



RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

ANNUAL LEAVE, ABSENCE AND TIME OFF

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Information

Ramsey Town Commissioners are committed to a workplace where staff can integrate and manage their work and personal life balance. Each member of staff is allocated a personal leave entitlement as part of their contract which is part of the fulfilment of this commitment.

The annual leave entitlement for each individual employee is determined in accordance with their terms and conditions of employment, under either

- National Joint Council;
- By analogy the IOM Public Service Commission; or
- By analogy the IOM Public Service Commission New Starters and Promotions Agreement

In accordance with the provisions of the Employment Act 2006 all workers are entitled to a minimum of 4 weeks' paid leave each year ('statutory leave' pro rata for part time staff); and payment when their employment terminates, for any statutory leave to which they are entitled but which they have not taken. A week's leave should allow workers to be away from work for a normal working week.

1. Policy

1.1 The Commission operates to serve the public, both the rate-payers of the town and visitors from further afield. Annual leave will always be granted with cognisance of the exigencies of providing the service levels required.

1.2 Health and wellbeing is important, and good personal management of time off is a key part of this. The Commission determines that 'Time away from work is time away from work'. Staff should not carry any on-call commitment, nor be expected to check in or be contacted by work in that period, save for and except where there is a need for safety or other critical reason.

1.3 When periods of sickness occur, these will be proactively monitored and managed, with the wellbeing of the individual as the key focus. Operational need will also be factored in but not to the detriment of the individual.

1.4 Where guidelines in this policy and procedure document require augmentation, the informative guidance will be found from the Isle of Man Government Office of Human Resources web pages.

<https://hr.gov.im/sickness-and-absence/sickness-absence-procedure/>

2. Strategy

2.1 The overarching principles to achieve this policy are:

- all staff to ensure that so far as practicable all annual leave is taken within each individual leave year
- all staff where practicable to take two periods of one week in each leave year or 2 consecutive weeks leave at least once during each leave year
- all staff where practicable and within workplace requirements to take at least half of their annual leave entitlement within the first six months of the year.
- Managers take a proactive approach to wellbeing and sickness management.
- Employees actively engage with monitoring, managing and developing their own wellbeing.

Procedures

3. Leave Calculation

3.1 Each member of staff will be informed of their annual entitlement and increments to that allowance via their contract of employment.

3.2 Leave calculation will be based on hours, which will be calculated by multiplying the number of days allowed by 7.4 (hours per day based on a 37 hour week). This will allow for the provision of flexible working hours and the taking of smaller periods of leave.

3.3. The minimum hours that can be taken will be three hours.

4. Types of Leave

Annual Leave (AL)

Leave taken as part of the annual allowance provided in the employee's contract

Lieu Day (LD)

A day taken to replace another that was worked when normally a rest day was scheduled

Unauthorised Leave (UA)

Time away from work which has not been authorised by a line manager.

Sickness Self Certified (SS)

Time away from work as a result of illness where the employee has not been able to come to work, as allowed within statutory rules

Sickness Certified (SC)

Time away from work where a health care professional has instructed the employee that they should refrain from work.

Sickness Unpaid (SU)

Time away from work where the provision of statutory sick pay or any other arrangement has fallen away, and the employee remains off work without payment.

Antenatal Time Off (ATO)

Time taken to attend antenatal appointments in accordance with the Employment Act 2006

Maternity Leave (ML)

Time away from work concerning the birth of a child as provided by the provisions of the Employment Act 2006 and Equality Act 2017

Maternity Leave Unpaid (MLU)

Time away from work concerning the birth of a child where by written agreement with the employee, they elect to take further time beyond statutory maternity leave but receive no pay.

Adoption Time Off (ADTO)

Time away from work to attend meetings prior to an adoption placement in accordance with the Employment Act 2006

Dependent Care Time Off (DCTO)

There is a right to “reasonable” time off to care for dependants. This is usually in emergency or unexpected situations. This is a right for the leave, not paid leave, although pay may be provided at discretion. A decision should be recorded by the line manager referring to the Employment Act 2006 and Manx Industrial Relations Service (MIRS) guidance

Facility Time (FL)

FL includes such as Union meetings, public service attendance, jury service

Training (TR)

TR are days which are allocated over to internal or external training. Normally these will be service provided events. However, where a member of staff is undertaking self-funded personal development training which is related to their occupation, the line manager has discretion to allow this as TR leave

Public Holidays (PH)

PH are those holidays designated as public holidays by Government, including those known as Bank Holidays, and such as Senior Race Day and Tynwald Day, and such other as from time to time are so designated.

Unpaid Leave

Unpaid leave is where an employee takes time away from the workplace and pay is stopped. It may be requested for many reasons and the employee should provide a clear rationale. Unpaid leave may be granted at the discretion of the line manager with strict cognisance of operational need.

Some further guidance on Ante Natal, Adoption, and Emergency with Dependants leave can be found in the appendices

5. Booking Leave

5.1 Requests for annual leave will be made through line managers and approved before the leave is to be taken.

5.2 Where arrangements require time off to be booked in advance, then the leave request should be made prior to confirming bookings. Line Managers will be flexible in permitting short breaks with minimal notice provide they do not impact upon the provision of services or work demands.

5.3 Staff should ensure that annual leave is taken throughout the leave year having regard to the need to ensure adequate remaining staff are in place to deliver the Commissions services. In considering leave requests managers will have regard to the service requirements of the workplace and leave already booked by colleagues, staff are encouraged therefore to plan leave throughout the year to avoid refusal of requests due to staff limitations.

6. Leave and Absence Records

6.1 Individual records are to be maintained on People HR. These will be managed and audited by line managers.

6.2 Managers will review leave and attendance records regularly to ensure that staff members are able to take the annual leave to which they have an entitlement.

6.3 If by the end of September in any leave year staff have not been able to take a significant proportion of annual leave, and future leave has not been identified, this should be discussed by the Line Manager with the staff member and agreement sought as to when the balance of leave entitlement will be taken. The focus should be on wellbeing.

6.4 In exceptional circumstances the Town Clerk may authorise the rolling over of a maximum of five days annual leave into the following leave year. That leave must then be taken in the following leave year period.

7. Sickness Absence.

7.1 It is essential that staff members notify their manager if they are going to be absent from work as soon as practicable possible.

7.2 Managers must be aware of the sensitivities of sickness issues and the response must be supportive and focus on wellbeing.

Staff member procedure

Make contact personally – only in exceptional circumstances, for example when the medical condition prevents normal communication, should someone else make contact on the employee's behalf.

Give details of your sickness and some indication if possible of when a return to work is likely.

Advise of any potential problems or work commitments which might arise during the absence.

If the manager/supervisor is unavailable, the employee must speak to the most appropriate person.

If the employee fails to report sickness absence within the agreed timescale this will result in it being treated as unauthorised absence, and may lead to sick pay being withheld and/or disciplinary action.

Management procedure

Team member reports sick

Manager creates a new sickness absence.

During the absence there will be support and regular contact

It is the key responsibility of the manager/supervisor to ensure regular contact is maintained.

Doctor's notes

Any doctor's notes which are issued during the absence should be sent to the manager who should take a copy for the records and return the original to the employee.

If a staff member is absent for 15 or more consecutive days (including weekends) they must obtain a Doctor's Note.

If an employee moves to half sick pay or no pay, they must submit a completed Incapacity Benefit Claim Form (SC1) directly to Social Security.

Doctors notes will be held within the individual's secure personal file as they may contain special data under GDPR.

Return to Work

Employees must have a return-to-work discussion and a record should be made of this. The employee will be furnished with a copy and the completed record stored on the employee's file.

Accidents and Third Party Claims

If a Third-Party Claim may be made, the individual or manager/supervisor should contact the HR Advisory team for further information as soon as possible as this could affect the claim.

Supporting staff members who are off work through sickness.

Up to date advice and guidance can be found via the Isle of Man Government Office of Human Resources. Topics include:

- Maintaining Contact

- Dealing with frequent short-term absences

- Long-term absences

- Assessing the impact of absences on the team

<https://hr.gov.im/sickness-and-absence/supporting-staff-off-sick/>

Within RTC there is provision of Mental Health First Aiders, who can also be consulted for advice and support.

Preventing Absence

A manager/supervisor has a duty of care to their staff to ensure their wellbeing and that policies and procedures are followed.

Managers/supervisors Behaviours

Staff in leadership roles can have a significant influence on the health and wellbeing of their staff. They should lead by example by following policies and procedures and ensure staff are aware of policies and procedures.

Leaders should strive to create a Psychologically Safe team climate and culture which promotes and encourages the highest possible attendance at work. They should make time to get to know staff well enough to exercise judgement in individual cases

All decisions around absence management should be fair, consistent, sensitive and confidential

Individuals

Employees should take reasonable steps to maintain a good standard of general health to help minimise absence from work. It is important to cooperate with their line manager in identifying and implementing all reasonable steps to enable them to attend work

Additional guidance can be found via the Isle of Man Government Office of Human Resources. Topics include:

Building resilience

Occupational Health referrals

<https://hr.gov.im/sickness-and-absence/preventing-absence/>

<https://hr.gov.im/media/1019/prevention-and-management-of-workplace-stress.pdf>

Use of the Bradford Factor Score

The Bradford Factor score is a diagnostic tool that helps managers to identify frequent, short-term absences – the higher the Bradford Factor score, the greater the number of short term sickness absences.

A Bradford Score of **128** or above within the previous 12-month period will act as a threshold for the manager to undertake a more formal review.

A threshold of 128 has been adopted as the point at which absence levels warrant formal review or management action. This threshold has been selected because:

It highlights frequent short-term absences (e.g. four single-day absences in a year would result in a score of 128), which can indicate underlying issues such as workplace dissatisfaction, poor health management, or non-genuine sickness.

It provides an evidence-based and consistent trigger for early intervention, allowing the organisation to offer support where appropriate or address patterns that may suggest misuse of sick leave.

It is aligned with best practice benchmarks used in other public service and local authority settings, striking a balance between recognising genuine health issues and maintaining service continuity.

The score enables proactive case management without being overly punitive—allowing time for conversations, support plans, or reasonable adjustments to be explored before disciplinary procedures are considered.

This threshold is a prompt for a supportive discussion with the employee, typically as part of a return-to-work meeting or attendance review. All absences are considered in context, including any underlying medical conditions or disability-related absence, in line with the organisation's duty of care and relevant employment legislation.

The Bradford Score is calculated using the formula:

$$S \times S \times D = B$$

- **S** = number of **spells** of absence taken by an individual in 52 weeks
- **D** = number of **days** of absence taken by that individual in 52 weeks
- **B** = the Bradford Score

The Bradford Factor is not intended to penalise genuine sickness absence but introduces a transparent and fair means of identifying an unusually high number of short term absences. In all cases it is essential that open dialogue and discussion takes place to fully understand the drivers of absence and the means to minimise them.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

The appendices provide information on other matters that may give rise to a need to be absent from work. More detailed guidance can be found on the gov.im website.

APPENDIX 1:

ANTE NATAL APPOINTMENTS

A partner or birth partner is entitled to time off work to accompany a pregnant woman to an ante natal appointment.

The entitlement is for time off on two occasions, of up to six and a half hours on each occasion. The right is for unpaid time off.

This extends to an employee who has a qualifying relationship with a pregnant woman or her expected child. Those relationships are:

- The husband, wife or civil partner of the pregnant woman

- The person lives with the pregnant woman in an enduring family relationship

- The father of the expected child

- Relative of the pregnant woman, and

- The pregnant woman's birth partner

APPENDIX 2:

ADOPTION APPOINTMENTS

An employee adopting a child on his or her own will be entitled to paid time off to attend five appointments.

An employee adopting a child or children with another person (i.e. joint adopters) may elect for one of them to take paid time off to attend up to five appointments, while the other may take unpaid time off to attend up to two appointments.

The maximum time off for those appointments is six and a half hours.

APPENDIX 3:

EMERGENCY WITH DEPENDANTS

An employee will have a right to time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.

The right is for a reasonable amount of time for the situation. There is no right to pay for this time off.

Dependants are a spouse or civil partner, a child or grandchild, a parent or grandparent, or a person who lives in the same household.

There is entitlement to time off in the following circumstances:

- If a dependant falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted

- When a dependant is having a baby

- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured

- To deal with the death of a dependant

- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant

- If a child is involved in an incident during school time

What is reasonable will depend on the incident and the individual circumstances. However, it is likely that in the majority of situations no more than a few hours will be necessary.