

Isle of Man Government

COVID-19 Caring Responsibilities - Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines are intended to assist staff and managers in the Isle of Man Government in enabling staff to continue to work where at all possible and avoid periods of financial hardship during periods of time where they are undertaking caring responsibilities caused by COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Please have regard to the latest public health advice for self-isolation, shielding and social distancing at <https://covid19.gov.im/> if you are either:

- a) self-isolating or living with someone who is self-isolating, or
- b) in a vulnerable or extremely vulnerable category or living with someone in these categories who is shielding

Decisions about your working arrangements, caring responsibilities and leave arrangements will be made in compliance with that advice.

Caring Responsibilities

For the purpose of these guidelines a person with caring responsibilities is defined as someone who is responsible for one, or both, of the following:

- the care and support of a disabled, elderly or sick partner or relative who is unable to care for themselves
- the parental or caring needs of a child of an age up to their 18th birthday

In relation to Covid-19 these guidelines cover caring responsibilities triggered by:

- a self-isolation period or diagnosis and care of an individual whilst unwell with the virus
- the discharge from hospital of an individual who can no longer remain in hospital but requires care in their home
- the decision by Isle of Man Government to close most schools and restrict activity at others and UCM with effect from Thursday 7 January 2021
- the closure of nursery/pre-school childcare provision

Options to consider

In the event that one of the situations above occur for a member of your team, please consider with your team member if one/a combination of the following is appropriate.

- agreeing an alternative shift or working pattern – in a way that accommodates the caring requirements of the employee and can be accommodated within operational requirements. This can include day, night, week and weekends being considered, regardless of terms and conditions
- flexible or home/remote working - where the circumstances enable the carer to successfully balance caring and work responsibilities
- redeployment temporarily to a role that can accommodate alternative shifts, revised working pattern or home/remote working
- using available annual leave, flexi leave or TOIL

The most appropriate option will very much depend on the nature and intensity of caring responsibilities required; and the required length of time over which the responsibilities last.

Any changes to standard working patterns/times/days to accommodate caring responsibilities will not attract additional payment, regardless of provisions for weekend/evening working etc within terms and conditions.

Where these options are not possible

Where the caring responsibilities or role requirements do not lend themselves to any of the options above, the following additional options may be considered:

- Approving a period of unpaid Special Leave
- Continuing to pay the employee their ordinary pay during the period of leave with written agreement from the employee in advance to either:
 - repay for the hours of absence over an agreed time period (not to exceed 12 months); or
 - undertake additional hours on return, to be worked over an agreed time period (not to exceed 12 months)

If these options are required the individual must make arrangements in advance directly with their manager who should keep a record of what is agreed.

Periods of unpaid special leave should be requested by the employee through PiP and approved through the standard process. The link to PiP is here:

https://pipforme.gov.im/tlive_ess/ess/index.html#/login

The step by step guidance notes are here: <https://hr.gov.im/media/1776/how-do-i-book-other-leave.pdf>

If continuation of payment is to occur the OHR11 Undertaking to Repay Form must be completed in advance. This form is available under Coronavirus (COVID-19), Guidelines, Schemes and Policies here: <https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

When the individual returns to work the manager will then either:

- Calculate the number of hours owed and plan with the individual how these will be worked as additional hours over an agreed period
- Calculate the number of hours owed and submit this to payroll@gov.im to calculate the repayment plan period and amounts, using the form which can be obtained from Payroll Section, Office of Human Resources.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If home working is the most appropriate option, specific guidelines are available here under "H":

<https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

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