

# SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY

Version 5.1 Date 01-07-26 Owner Head of People

## Purpose

The Company recognises that employees experience personal or family difficulties from time to time and may find it difficult to fulfil family and working commitments due to their domestic responsibilities. This policy sets out our stance on permitting employees to take time off for this purpose while ensuring the Company's operations are not unduly affected. Our employees are also expected to make reasonable arrangements to limit the impact on the Company as far as possible. Taking time away from work to attend appointments such as medical and dental can be unavoidable. However, the employee will endeavour to arrange these outside their working hours wherever possible.

## Scope

This policy covers leave requested for time off work for a range of circumstances that is separate to annual leave. The policy applies to Stonbury Ltd, and Stonbury Holdings Ltd in conjunction with the staff handbook. The special leave policy will be applied fairly, consistently and with respect, in line with requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## Special Leave

This policy provides a framework that enables employees to request a reasonable amount of time off work. The following are examples which are deemed as 'Special Leave', this is not an exhaustive list.

- Medical appointments
- Unforeseen Emergencies (time off for dependants/domestic emergencies)
- Bereavement/Compassionate leave
- Sabbatical leave
- Jury Service and attendance in court as a witness
- Essential civic and public duties including service in the Reserve Forces
- Carers leave (please see our Carers Leave Policy)

Details surrounding and documents associated with Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption leave can be found in the staff handbook and will be administered in conjunction with the Maternity Policy.

The employee should request special leave in writing to their line manager where possible, explaining the reason for their request and the expected duration of their absence. In emergency situations, the employee should seek approval from their manager verbally and managers will confirm whether the leave is paid/unpaid ahead of the special leave commencing. The employee should endeavour to give as much notice as possible.

It is an employee's responsibility to maintain regular communication with their line manager while on special leave. Lack of communication and/or failure to report absence will be considered as misconduct and the Company's Disciplinary Procedure will apply. If an employee is found to be taking special leave for reasons other than which the request is intended, may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Special leave can be discretionary, meaning that a manager is entitled to reject a request if the employee's absence will affect business operations. In most cases of special leave being granted, the leave will be unpaid. Unpaid leave is also discretionary and can be rejected. Paid leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

## Right to Appeal

There is no procedure in place for appealing discretionary special leave decisions. If an employee feels that they are being treated unfairly and the matter cannot be resolved informally, the employee has the right to raise a formal grievance in line with the Grievance Procedure as detailed in the staff handbook.

## Parental Bereavement Leave

Parental bereavement leave is time off following:

- the death of a child, if they die under the age of 18.
- a child who is stillborn after 24 weeks' pregnancy.
- an abortion after 24 weeks – in very limited circumstances an abortion can take place after 24 weeks if the mother's life is at risk or the child would be born with a severe disability.

Eligible parents have a right to 2 weeks of parental bereavement leave and statutory parental bereavement pay.

#### Monitoring and Review

This policy and accompanying procedure will be reviewed annually, in the event of changes to legislation or failures to the system being highlighted.

#### Approval

Signed by the Head of People



Adrian Young

Date 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026