### ***EXAMPLE***

### **Leave Policy (Including Holiday, Sick, and Parental Leave)**

#### **Purpose**

This Leave Policy outlines the company’s rules and procedures for annual leave, sick leave, and parental leave, ensuring compliance with the **Employment Rights Act 1996**, **Working Time Regulations 1998**, and other relevant UK laws, including statutory entitlements for parental, maternity, paternity, and shared parental leave. The policy provides clear guidance for employees on how to request leave, the notice required, and their entitlements.

#### **Scope**

#### This policy applies to all employees of the company, including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff. It covers annual leave, sick leave, and all forms of parental leave, ensuring that statutory entitlements are upheld.

### **1. Annual Leave**

#### **Entitlement**

* **Statutory Entitlement**: All employees are entitled to a minimum of 28 days of paid annual leave per year (including public holidays), in accordance with the **Working Time Regulations 1998**. This entitlement is pro-rated for part-time employees.
* **Accrual**: Annual leave is accrued during the employee’s time at work, including periods of maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave, and during paid sick leave.
* **Carry-Over**: Employees may carry over up to 5 days of unused annual leave into the next holiday year if agreed in advance. Any additional unused leave beyond 5 days will be forfeited unless specific approval is granted due to exceptional circumstances (e.g., long-term sickness absence).
* **Holiday Pay**: Employees will be paid at their normal rate of pay during their annual leave. For employees with variable hours or earnings, holiday pay will be calculated as an average of their earnings over the previous 52 weeks, as required by law.

#### **Procedure for Requesting Annual Leave**

* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must submit a request for annual leave in writing at least twice as many days in advance as the number of leave days being requested (e.g., 10 days' notice for 5 days of leave). The company reserves the right to refuse leave requests based on operational needs.
* **Approval Process**: Managers will consider leave requests based on business requirements and the employee’s entitlement. Leave will be confirmed in writing once approved. Requests for leave during busy periods (e.g., Christmas) may be restricted to ensure operational continuity.
* **Public Holidays**: Public holidays are included in the annual leave entitlement, and the company may require employees to take leave on these dates, depending on operational requirements.

### **2. Sick Leave**

#### **Entitlement**

* **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)**: Eligible employees are entitled to **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)** if they are unable to work due to illness for four or more consecutive days (including weekends). SSP will be paid from the fourth day of absence for up to 28 weeks, at the statutory rate set by the UK government.
* **Company Sick Pay**: In addition to SSP, the company may provide enhanced company sick pay. The details of the company's sick pay scheme (if applicable) will be outlined in individual contracts of employment. Company sick pay may be provided at the employer’s discretion, based on the length of service and the nature of the illness.
* **Certification**: For absences lasting more than 7 calendar days, employees must provide a **fit note** (formerly known as a medical certificate) from a GP or healthcare professional. For absences of less than 7 days, employees may self-certify using the company’s **Self-Certification Form**.

#### **Procedure for Reporting Sickness**

* **Notification Requirement**: Employees must notify their line manager as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work due to illness. This should be done within the first hour of the normal working day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.
* **Ongoing Communication**: Employees should keep their manager informed of the progress of their illness and provide expected return-to-work dates if known. Regular communication is expected during extended periods of sickness.

#### **Return to Work**

* Upon returning from sick leave, employees may be required to attend a **Return-to-Work Interview** to discuss their health and any adjustments required to help them perform their role effectively.

### **3. Parental Leave**

The company complies with statutory requirements for maternity, paternity, shared parental, and adoption leave as set out in the **Employment Rights Act 1996**, the **Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999**, and related legislation.

#### **Maternity Leave**

* **Entitlement**: All pregnant employees are entitled to **52 weeks of maternity leave**, regardless of their length of service. This consists of **26 weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave** and **26 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave**.
* **Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)**: Eligible employees are entitled to **Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)** for up to 39 weeks. The first 6 weeks are paid at 90% of the employee’s average weekly earnings, followed by 33 weeks at the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).
* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must notify the company of their pregnancy, the expected week of childbirth (EWC), and the intended start date of their maternity leave at least **15 weeks before the EWC**.

#### **Paternity Leave**

* **Entitlement**: Employees who meet the eligibility criteria are entitled to **2 weeks of statutory paternity leave**, which must be taken as a single block of one or two weeks.
* **Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)**: Employees eligible for paternity leave may receive **Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)**, paid at the statutory rate or 90% of their average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.
* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must give at least **15 weeks' notice** of their intention to take paternity leave and provide evidence of the expected birth or adoption.

#### **Shared Parental Leave (SPL)**

* **Entitlement**: Eligible parents can opt for **Shared Parental Leave (SPL)**, allowing both parents to share up to **50 weeks of leave** and **37 weeks of statutory pay** following the birth or adoption of a child.
* **Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)**: Parents on SPL may receive **Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)**, paid at the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.
* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must provide at least **8 weeks’ notice** of their intention to take Shared Parental Leave.

#### **Adoption Leave**

* **Entitlement**: Employees adopting a child are entitled to **52 weeks of adoption leave**, which mirrors maternity leave in terms of duration and pay.
* **Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**: Eligible employees are entitled to **Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**, which is paid in the same way as Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).
* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must notify the company within 7 days of being matched with a child for adoption.

### **4. Other Types of Leave**

#### **Parental Leave**

* **Unpaid Parental Leave**: Eligible employees are entitled to take up to **18 weeks of unpaid parental leave** for each child under the age of 18. Employees can take up to **4 weeks** per year for each child, in blocks of no less than one week.
* **Notice Requirement**: Employees must provide at least **21 days’ notice** before taking parental leave.

#### **Compassionate Leave and Bereavement Leave**

* **Compassionate Leave**: The company provides up to **5 days of paid compassionate leave** in the event of a serious illness or death of a close family member. Additional unpaid leave may be granted at the company’s discretion.
* **Parental Bereavement Leave**: In line with the **Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act 2018**, employees who lose a child under the age of 18 or experience a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy are entitled to **2 weeks of paid bereavement leave**.

### **5. Record Keeping**

* The company will keep accurate records of all leave taken by employees, including annual leave, sick leave, and parental leave. These records will be maintained in compliance with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and GDPR.
* Employees are responsible for keeping track of their remaining annual leave and ensuring that they do not exceed their entitlement.

### **Breaches of This Policy**

Any employee who abuses the company’s leave policies, including providing false information or failing to follow the required procedures, may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the company’s Disciplinary Policy.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The company will regularly review this policy to ensure compliance with current UK employment laws, including any updates to statutory leave entitlements. Changes will be communicated to all employees as necessary.

### **Conclusion**

This Leave Policy ensures that all employees are aware of their entitlements to annual, sick, and parental leave, as well as other types of leave. The company is committed to supporting employees in balancing their work and personal responsibilities, while maintaining compliance with UK law. Employees are encouraged to discuss any leave-related questions with their line manager or the HR department.