

VOLUNTARY ACTION - LEEDS

OTHER LEAVE

Various types of “Other Leave” are available to VA-L staff after completion of the probationary period, as outlined below; during this period, such leave may be allowed (either paid or unpaid) at the discretion of line managers.

1. **Partner/Carer Leave for Birth**
(officially known as “Paternity Pay – Birth”)

Any employee of Voluntary Action - Leeds who has a major responsibility for a mother and her new child is entitled to 2 weeks leave on full pay* provided that they have completed 26 weeks continuous employment by the end of the 15th week before the Expected Week of Confinement (EWC) and they have continued to be employed by VA-L from the 15th week before the EWC up until the birth. The leave must be taken in a block of two one week periods or as two consecutive weeks rather than in odd days, and must be taken within 56 days of the birth or 56 days of the first day of the EWC, whichever is later.

An employee who wishes to take this leave must make a written request to their line manager at least 28 days before s/he wishes the leave to start, stating the amount of leave requested, the EWC (or the birth date if the baby has already been born), and the start date for the leave. The start date can be taken from the birth date, but must normally be within 56 days of it as explained above. The employee may change the proposed start date but reasonable notice will be expected of any such changes.

In addition to these statutory rights, VA-L will also allow partners/carers to take 1 days paid leave to attend the birth of the child if this falls within the working week, and up to 5 half-days paid leave to attend ante-natal appointments. Reasonable notice is expected where possible for such requests, and line managers may request proof of the EWC or of ante-natal appointments.

* (as opposed to the legal minimum which is SPP)

2. **Adoption Leave**

Any employee of Voluntary Action - Leeds with at least 26 weeks continuous service (ending with the week in which official adoption confirmation is received or the child is placed) who is to become an adoptive parent of a child under 18 years is entitled to statutory adoption pay and leave at the same rate and for the same period as applies to statutory (ordinary) maternity pay and leave; a partner of an adoptive parent is entitled to "Paternity" Pay and Leave as outlined in Section 1 of this Policy. If the child is to be adopted jointly the couple can decide who takes adoption leave and who takes "paternity"; if the adoption is by one person, they must take the adoption leave (or the paternity leave if it is their partner who is adopting).

In addition to these statutory rights, an adoptive parent/partner may take up to 5 half-days, paid, to attend pre-post adoption interviews.

An employee who wishes to take adoption leave (or paternity leave for adoption) must make a written request to their line manager giving as much notice as possible (ideally at least 28 days) before the expected leave date. Line managers may request proof of the adoption, but no personal details of the child need be divulged.

An employee who wishes to return to work early from adoption leave must give VA-L 28 days notice of the early return date but they do not have to inform VA-L if they return as planned following the full period of leave.

3. **Dependent Care Leave/Compassionate Leave**

Any employee of Voluntary Action - Leeds is entitled to a reasonable amount of time off to care for any dependent, for family emergencies, or for compassionate reasons (e.g. bereavement). VA-L will allow full-time staff up to 5 days leave on full pay in such cases (pro rata leave for part-time staff), although this can be extended at the discretion of a line manager for bereavement involving a relative or friend. Additional unpaid leave may also be

considered at the discretion of line managers. Requests for extended paid or unpaid leave should be made in writing giving reasons. Longer periods of unpaid parental leave are available, as outlined in section 4 below. It may be possible, depending on circumstances, and at the discretion of line managers, for dependent care leave/compassionate leave to feed directly into Parental Leave (unpaid) as outlined in section 4 without the normal 21 days notice period.

If possible, requests for any leave under this heading should be in writing, giving reasons and notice; however, it is accepted that this is not always practical, and staff may request such leave by telephoning their line manager (or another manager of VA-L if their line manager is unavailable) before the leave is taken. In such cases, staff will be asked to complete a special leave form on their return to work.

Requests for compassionate leave in other circumstances should be made to the line manager in writing, giving reasons.

4. **Parental Leave**

Any full-time employee of Voluntary Action - Leeds with more than one year's continuous service who is a parent of a child under 5 or a disabled child who is under 18, is entitled to take a total of 13 weeks unpaid parental leave or 18 weeks unpaid parental leave if their child is disabled (this is not "per year", but it is "per child").

If the employee changes to another employer they must work for one year before being entitled to this leave; any leave taken with past employers will count towards the 13 week limit for each child.

For part-time employees, the leave is calculated in proportion to the hours worked.

The right to take unpaid parental leave lasts until the child's 5th birthday; in the case of adopted children, it lasts until 5 years have elapsed since placement, or until the child's 18th birthday if that is sooner. Parents of disabled children may use their leave up until the child's 18th birthday.

Leave may only be taken in blocks or in multiples of a week (more flexibility is available for parents of disabled children, in which case a suitable pattern should be agreed with the line manager), and a maximum of 4 weeks at any one time may be taken in respect of each child.

An employee wishing to take unpaid parental leave as outlined above must normally give VA-L at least 21 days notice of their intention (see section 3 above), specifying the dates on which the leave is to begin and end, and must supply proof of their responsibility for the child if required by line managers. The period of parental leave counts as continuous employment, and the employee is entitled to return to their post and to the same employment conditions (except pay) during their absence.

5. **Right to Request Flexible Working**

Parents of children under 6 (or 18, if the child is disabled) and their partners are entitled to make a written request for more flexible working arrangements if they feel these are needed. Employees who are carers for another adult (either a partner or relative or someone else at the same address) have the same entitlement. To apply, a staff member must have a major responsibility for the upbringing of a child or the care of an adult, and must have been continuously employed by VA-L for 26 weeks. Any request of this nature is for a variation of contract, and this remains permanent unless expressly agreed otherwise – i.e. the new work pattern continues even when the child reaches 6 (or 18) or the carer responsibility ends. Any request must be in writing to the appropriate line manager, and it must relate to a desired change in hours, times, or place of work, and must be only for the purposes of childcare where there is a parental responsibility or carer responsibilities relating to another adult. The request must be dated, and must set out the desired pattern of work along with an explanation of how this may affect VA-L and what solutions may be suggested to offset any potential problems for the organisation in meeting the request. Requests cannot be made more than once a year, and where they involve childcare responsibility, they must be made no later than 2 weeks before the child's 6th birthday (or 18th if disabled).

If the request is approved, the employee will receive formal notification of this within 28 days from the date of the request, stating the agreed contract variation and the start date.

If the request is refused (any refusals must fit within the statutorily defined reasons), the employee will be invited to meet with the manager within 28 days from the date of the request to discuss the situation. They will then receive a written response within 14 days, either agreeing to the request or explaining the reasons for refusal and the employee's right of appeal. The employee has 14 days to appeal, counted from the date of this letter. The manager then has 14 days to arrange an appeal, which will be considered by another VA-L manager, and a final 14 days to notify the employee of the outcome. At any meetings to discuss the request, the employee is welcome to be accompanied by a colleague from within VA-L.

6. **Absence for Public Service**

Employees must inform their line manager of any ongoing commitments at the start of their employment, and of any further commitments taken on during the course of their employment. Such commitments include:

- a Justice of the Peace
- a member of a local authority
- a member of a statutory tribunal
- a member of a police authority
- a member of the Service Authority for the National Criminal Intelligence Service or National Crime Squad
- a member of a board of prison visitors or a prison visiting committee
- a member of a relevant health body
- a member of a relevant education body
- a member of the Environment Agency (or Scottish equivalent)
- a member of a water and sewerage authority or Water Industry Consultative Committee
- a member of the General Teaching Council for England or Wales

An employee who is a member of any of the above is entitled to reasonable time off to carry out their duties relating to these

commitments. The amount of time which can be defined as reasonable, and whether the time should be paid or unpaid must be negotiated with the General Manager of Voluntary Action – Leeds either at the start of employment or when the commitment is being considered, as appropriate.

Employees who are required to do Jury Service may take the required time off.

If any financial allowances are received for public duties carried out during working time for which the employee is also being paid by VA-L it is the employee's responsibility to inform VA-L, and the payments will be deducted from their salary if surplus to expenses.

This Policy was formally adopted by the Trustee Board of Voluntary Action - Leeds on 20th June 2000; this update May 2007.