

AGE UK EXETER

Controlled Document

Document Name: Compassionate Leave Policy

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Agreed by Risk and Quality Committee: 28.07.26

Approved by Board of Trustees on: 25.08.26

Review Schedule: Every three years

Next review due: August 2029

Owner (Responsibility) CEO

Amendments to: Governance Lead

Revision History: See end of document

Document location: www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter/about-us/policiesandguidelines

Document Description

Compassionate leave is designed to help you deal with traumatic personal circumstances such as the death of a close relative or where a close relative has a life-threatening illness or injury.

Implementation and Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice, or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy, please contact the CEO on info@ageukexeter.org.uk or at Age UK Exeter, The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AE, 01392 202092.

Compassionate Leave Policy

1. About this policy

Compassionate leave is designed to help you deal with traumatic personal circumstances such as the death of a close relative or where a close relative has a life-threatening illness or injury.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Who does this policy apply to

This policy applies to all employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and interns.

3. When compassionate leave may be available

You may take paid compassionate leave where a close relative has died, is critically ill with a life-threatening illness, or has suffered a life-threatening injury. We will usually grant between one day and seven days but will consider on a case-by-case basis.

Close relative means a spouse or partner, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, step-sibling, or sibling-in-law.

In the event of the death of a child under 18, including a stillbirth, please see our Parental Bereavement Leave Policy and Stillbirth and Neonatal Loss Policy. In either situation, we may, in addition to another type of leave, grant unpaid compassionate leave at our discretion.

We will consider requests for compassionate leave due to other traumatic events, such as the death of a close friend, or difficult personal circumstances on a case-by-case basis. We may, additionally, grant unpaid compassionate leave in this situation at our discretion.

If you are unable to return to work following compassionate leave, you should contact your line manager or the HR and Finance Manager. We may at our discretion grant you further unpaid compassionate leave in those circumstances. Alternatively, you may be able to take a period of annual leave, subject to your manager's approval.

If you need longer term changes to your working arrangements, please talk with your manager in the first instance and consider making a request under our Flexible Working Policy.

4. Requesting compassionate leave

We recognise that it may not always be possible to request compassionate leave in advance. However, where it is possible, you should make a request to your line manager or the HR and Finance Manager. You should tell them the reasons for your request and the number of days leave you would like to take.

Where it is not possible to request leave in advance, you should contact your line manager as soon as possible to tell them the reason for your absence and the number of days you expect to be absent. Someone can do this on your behalf if necessary.

In exceptional circumstances, we may have to refuse a request for compassionate leave. We will give you a written explanation setting out our reasons. If you are dissatisfied with the decision, you may appeal to your line manager or the HR and Finance Manager in writing within 5 working days of receiving our written reasons or make a complaint under our Grievance Procedure.

Revision history

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
July 2026	Made a standalone policy on the recommendation of HR Express.	