

SUPPORTING CARERS POLICY

Brief Description (max 50 words)	This policy sets out the University's commitment to supporting carers and the support that we offer to combine work with care.
Target Audience	All University of Suffolk (UoS) employees.
Version Number	1.2
Document Reference	POD041
Policy Dept	People & Organisational Development
Equality Impact Assessment Equality Impact Assessment	This document has been assessed for equality impact on the protected groups, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This Policy is applicable to every one in scope within UoS irrespective of their age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage, or civil partnership, and those who work on behalf of UoS.

Amendment History

Version	Date	Reviewer Name(s)	Summary of changes
1.0	November 2024	Ataylia Clarke	Update of template
1.2	February 2025	Ataylia Clarke	Update of template

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1. Introduction

This policy sets out the University's commitment to supporting carers and the support that we offer to combine work with care.

Employees may have caring responsibilities and may need our support to combine work with care. We have adopted this policy to demonstrate our support for employees who are carers, and to set out what support is available.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- University of Suffolk employees

Should service conditions apply to any part of this policy, this will be detailed as relevant.

3. Definition of a Carer

A carer is anyone, including children and adults, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, mental health, or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.

A dependent of an employee has a long-term care need if:

- They have an illness or injury (whether physical or mental) that requires, or is likely to require, care for more than three months;
- They have a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and cannot cope without a carer's support; or
- They require care for a reason connected with their old age.

This statutory right to carer's leave applies to a wide range of caring situations, but excludes general childcare, except where your child meets the definition of a dependant with a long-term care need.

The activities that carers undertake are wide ranging, including but not limited to:

- help with personal care;
- help with mobility;
- managing medication;
- practical household tasks;
- emotional support; and
- help with financial matters or administration.

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4. Identification and Disclosure

You are not required to disclose to your Line Manager that you are caring for someone but are encouraged to do so. This will help us provide appropriate support to you. Line Managers will respect the confidentiality of any information provided to them in this regard. You can also disclose that you have caring responsibilities on the 'Equal Opportunities' section on MyView.

When you disclose to your line manager that you are a carer, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with our data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which an employee informs us of their caring responsibilities is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of supporting the employee in their caring responsibilities (for example when dealing with requests for flexible working).

5. Carers Leave

Employees who are carers are entitled to up to 5 days' paid leave (pro rata for part time staff) in an academic year to care for, or arrange care for, a dependant with long-term care needs (as defined in section 2).

Carers leave is available to employees from day 1 of employment.

Carers leave can be taken at any time, non-consecutively and no evidence is required to support a request. Employees must give notice to their Line Manager in advance of taking leave. If the request is for one day or less, the notice period must be at least 3 days. If the request is for more than one day, the notice period must be at least twice as long as the requested leave (e.g. if the request is for 2 days leave, there must be at least 4 days notice). Carers leave may only be taken with the express approval of the relevant Line Manager. In the event of an emergency, the Time off for Dependants policy would apply.

Carers leave can be taken in one continuous block, as individual days, or as half days.

If you are caring for more than one dependant, you do not have a separate entitlement to carer's leave for each dependant.

If an individual's request for carers leave is going to cause undue disruption to business operations during the period requested, the University is within its rights to ask for the leave to be postponed. The individual's Line Manager will discuss with them to determine an alternative date which will be no later than one month after the earliest day or part day of the individual's original request. The Line Manager will confirm the reason for postponement and the agreed new date within 7 days of the original request, and before the requested start date of the leave.

To request carers leave, please complete the request form on [Hub](#).

6. Carers Passports

A carers passport is a tool to support discussions between employees and Line Managers around what support can be provided to the employee. It is advised that a Line Manager uses this tool with any carers in their teams.

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The carers passport can be found on [MyView](#) under the 'Adjustments at Work' category. The completed form can then be viewed by both the employee and Line Manager at any time.

Appendix 1 – Further Support

Agile Working	The ability to choose time and place for key work activities. Within our Agile framework it is vital that a connection between colleague and campus is regularly maintained. Your line manager will discuss the 'shades of agility' which can be afforded in your role or department. It should be recognised that not all roles will be able to be agile because of the nature of the work, the level of supervision required in the role or the need to be present and accessible to other colleagues and/or students for most of the time. Staff who fall into this category are defined as campus workers
Employee Assistance Programme	A confidential employee resource designed to help employees deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting their home life or work life, health, and general well-being.
Family Friendly Policies	<p>A range of policies addressing the needs of expectant mothers, new parents (including those who adopt) and those with older children, as well as carers of disabled and/or elderly dependants.</p> <p>These include Time off For Dependants which is to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency.</p>
Flexible Working Policy	This policy is available to all staff and gives the opportunity for requests to be made to adjust their working pattern / arrangements to suit their individual needs and responsibilities
Health and Wellbeing Toolkit	The toolkit aims to provide the University community with the information, tools, and opportunities available to support our self-care and

	importantly details where to access guided and enhanced support at the University or externally, when we need it.
Special Leave	This policy covers the University's approach to requests for time off for reasons not covered in other policies e.g. bereavement and compassionate leave.
Short Term Flexibility	In line with our Agile Working principles, there may be some short term agreements that could be put in place locally which could include a temporary amendment to start/finish times or working time back when carers need to support attending an appointment which does not come to a full or half day.