Compassionate Leave Policy

Applies to	All employees
Does not apply to	Workers and self-employed contractors
Policy owner	HR Manager
Version	1.0
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Next review	20/07/2027

1. Introduction and scope

Anstey Horne recognises that bereavement is a difficult and highly personal experience. We are committed to supporting employees during times of loss with compassion, flexibility, and respect, while complying with UK employment law and ACAS guidance.

This policy sets out the compassionate leave we offer following a bereavement, and signposts where additional related provisions can be found.

2. Definitions

Bereavement: The death of a close family member, dependant, partner, or other significant person.

Dependant: As defined under the Employment Rights Act 1996, this includes a spouse, civil partner, partner, child, parent, or a person who lives in the same household (other than as a tenant, lodger or employee), or a person who reasonably relies on the employee for care or for making care arrangements.

Anstey Horne acknowledges that bereavement affects individuals differently. The provisions below set out the paid leave an employee is entitled to. In practice, we will always seek to be flexible and supportive on a case-by-case basis.

3. Compassionate leave entitlements

Death of a dependant

In the event of the death of a dependant, employees will be granted up to 3 working days' paid leave.

A dependant includes:

- Spouse, partner or civil partner (partner includes someone the employee is cohabiting with)
- Child (including a child for whom the employee is the adoptive parent, legal guardian or carer)
- Parent
- Step-parent
- Sibling
- A person who lives in the employee's household (other than as a tenant, lodger or employee)
- A person who reasonably relies on the employee to make care arrangements

Where the deceased is a child under 18, or in the case of a stillbirth after 24 weeks, additional statutory entitlements apply. Please refer to the Family Friendly Policy.

Death of a close family member or significant person

Employees may request paid or unpaid time off in the event of the death of a close family member or other significant person who does not fall within the definition of dependant above (for example, a grandparent, close friend, or extended family member). Requests will be considered sympathetically by the line manager, with the amount and type of leave agreed on a case-by-case basis.

Funeral attendance

Where an employee wishes to attend the funeral of someone who does not fall within the compassionate leave provisions above, they may request up to one day of paid or unpaid leave, subject to line manager approval.

Extended leave

We recognise that up to three working days may not be sufficient in all circumstances. Where an employee requires additional time, they may request further paid leave, unpaid leave, or the use of annual leave. Requests should be made to the line manager, who will consider each case with empathy and flexibility.

Related statutory entitlements

Where the following circumstances apply, please refer to the relevant policy:

- Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (death of a child under 18, or stillbirth after 24 weeks) - Family Friendly Policy
- Pregnancy Loss Bereavement Leave (before 24 weeks) – Family Friendly Policy
- Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (where the mother or primary adopter dies within the child's first year) - Family Friendly Policy
- Neonatal Care Leave (under the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023) - Neonatal Care Leave Policy
- Miscarriage and pregnancy loss support - Family Friendly Policy

4. Notifying your absence

Employees should notify their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable, ideally on the first day of absence, so that appropriate cover and support can be arranged. Written confirmation is not required at the point of notification. Where an employee is not in a position to make contact themselves, a family member or nominated colleague may do so on their behalf.

5. Support on return to work

We understand that recovery and grief do not follow a fixed timeline. On return to work, employees may request:

- A phased or flexible return
- Temporary adjustments to duties or hours
- Additional unpaid leave where appropriate
- Signposting to external wellbeing or bereavement support services

Line managers are expected to handle these conversations with empathy, discretion, and flexibility.

6. Confidentiality

Information shared by an employee about a bereavement or compassionate circumstance will be handled sensitively and treated as confidential. Details will only be shared with others on a need-to-know basis, and with the employee's agreement wherever possible.

7. Your protection under this policy

No one will be disadvantaged or subjected to any detriment for taking leave, or requesting support or flexibility, under this policy. If you have any concerns, these can be raised under our Grievance or Whistleblowing Policy.

8. Time off for dependants

Time off to deal with emergencies involving a dependant (for example, sudden illness or a breakdown in care arrangements) is a separate statutory right and is covered under the Absence Management Policy.

9. Questions and administration

The HR Manager is responsible for the administration of this policy. If you have any questions, please speak to your line manager in the first instance, or contact suebailey@ansteyhorne.co.uk.

Related policies: Family Friendly Policy - Neonatal Care Leave Policy - Absence Management Policy - Grievance Policy - Whistleblowing Policy

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment. Statutory rights always prevail where they differ from this policy.