

Annual Leave Arrangements 2020 & 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The revised arrangements for Annual Leave during 2020 and 2021 have been developed to ensure consistency of application and treatment of annual leave requests and provision during and after COVID-19.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. These arrangements and its full content applies to Chief Officers and Local Government employees.
- 2.2. COVID-19 and the response to recovery is based on Scottish Government guidance and Public Health Scotland Guidance. These arrangements take account of the current context and the evolving nature of the recovery phases to the pandemic.
- 2.3. The principles of Annual Leave are included within the scope of these arrangements.

3. REQUESTING ANNUAL LEAVE

- 3.1. Employees should continue to request Annual Leave throughout the current arrangements, subject to the needs of the service.
- 3.2. It is recognised that whilst it is harder to plan at the moment, it is essential that employees still take annual leave across the leave year to allow time away from work duties to ensure health and wellbeing are maintained at this time. This also allows managers to ensure appropriate cover in teams throughout the year.
- 3.3. Wherever possible, Council will continue to comply with the requirements of the Working Time Directive to ensure that employees have sufficient rest and break periods, including holidays.
- 3.4. Employees who do not currently have any annual leave booked should speak with their line manager about what can be accommodated. All annual leave requests will be considered in line with the requirements of the service.
- 3.5. There is an expectation that employees will continue to take annual leave during this period to ensure that they are not working for long periods without a break. This applies to all employees even if they are working from home, where services are not operational and/or where employees are at home shielding.
- 3.6. It is expected that employees will use a proportionate amount of their annual leave entitlement throughout the leave year entitlement that ensures proper rest breaks. Line managers will discuss this with their team to identify when they will be taking their annual leave and should, wherever possible, ensure that employees plan to take their leave in the leave year.

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- 3.7. Employees in emergency frontline services or those services which have been deemed as essential, should discuss any request with their line manager in advance of making requests. Where possible, subject to available resources to deliver the emergency or essential service, leave requests will be granted.

4. PRE BOOKED ANNUAL LEAVE

- 4.1. Where employees have pre booked annual leave, they should continue to take the annual leave where possible, subject to the service delivery needs. The fact that a planned trip away cannot be undertaken does not mean that annual leave cannot be taken. Talk to your manager, if you want to cancel or alter the pattern. It will be at the discretion of line managers as to whether it can be cancelled or changed, but they should be flexible within the limitations of service delivery. They will consider the availability of work during the period of planned leave and the ability to accommodate it at a future date. This is no different from existing leave provisions.
- 4.2. Employees delivering frontline essential services should discuss any pre-booked annual leave with their line manager. Depending on available resources and service needs, line managers may ask employees to postpone pre-booked holidays to support the delivery of the service. Any request like this would be subject to agreement.

5. THE ANNUAL LEAVE YEAR 2020 & 2021

- 5.1. The Government has relaxed the rules around carry-over of statutory leave in response to Covid-19 easing the requirements to ensure that employees take the statutory amount of annual leave in any one year and allowing up to 4 weeks of unused leave to be carried into the next 2 leave years.
- 5.2. Many annual leave requests will be accommodated by the service based on the operational requirements during and in the recovery phases of COVID-19. It is therefore anticipated that requests to carry forward leave will be due to exceptional circumstances. There will not be a need for all employees to arrange to carry forward annual leave unless operational requirements have prevented them from taking their annual leave and these requests have been approved through the established authorisation processes.
- 5.3. Where this is not possible, the carry over of annual leave will only be considered where justification has been presented to and approved by the relevant Executive Officer. In such circumstances there will be a requirement to look at the justification provided on the carry forward proposed.
- 5.4. Only in exceptional circumstances will leave be carried forward and employees may be asked to use leave in advance of the leave year coming to an end where no justification is given for remaining balances.
- 5.5. For the purposes of the carry forward deemed as the maximum statutory leave that can be carried over, a working week will be 5 days (or pro-rated where appropriate). Therefore up to a maximum of 20 days (pro-rated where appropriate) can be approved for carry forward in exceptional circumstances.

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- 5.6. Where term time employees or those supporting term time services wish to take annual leave, this will follow the established protocol included within these arrangements.

6. ARRANGMENTS FOR QUARANTINE

- 6.1. Individuals who are likely to be affected by the quarantine period should discuss this with their manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.2. Employees who choose to travel abroad and are required to self-isolate in line with Government Guidance on quarantine arrangements will be required to either use their annual leave entitlement or to take unpaid leave for the duration of the self-isolation period.
- 6.3. Updates will take place in line with any emerging Scottish Government updates.

7. RECORDING

- 7.1. Recording of annual leave on iTrent should continue in accordance with normal arrangements and approval processes.
- 7.2. Given the recording processes in place for employees who are unable to work at this time or are working from home due to being identified as vulnerable or shielding, there will be a requirement to confirm leave requests with HR Service Support. Line Managers should email HR Service Support on a request having been approved and HR Service Support Team will update record on iTrent accordingly.

ANY UPDATES TO THESE ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL EMPLOYEES AS AND WHEN THESE ARE CONFIRMED