

TIME OFF FOR DEPENDANTS POLICY

Brief Description (max 50 words)	Time off for dependants policy for University of Suffolk (UoS) employees. This applies to all staff should you need to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency involving someone who is reasonably described as your dependant.
Version Number	2.1
Document Reference	POD033
Policy Dept	People and Organisational Development (POD)
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 as outlined in the 'scope' irrespective of 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.

Amendment History

Version	Date	Reviewer Name(s)	Summary of changes
2.0	Nov 2024	POD Team	Update of template
2.1	Jan 2025	Emma Gwinnutt	Changed to new template

Dependants Leave

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Issued: June 2022

Review due: June 2025

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1. Introduction

This Time Off for Dependants Policy applies to all staff should you need to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency involving someone who is reasonably described as your dependant.

You are welcome to arrange to speak with your line manager or with a member of the People Operations and Development team to discuss your circumstances and whether this and/or other University of Suffolk family friendly policies best suit your needs.

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. Eligibility for Time Off for Dependents

You will be eligible to take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with sudden or unexpected emergencies affecting a dependant. A dependant is:

- A spouse
- A civil partner
- A child
- A parent
- A person who lives with you as part of the family (not your tenant/lodger or employee)
- Any other person who would reasonably rely on you for assistance during an emergency or in the event of illness/injury.

Reasonable is deemed to be sufficient time to deal with the immediate emergency. If you have prior notice of an event requiring you to take time off, this is unlikely to come within the remit of this policy.

4. Circumstances in which Time Off is Appropriate

- To provide assistance if a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted
- To make arrangements for the provision of care for an ill or injured dependant
- To deal with the death of a dependant, e.g. to make funeral arrangements
- To deal with the unexpected interruption or termination of care arrangements of a dependant e.g. unexpected illness of the childminder
- To deal with an incident that involves your child and occurs unexpectedly during school hours

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5. Advising University of Suffolk of Your Need to Take Time Off

You must let your line manager know of your need to take time off as soon as possible. POD also needs to know why you need to take time off and how long you expect your absence to last as soon as is reasonably practicable. It is important that we are able to inform your students/customers/colleagues of your absence as early as possible so that appropriate measures can be taken to minimise any disruption caused by your absence.

Leaving a message by telephone or email for your line manager and colleagues will suffice if you are facing an urgent situation/crisis. However, you must make direct contact with your line manager as soon as you can.

6. Is It Paid Time Off?

There is no statutory right to pay whilst taking time off under this policy. Therefore, if you take time off under this policy you will not be entitled to receive pay for the period of your absence.

There may, however, be circumstances where you could be entitled to pay whilst dealing with emergencies. This could happen if you are able/ choose to take a different form of leave. For a brief period of absence (not likely to be more than 2 days), you may be able to make the time up through flexible working or you may have accrued time in lieu which could be offset against your absence.

Your absence may be better managed under another more appropriate family friendly policy. This may be determined in conjunction with your line manager and People Operations and Development.

Where you take time off which is deemed to be without pay, the appropriate deduction will be made from your next salary payment and shown on your payslip.

7. Pension Contributions Whilst Taking Time Off

You can maintain your scheme membership, but you must continue to make contributions for the period of unpaid emergency leave. Contributions will continue to be taken (and University of Suffolk will continue to make employer contributions) unless you inform the POD Team in writing or email to the contrary.

If you choose to stop your contributions the employer contributions will stop too, and the period of unpaid leave will be treated as Suspended Membership. In this case, the period of unpaid leave will not count towards your total pensionable service. This will affect your benefits.

If you wish to take advice before making a decision to suspend membership, please contact the POD team in the first instance.