



**Isle of Man  
Government**

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## **Department of Health and Social Care**



# **Career Break Policy**

October 2019

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## **1. Policy statement**

The Department of Health and Social Care is committed to equality of opportunity in employment for all their staff and to developing work practices that support work life balance. The Department has developed a career break scheme to enable employees to take extended periods of unpaid time away from work to help and support employees strike a balance between paid work and personal life.

The Career Break Policy will apply equally to all employees of the Department of Health and Social Care including employees employed under and by analogy to Public Service Commission, Civil Service and Manual and Craft Workers terms and conditions.

There is no contractual entitlement to a career break. Any approval of a career break will be subject to service delivery needs being met.

## **2. Aim**

The aims of the Career Break Policy are to attract and retain staff by demonstrating a commitment to their long term career and personal development in order to reduce the numbers of leavers thereby saving on recruitment and training costs.

## **3. Career Break Conditions**

- 3.1 Employees must have three years or more continuous service before any request for a career break can be made.
- 3.2 Employees may apply for a career break of between three months and one year in a five year period, only one career break will be granted in any 5 year period.
- 3.3 A career break may be taken in addition to maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave or parental leave but may not normally within three months of return from any such period of leave.
- 3.4 A career break could be taken for any of the reasons listed below, or simply to have a break from paid employment. Possible reasons for a career break could include:
  - To undergo a university or college course
  - Childcare or other family responsibilities
  - To pursue a personal interest
  - Overseas travel
  - Any other purpose agreed with the Department
- 3.5 Requests for a career break may not be granted where:
  - An employee is subject to internal procedures such as disciplinary, capability, grievance or fairness at work procedures.
  - It is not possible to secure temporary cover for the employee or not possible to secure such cover at similar cost.

- There is an operational need for the employees involvement in key areas of service delivery which require their specific skills or continuity of service

The above list is not exhaustive.

#### **4. Conditions of service during a career break**

- 4.1 Career breaks are unpaid
- 4.2 The period of the career break will count as continuous service for statutory purposes however contractual terms based on length of service will not accrue.
- 4.3 During a career break an employee will not accrue contractual annual leave.
- 4.4 A career break is not counted as reckonable service for pensions purposes.
- 4.5 A career break does not count towards continuous service for relocation or study leave purposes.
- 4.6 Salary and allowances will not be paid during the career break. Incremental scale point and salary point will be frozen during the career break. An employee returning from a career break will be placed on the same salary scale and point as when commencing the break. Any incremental date will be adjusted to account for the break.
- 4.7 There will be no entitlement to sick pay during a career break and employees will not be required to report period of sickness unless this is likely to prevent return to work on the agreed date.
- 4.8 The employee may be required to be available for work for an agreed number of day during a career break, for example to ensure they remain up-to-date with training requirements. Employees will be given appropriate notice of a requirement to attend work, the notice period will be agreed with management prior to a career break being granted. The employee will be paid at their normal rate of pay for any hours they are required to attend.
- 4.9 An employee will not take up any employment with another employer during a career break without prior agreement with management. Work for another employer will not be approved where this presents a conflict of interest with remaining in the Departments employment.

#### **5. Keeping in contact**

- 5.1 Employees taking a career break will ensure that contact is made with their Line Manager during the break. The frequency and nature of contact will be agreed with management prior to the career break.
- 5.2 The Line Manager should endeavour to keep the employee informed of developments in the work area during the career break. This may include, for example, provision of information through e-mail or if appropriate inviting them to training sessions.

- 5.3 If organisational changes occur, the Line Manager will ensure employees taking a career break are involved in any consultations or other appropriate procedures as far as possible on the same basis as all other affected employees.
- 5.4 Should the employee become subject to criminal proceedings during a career break he/she must notify their Line Manager immediately.
- 5.5 The employee should keep management notified of any changes to their circumstances which may affect their return to work.

## **6. Returning to work**

- 6.1 A preferred date of return should be given when requesting the career break. The actual date will be subject to mutual agreement between the employee and the Line Manager.
- 6.2 Consideration will be given to those who wish to return earlier than the agreed date. Acceptance of any change to the agreed date of return will be at the discretion of management taking into account operational needs and any arrangements put in place during the break.
- 6.3 The Line Manager should ensure that, prior to returning to work, employees are advised of any required training on any new systems, procedures or courses that have been introduced and arrange an appropriate induction schedule. They should also ensure employees are brought up to date on changes that will affect them such as re-organisation.
- 6.4 In order to ensure the effectiveness of the Career Break Policy, the Department of Health or Department of Social Care will seek as far as possible to place an employee returning from a career break in their former job or in one at an equivalent level which may be in another location in the Department. Management will ensure that an employee can return to the same post or a similar post, in the same work area, on their existing terms and conditions. An employee taking a career break does so accepting that it may not be possible to return to their previous post.

## **7. Resignation during a career break**

- 7.1 If an employee decides to resign during a career break he/she is required to give notice in writing in accordance with his/her Terms and Conditions of service if any part of the required contractual notice period falls outside the career break period it will be at management discretion to accept a shorter notice period. If the whole of the notice period falls within the career break period the manager may elect to waive the contractual notice period and statutory minimum periods will apply. The employee will not be expected to return to work during their notice period if it falls entirely within the period of their agreed career break.

## **8. Application Procedure**

- 8.1 In the first instance the employee should discuss the request with their Line Manager.

- 8.2 Applications should be made in writing to the Line Manager a minimum of three months in advance of the proposed start date of the career break. The special leave form should be completed requesting unpaid leave.
- 8.3 The Line Manager should then forward the request to the Director who holds the budget from which the employee's salary is drawn or manager to whom this authority has been delegated.
- 8.4 Following approval/non-approval the form should be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources so that the employment record can be amended.
- 8.5 Career Breaks may be refused for operational reasons. If the request is refused the manager making the decision will provide reasons for the refusal.
- 8.6 If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision they should follow the appeal procedure in Section 9.
- 8.7 The date of the commencement and termination of the career break will be by mutual agreement between the employee and their Line Manager and will need to take into account outstanding work activities and replacement staff arrangements.
- 8.8 Before the career break commences the Line Manager should carry out a meeting to discuss the following:
- Mechanisms for keeping in touch
  - Name of contact person
  - Arrangements for any periods of work/training or continuous professional development to be undertaken during the break and on potentially on return to work
  - Arrangements for returning to work
- 8.9 A written record of this meeting should be kept by the line manager with a copy given to OHR to place on the employee's personal file.
- 8.10 On returning to work, after completion of the career break, the employee should be welcomed back by the Line Manager, with a return to work meeting. The meeting should cover areas of mutual interest such as:
- Changes within the Department.
  - Developments specific to the work area eg legislation, standing orders, local procedures

## **9. Appeal Procedure**

- 9.1 Appeals against any decisions made under this policy should be raised under the appropriate grievance procedure.

Please submit to: [absence@gov.im](mailto:absence@gov.im) Central Administration Team, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Illiam Dhone House, Douglas, IM1 1AG

### Application for Special Leave / Leave of Absence

**Please complete this form to request paid or unpaid special leave in accordance with your terms and conditions of service.**

Full Name:	Block Capitals
Post:	
Payroll Number:	
Department:	
Division/Section/Unit:	

I wish to apply for the following period of **PAID / UNPAID (delete as appropriate)** special leave:-

DATE FROM : <i>(first day of absence)</i>		DATE TO: <i>(last day of absence)</i>	
Number of working days/weeks* absent (*delete as appropriate)	Days	or	Weeks
<b>All Staff :</b>	For incomplete weeks or irregular shift patterns please also detail the number of working hours		Hours

***Please ensure that the information provided is accurate. Any person who willfully submits false information renders themselves liable to disciplinary action.***

**Applicant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Applications for Special Leave should be submitted in sufficient time for the approval process to take place and in respect of unpaid leave, for your salary to be adjusted. Should this notification not be received in time to make the necessary adjustment in the current month's salary, I agree that any overpayment can be recovered in the following month.

**Approved by:**

Manager's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Manager's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorised by:**

Accounting Officer's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(or Delegated Signatory as appropriate)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note for Civil Servants:** If the reason for applying for special leave, whether paid or unpaid, does not fall within the categories detailed in Civil Service Regulations [F41 to F65](#), the application request must be sent to the Civil Service Commission along with the views of the Accounting Officer. Where specific periods with pay are laid down, they must not be exceeded without the written authority of the Civil Service Commission.

**Note for Trade Union Representatives:** Completion of this special leave form is not required for facility time leave of absence requests. Please complete Trade Union Facility Time Request Form **OHR8**

**Please note the reverse of this form also requires completion.**

Please identify the Employee's Terms and conditions of service:-  
*(circle appropriate terms)*

E.g: PSC Civil Service PSC Manual & Craft Workers MPTC Teacher/Lecturer  
 NHS Maintenance NJC Bus Vannin

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Information to support this request:**

You **must** complete this box

**Please identify the reason for the request by ticking the appropriate box below:**

Reason For Leave	Tick	Details Of Information Required <i>(You must provide the relevant details in support of your request in the box above)</i>
Civic and Public Duties		Type of duty. Date and times of attendance. Whether you will receive any payment for attending.
Carer/Compassionate leave		Reasons for requesting the leave.
Urgent Personal Circumstances		Reasons for requesting the leave.
Medical/Dental		Reasons for requesting the leave.
School Governor		Reasons for requesting the leave.
Participating in the work of recognised examination boards		Reasons for requesting the leave.
Learning & Development: Training, Study or Examination		Dates and times of attendance
Parental Leave <small>Parental Leave is not intended to be used as short-term emergency leave.</small>		Reason for the request. The name and age of the child for which you have parental responsibility. Whether the application is in respect of a disabled child.
Adoption Leave		All documentation and information required by the terms and conditions of service.
Paternity Leave		Date of child's birth and name.
Other reason		Please specify the reason and provide the relevant details.

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**The information on this form will be used to update Oracle and notify Payroll, the Public Sector Pensions Authority and the Office of Human Resources of the change.**

Copies of this form are available from: <https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/forms/>



**Any enquiries regarding this policy should be directed to:**

**The Office of Human Resources  
Illiam Dhone House, Circular Road,  
Douglas, IM1 1AG**

**Tel: 01624 685000**



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The information in this document can be provided in large print or audio tape on request.



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