

PERSONNEL ADVISORY BULLETIN NO 71

CARERS POLICY

1 Introduction

Angus Council recognises that employees may have caring commitments outside work and therefore considers it to be in the interests of both the council and employees that a work/life balance is maintained.

The Council aims to create a working environment in which carers feel valued and supported to help them continue working for the organisation and at the same time ensuring that operational requirements are met. It is recognised that there are key benefits for the organisation in doing this including reduced absenteeism, higher retention rates and fewer recruitment costs.

2 Definition

A carer is an employee with significant caring responsibilities that have an impact on their working lives and who may provide care and support to a person who is dependent on them and who is affected by long term illness, disability or other condition or addiction and who could not manage to live independently without the employee's help.

A dependant is a spouse, partner, civil partner or child of the employee, anyone who lives with the employee as part of his/her family, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandparent-in-law, or other individual reliant on the employee.

Note: Many employees assist relatives or friends from time to time and provide valuable help and support but would fall out-with the definition of 'Carer'.

3 Scope

The provisions of this Policy apply to all employees of Angus Council.

4 Principles

- The Council recognises the implications of and its responsibilities under The Work and Families Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010 to provide support to employees and assist in maintaining a work/life balance.
- The Council recognises that from time to time employees will need to try to balance work and caring responsibilities and seeks to provide this support for employees. The provisions within the Carers' Policy mean that some employees may be able to remain in employment where otherwise they would have had to resign to provide care to a dependant.

- A compassionate and flexible working approach for carers can attract and retain staff; reduce stress; increase resilience and productivity; reduce sick leave; improve service delivery and increase staff morale.
- The Council is committed to raising awareness of the role and demands of carers in the workplace through communication and training to support employees and managers.
- The Council has a number of Human Resource policies and procedures to support carers which can help address some of the support employees with a caring role may need as outlined below.
- Through Carer Positive the Council is committed to achieving a working environment where carers feel valued and supported through employee engagement and whereby the Council retains a healthy and productive workforce.

5 Related Legislation

The Council recognises the implications of and its responsibilities under The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, the Work and Families Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010 to provide support to employees and assist maintain a work/life balance.

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 will take effect from 1 April 2018. The Act is designed to support carers' health and wellbeing and help make caring more sustainable. Measures include:

- a duty for local authorities to provide support to carers, based on the carer's identified needs and outcomes which meet the local eligibility criteria.
- a right to a specific adult carer support plan or young carer statement to identify carers' needs and personal outcomes.
- a requirement for local authorities to have an information and advice service for carers which provides information and advice on, amongst other things, emergency and future care planning, advocacy, income maximisation and carers' rights.

The **Work and Families Act 2006**: amongst other rights, allows employees the right to request Flexible working, provided that they have at least 26 weeks continuous service and have not made another request in the previous 12 months.

Employees who have worked for their employer for at least 12 months (continuous service) are entitled to Ordinary Parental Leave if they are responsible for a child under 18 years of age.

The **Equality Act 2010** protects employees against direct discrimination or harassment due to their caring responsibilities. Because carers are 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability, they are also thereby protected by the Act.

6 Links to other HR Policies / Further Support

Agile working
Annual Leave and Buying and Banking Leave
Alcohol and Drug Misuse
Chaplaincy
Employee Assistance programme
Flexitime Guidelines
[Flexible Working Procedure](#)
Flexible Working Opportunities
Leave
Leave of Absence
Parental Leave
Safety Health and Wellbeing – stress, mental health and wellbeing
Time off for Dependents
Time off in Lieu

Visit our website for further information specific to [Support for Carers](#).

<http://www.anguscarers.co.uk/> Based in Arbroath, Angus Council Health & Social Care Partnership contract with Angus Carers Centre which provides information, advice and a range of services to carers.

<http://www.carersuk.org/forum> carers centres will help carers connect with other people in the same situation – there may be local groups which meet regularly, or they could access online peer support.

Please refer to Appendix 1 in the Carers Support at Work Guidance for a non-exhaustive list of independent organisations and facilities which carers can access for further advice and support.

Should you have any questions or wish clarification on the content of this Personnel Advisory Bulletin please contact Human Resources.