

Compassionate leave & Time off for Dependants

If you are not given time off for dependants, your employer may allow you 'compassionate leave' - this can be paid or unpaid leave for emergency situations. Check your employment contract, company handbook or intranet for details about compassionate leave.

What's an emergency?

You could get time off when a dependant is involved in the following emergencies.

Illness, injury or assault

This includes mental or physical illnesses that do not have to be life-threatening or need full-time care - it could be an existing condition that has worsened.

For example, if a dependant is mugged without being physically hurt, you could take time off to comfort or help them.

You can also take time off to arrange longer term care for a dependant.

Having a baby

You could take time off if a dependant goes into labour unexpectedly and they rely on you to take them to the hospital. You cannot take time off for dependants after the birth to care for the child, unless it's an emergency.

Disruption of care arrangements

You could get time off if:

- a child minder or carer does not turn up to look after a dependant
- a nursing home or nursery closes unexpectedly

If your child is involved in an incident during school time

You could get time off if your child has been:

- involved in a fight
- injured on a school trip
- suspended from school

Taking time off

Tell your employer as soon as possible if you need time off. If it's an emergency, you may not be able to do this before you leave work but you should let your employer know as soon as possible.

You do not have to do this in writing or give written proof.