

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

Purpose

Integrity Action is committed to ensuring that staff entitlement to time off work is balanced fairly and consistently with the organisation's requirements for ongoing operational efficiency and effectiveness.

This policy covers annual leave, time off in lieu (TOIL), parental leave, sick leave, bereavement/compassionate leave, study leave, volunteering/public duties, secondments, time off during notice, garden leave, flexible working and working remotely and Jury service.

Application

This policy and related procedures apply to all Integrity Action employees (i.e. those with a contract of employment with the charity).

Ownership

Primary responsibility for the introduction (including training), consistent application and ongoing review of this policy and related procedures lies with the CEO.

Annual leave

Integrity Action's holiday year coincides with the financial year i.e. it runs from 1 October – 30 September.

All staff members are entitled to **28 days** of annual leave each year plus public holidays.

The annual leave and Bank Holiday entitlements of part-time or compressed hours staff members are calculated on a pro-rata basis, by reference to their contractual working hours/days. Calculation of a staff member's annual leave entitlement should be rounded up to the nearest full day.

If a half day of leave is booked this equates to 3.5 hours of work on that day (with no lunch break) For staff on compressed hours, this will be calculated according to their specific standard daily working hours. For more information on how to calculate your holiday entitlement, please read [here](#).

Annual leave must be taken during the financial year in which the entitlement has accrued, with up to 5 days allowed to be carried forward into the next year, on written approval by your line manager.

Staff may buy or sell up to 5 days of annual leave per annum. Leave can be purchased at any time during the year. The cost per day is based on gross salary at the time the leave is purchased. The line manager must approve the purchase and selling of leave. The Finance manager is responsible for organising the required salary deduction or accrual. **The CEO is authorised to suspend such purchase and selling of leave for any year where this might negatively impact the charity's work or its finances.**

Staff should give as much notice as possible of when they wish to take leave. If the leave is for 5 days or more, at least four weeks' notice should be given.

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

If approval is withheld, the line manager must specify grounds for withholding approval. The staff member may, if they feel approval is being unreasonably withheld, escalate the matter to the CEO or to the Trustee in charge of HR (Philip Welply at the time of writing) for mediation.

Once approval is given, subsequent cancellation of a staff member's leave requires their express consent. Where cancellation occurs at Integrity Action's request, Integrity Action will reimburse the staff member for any expenses already incurred by them in making arrangements for their vacation.

As far as possible leave should be spread evenly over the course of the year to avoid problems with untaken leave at the end of the year.

A new joiner shall accrue annual leave during their first year (including probationary period) on a pro-rata basis based on the period worked, and may take all public holidays.

A leaver shall accrue annual leave up to the date their contract ends. By mutual agreement untaken leave may be paid with the final . If more leave has been taken than the leave was entitled to up to the date of leaving, the extra days must be paid for in the final pay cheque.

Procedures for booking annual leave

The member of staff should complete the Annual Leave Request Form with the required number of Annual Leave days and relevant dates, adding any additional details in the comments section. The automated Leave Request System will send details of the request to the relevant line manager, enabling them to approve/query or decline the request. The request and subsequent response from your line manager will be saved in the Annual Leave Database.

The member of staff must put the holiday in their work calendar and copy the appointment to the team whereabouts calendar so everyone can see it.

The member of staff must ensure that others know that they are absent on leave and uncontactable during this period (including putting an up-to-date "out-of-office" notification on incoming e-mails).

There is a holiday records spreadsheet in google drive (_IA Folders\Finance, HR, Insurance). The finance assistant keeps this up to date but you should periodically check that it agrees with your personal records.

Compensation days - or Time off in Lieu (TOIL)

As much as possible, we discourage working or travelling for work on weekends or days off. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to avoid and in these circumstances you may request TOIL.

TOIL will be awarded only with the prior agreement of your line manager where there is a clear business need to work on a day off, this approval needs to be obtained in advance via the Annual Leave Request Form

TOIL should be taken within 28 calendar days of being accrued.

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

Please note on occasion you may be expected to work reasonable overtime after office hours. E.g. if you need to work a few hours in the evening to finish a report; it is unlikely that you will be granted a compensation day in these circumstances.

Family leave

Integrity Action complies with the statutory requirements in respect of maternity, paternity, shared parental leave, adoption and unpaid parental leave.

In addition to the [statutory entitlements](#) and after one year of service, Integrity Action will provide the following enhanced entitlements:

1. Primary caregiver pay as follows:
 - First 12 weeks: 100% of current pay
 - Next 12 weeks: 50% of current pay

Following this, 9 weeks of statutory pay will be provided.

2. All staff may take up to **five days** paid leave when their partner gives birth.
3. If staff and their partner are entitled to shared parental leave (see www.gov.uk), the non-pregnant partner may take leave on the same terms as the enhanced maternity pay after one year of service.

The provisions above also apply to adopting children.

In exceptional circumstances, and at the CEO's discretion, some enhanced entitlements can be provided to staff who have not reached one year of service.

Special occasions and exceptional circumstances

Staff may have **one additional day** paid leave on special occasions or exceptional circumstances, for instance, weddings. This is at the discretion of the CEO.

Caring for dependants

Integrity Action recognises that employees will sometimes need time off to care for dependants. Where possible notice should be given. The time can be taken as annual leave, unpaid leave or as flexible working arrangements, with your line manager's approval.

Employees are allowed time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependent (e.g. if your child is sick you may take paid time off on the first day of sickness to make care arrangements). If the sickness continues you may arrange for flexible work to care for them. You can't have paid time off if you knew about a situation beforehand. For example you wouldn't be covered if you wanted to take your child to hospital for an appointment. You may take annual leave or unpaid [parental leave](#) instead.

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

Sick leave

In normal circumstances the employee will continue to be paid salary at full rate during absence owing to sickness or injury for a maximum period up to a total of up to **14 weeks**.

Thereafter, Integrity Action will pay 50% the normal salary for up to a further **14 weeks**.

After **28 weeks'** sickness you will no longer be paid.

If the period of sickness is less than **seven days** in a row (including non-work days) staff may self-certify. If the period of sickness is more than seven days a doctor's 'fit for work' note must be provided.

For further details, see <https://www.gov.uk/taking-sick-leave>.

Payment of sick pay is conditional upon timely submission of appropriate medical certificates. During this period Integrity Action may request further details of your illness and, with your consent, seek medical advice on your condition from your GP. Integrity Action shall also be entitled to require you to undergo examinations by a medical adviser appointed or approved by the organisation.

For the purposes of paying sickness pay all broken periods of sickness shall be added together unless separated by a sickness-free period of at least **26 consecutive weeks**.

The employee or somebody on their behalf must notify your line manager if they are unable to attend work. You should give the reason and likely duration of your absence. This should be done as early as possible and certainly by the beginning of your work start time. Failure to do so may render you liable to disciplinary action and may also bar you from receipt of sick pay.

Pre-arranged medical appointments classify as sick leave. You should notify your line manager as soon as possible.

If the employee suffers any injury at work or during the course of your employment, you or someone on your behalf must immediately report this to your line manager who will record the matter in the organisation's accident book (found here: _IA Folders\Finance, HR, Insurance\HR). This also applies to employees working remotely. Any such records will be reviewed by the designated Health and Safety Representative, with further action taken where necessary.

Bereavement/compassionate leave

Integrity Action acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways as appropriate in the specific circumstances.

Bereavement leave (paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements such as organising and attending a funeral) will be permitted primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their immediate family dies.

Integrity Action acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

different circumstances - not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

In the event of the death of an immediate relative, up to **ten days** paid leave will be granted. An immediate relative includes a spouse, civil partner or partner (including same sex partners and someone with whom the employee is cohabiting), child, step-child, parent, step-parent, sibling or a person with whom the employee is in a domestic relationship.

One day of paid leave will be allowed on the death of an extended family member to facilitate attendance at the funeral.

An employee should notify their line manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at latest, on the first day of absence.

Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

In the event of a bereavement, an employee will be able to take unpaid leave or annual leave at short notice to supplement their bereavement leave. An employee who suffers a family bereavement while on annual leave can convert their annual leave into bereavement leave and take their annual leave at a future date.

Unpaid leave on compassionate grounds up to a maximum of **four weeks** may be granted after bereavement. Written approval needs to be obtained from your line manager.

In certain circumstances a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative - for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role, or where new child care arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee. In such instances Integrity Action will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where practicable.

Study leave

Members of staff who are studying for a qualification which is relevant to their job may request up to **five days** per annum study leave. This is at the discretion of the CEO. Written approval needs to be obtained from your line manager.

Volunteering, public duties, UK reserve, auxiliary and cadet corps

Integrity Action wishes to encourage a culture of volunteering and public service. As such staff may take an additional **three days** paid leave per annum as volunteer/public service leave.

The procedure for booking approved volunteering leave is the same as for study leave.

In addition, reasonable unpaid leave may be requested to discharge public duties e.g. as a Justice of the Peace (magistrate) or a member of a local authority or trustee for an occupational pension scheme etc.

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

Jury or witness service

Special leave will be granted to allow you to fulfil your civic duty and attend jury or witness service.

Although we are not required by law to pay you, you may be granted special leave on full pay while you are absent on jury service.

As soon as you are summoned for jury service you should notify your line manager and provide a copy of the court summons.

Depending on business demands we may request that you apply to be excused from or defer your jury service.

Secondments

Integrity Action does not as a rule encourage secondments because we are a small team and it is difficult to provide cover for seconded staff. However, in exceptional circumstances it may be possible. Staff should discuss potential opportunities with the CEO.

Time off during notice period

If an employee has resigned, Integrity Action may allow reasonable time off during the notice period to attend job interviews. Time off needs to be approved by your line manager and should not interfere with the delivery of your remaining tasks.

Garden leave

Integrity Action may suspend an employee from the performance of their duties once notice of termination has been given by either the member of staff or Integrity Action.

In the event of a pending investigation for a disciplinary or grievance lodged against the employee, the suspension could be without notice.

Salary and other contractual benefits will be paid during the period of suspension and/or exclusion.

During any such period of suspension and/or exclusion, the employee must not, without the prior written consent of their line manager, contact (either directly or indirectly) any funders, partners, beneficiaries, clients, suppliers or employees of Integrity Action.

In the event of such suspension and/or exclusion, Integrity Action may require the employee to return all Integrity Action property in their possession or under their control.

Flexible working

Full time staff are expected to work **35 hours a week and 7 hours per working day**. This does not include lunch or other breaks which are unpaid. The option of compressed time is available to staff, provided it is agreed with your line manager.

STAFF LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2022

Staff may choose to work on their preferred times (and days for part time employees), provided that these are communicated to your line manager and that core hours are respected. Integrity Action may however from time to time require you to be available at specific times (e.g. for external meetings).

Core working hours are 11am – 3pm and staff should be available for meetings during this time.

During their working hours, staff should, as much as possible, make themselves available in the Slack chat, and must indicate when they start working in the Slack Integrity Action Team channel, so that everyone is aware whether they are working or not.

Remote work

Staff may choose their workplace location(s) as long as they have good internet coverage and comply with Integrity Action's Health, Mental Wellbeing and Safety policy.

Integrity Action may agree in consultation with staff to regular face-to-face meetings and other gathering events, provided that it is safe to meet and that Integrity Action's Health, Mental Wellbeing and Safety policy and UK Government regulations on working during COVID-19 are met.

Working from abroad for short periods of time (e.g. a few days or weeks) is generally permitted, as long as there are no tax, social security and other legal consequences for both you and Integrity Action. Working from abroad for longer periods (e.g. longer than 6 months) may have implications on your tax position and reporting obligations for Integrity Action. In all cases, a request to work from abroad needs to be made by the employee to their line manager no later than one month before the intended date of travel, and permission will be discussed by the SMT and granted on a case-by-case basis, provided that all tax implications are verified and agreed and that no extra cost is borne by Integrity Action.