

The right to take time off may be available if a dependant is a victim of a mugging or similar incident, even if they have not been physically hurt if they need comfort or help. You could also take time off work to make longer-term care arrangements for the dependant.

WHEN A DEPENDANT IS HAVING A BABY

This does not include taking time off after the birth to care for the child as you could be entitled to paternity or parental leave for this purpose. When there is an unexpected disruption of care arrangements. For example, if a childminder or nurse fails to turn up as arranged, or the nursery or nursing home has to close unexpectedly.

WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS AN UNEXPECTED INCIDENT DURING SCHOOL HOURS

For example, if your child has been involved in a fight, is distressed, has been injured on a school trip or is being suspended from school.

WHEN A DEPENDANT DIES

When a dependant dies, you can take time off to make funeral arrangements and go to a funeral. If the funeral is overseas you will need to agree a reasonable length of absence with your employer.

TAKING TIME OFF FOR A DEPENDANT

You can take time off regardless of your length of service. If you do need time off you should let your employer know as soon as you can, although you don't have to do it in writing or provide evidence. If you return to work before you've had the chance to contact your employer, you must still tell them why you were absent.

HOW MUCH TIME YOU CAN TAKE OFF

You are allowed 'reasonable' time off to deal with the emergency and make any arrangements that are needed. There's no set amount of time allowed to deal with an unexpected event involving a dependant as it will vary depending on what the event is, but for most cases one or two days should be enough to deal with the problem.

For example, if your child falls ill you can take enough time off to deal with their initial needs, like taking them to the hospital/doctor and arranging for their care. But you'll need to make other arrangements if you want to stay off work longer to care for them yourself.

If both parents wish to take time off for a dependant they should try to adopt a common-sense approach with your employer. Both parents may need to take time off if their child has had a serious accident, however it is unlikely to be necessary for both parents to be absent for work if the childminder fails to turn up.

There's no limit to the number of times you can take time off for dependants, provided it's for real emergencies. If your employer feels that you are taking more time off than they can cope with, they should warn you of this. If you need to be off for longer than you thought to deal with something, contact your employer as soon as you can to let them know why telling them how long you might need. Try to give details in writing as soon as you can. Your employer may have a form they'll need you to fill in.

Please find and complete a: [StreetlightUK Emergency Dependants Leave Request Form](#)

GETTING PAID FOR TIME OFF

Streetlight UK doesn't have to pay you for time off for dependants and this along with taking time off as annual leave is at the discretion of management.

KEEPING DISRUPTION TO A MINIMUM

Try to cause as little disruption to your employer as possible. For example, if your mother's day carer, or child's nanny has unexpectedly quit, try to get other family members to look after them instead of you while you look for a replacement.

WHEN THE RIGHT TO TIME OFF DOESN'T APPLY

PROBLEMS NOT INVOLVING A DEPENDANT

You don't have the right to time off for every problem. A burst boiler at home or problems with your dog don't count, as neither involves a dependant. Time off to care for people who don't count as a dependant, like going with a friend to hospital for example aren't covered.

Your employer can still choose to allow you time off if they wish, or you could take the time out of some of your paid holiday. If it happens regularly, it may be more useful to consider using a flexible working arrangement.

WHEN YOU KNOW ABOUT SOMETHING IN ADVANCE

The right to time off for dependants only covers emergencies and so doesn't apply if you know about an event in advance. For example, if you want time off to take your child to the doctors or into hospital in a week's time the right doesn't apply, although you may be able to take it as parental leave instead.

ACTIONS FOR STAFF IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCY LEAVE REQUESTS:

1. Inform your line manager by phone as soon as possible about the emergency.
2. Complete a [StreetlightUK Emergency Dependants Leave Request Form](#), which can be found in [General Files/Staff Information Folder/ Staff Document Templates](#).
3. Your line manager will confirm what is agreed verbally in writing via email within 24hrs, including how long has been requested and approved.
4. Communicate with line manager regularly if needed to update on the situation.