# **An example of a policy on taking emergency / dependants leave**

## **Purpose and Scope**

All employees with dependants can take reasonable unpaid time off to deal with unforeseen emergencies. This is unlikely to amount to more than a day or two a year.

This policy covers all instances where you may need to take unplanned absence to attend to urgent or serious situations affecting your dependants and where no alternative provision is available.

Emergency leave is designed to provide carers with the opportunity to make alternative arrangements for the care of dependants. The Emergency leave policy is not intended to be used to allow carers to look after dependants on an ongoing basis.

## **Taking Emergency Leave**

Dependants include parents, husband, wife, partner, civil partner, children or individuals living as part of the family for whom you are the main carer or an individual who depends on you for care, e.g. an elderly neighbour.

Emergency leave is only intended to cover unplanned absence to attend to urgent or serious situations affecting your immediate family or dependants. It is impossible to provide a complete list of circumstances that are covered under the policy, however the most common circumstances are as follows: -

* to provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted
* to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured,
* as a result of the death of a dependant,
* because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant, or
* to deal with an incident which involves a child of the employee and which occurs unexpectedly when the child is at school

As soon as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances, contact your manager by telephone to explain the circumstances, and if possible, an indication of the length of time-off you are likely to need in order to make alternative arrangements. If your manager is unavailable you must contact another senior manager instead.

If you need to stay and care for a dependant on an ongoing basis you can agree with your manager to take annual leave; or where you have insufficient annual leave to take a period of unpaid leave. Alternatively you may be able to take Parental Leave where the care is for your child.

**Important notice**

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small not-for-profit employer adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment as well as your culture and aspirations. There is no one size fits all!