

Carer's Leave – Key Facts for Employers (UK)

(From 6th April 2024)

What is it?

Carer's Leave is a new statutory right that allows employees to take time off to care for a dependant with long-term care needs.

Who qualifies?

All employees are eligible from their first day of employment.

A dependant can be anyone who relies on the employee for care, not just a family member.

What counts as a 'dependant'?

Someone who needs care due to:

- A long-term physical or mental illness or injury (lasting over 3 months)
- A disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010)
- Old age

How much leave can be taken?

- Up to 1 week of unpaid leave per 12-month period
- A "week" matches the employee's usual working week (e.g. 3 days if they work 3 days/week)
- Leave can be taken in full days, half days, or all at once

Notice requirements:

- 3 days' notice for 1 day or less
- Twice the length of the leave for more than 1 day
- Notice doesn't need to be in writing, and no proof of care needs is required

Can employers refuse the leave?:

No, but they can postpone it if the absence would cause serious disruption.

In that case, they must:

- Propose a new date within 1 month
- Provide written reasons within 7 days of the request

Other key points:

- Employment rights (e.g. holiday, return to work) are protected
- Carer's Leave is separate from parental leave or emergency time off

Further resources:

[Carers' Leave Act 2023](#)