

BEREAVEMENT & COMPASSIONATE LEAVE POLICY

Policy Statement: The McSence Group acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief where we are committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways in the workplace in event of bereavement leave at the loss of a loved one or compassionate leave for time off to look after a dependant.

All Employees: This policy applies to all persons working for or on our behalf of the McSence Group of Companies which includes the subsidiary companies - *McSence Communication Ltd, McSence Ltd, McSence Services Ltd & McSence Workspace Ltd* in any capacity including but not limited to:

✚ All employees at all levels, prospective employees, agency workers, seconded workers, temporary workers, contractors/sub-contractors, clients, agents, external consultants, volunteers, members of the public, group's supply chain, third-party representatives and/or business partners who will be referred to in our Group policies as "all employees".

The Workplace: This policy applies to all persons working for or on our behalf of the McSence Group of Companies in any capacity at the workplace(s) as defined below which includes but not limited to:

✚ McSence Premises, Offices, Units, Business Park, Client's Premises, External Meeting Places, Customers' Homes, Gardens, Sheltered Housing, Whilst On-Call, On-Duty, Emergency Cover, Working from Home including On-Line Meetings, Whilst Driving in Company Time, Working Public Areas (café's, trains, coffee shops, buses etc) and will be referred to throughout this policy as "the workplace".

Notification: 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. In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence. Line managers have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances as outlined above. Also leave days usually are taken consecutively but do not have to be taken consecutively.

Bereavement Leave: Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their family dies. McSence 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 different circumstances. McSence acknowledges that 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, 3 working days paid leave will be granted and an immediate relative includes:

- ✚ Spouse
- ✚ Partner, civil partner (including same sex partners) and includes someone with whom the employee is co-habiting but is not the employee's spouse or civil partner.
- ✚ Parent, step- parent, sibling, or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.
- ✚ Children in respect of whom the employee is the biological, adoptive parent and legal guardians – see below for Parental Bereavement Leave

In exceptional circumstances, the immediate Line Manager may request authorisation from the Senior Management Team to agreed additional for the death of someone outside the immediate family as outlined above.

Parental Bereavement Leave: A new right for parents to paid time off to grieve the loss of a child will come into force from 6 April 2020. The new right was revealed in the recently published Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020 and Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (General) Regulations 2020. The right to paid bereavement leave is only for employees in respect of their children. For the purposes of the Regulations, there are definitions of "child" and "parent".

The right is in respect of a child under the age of 18 who dies on or after 6 April 2020. This also includes still-born babies, or a child lost to miscarriage, on or after the 24th week of pregnancy.

The right to bereavement leave is a 'day-one right' where eligible parents are entitled to time off as soon as they start but they must have worked for their employer for 26 weeks to be entitled to receive statutory parental bereavement pay. The employee must be one of the following:

- ✚ The parent
- ✚ The adoptive parent
- ✚ The parent-to-be
- ✚ The primary caregiver
- ✚ The partner of any of the above

Parents are entitled to up to two weeks' paid bereavement leave; the minimum amount of time that can be taken is one week. The two weeks can be taken consecutively or separately at any time within 56 weeks of the date of the child's death. This gives parents' flexibility to choose when to take the leave. The leave entitlement period deliberately extends over one year to allow for time to be taken on the first anniversary of the child's death.

In the particularly sad circumstances of the parent losing more than one child, they would be entitled to two weeks' leave for each child lost. Only employees with at least 26 weeks' continuous employment are entitled to statutory parental bereavement pay. This is the same rate currently as statutory paternity pay and at the moment, the amount payable is the smaller of:

- ✚ £151.20
- ✚ 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings

Parents who wish to take bereavement leave must tell their employer three things:

- ✚ The date their child died.
- ✚ When they want their leave to start
- ✚ The amount of time they wish to take off.

The Regulations are deliberately flexible to allow parents to take the time off at short notice. During the first seven weeks, an employee need only give notice of intention to take leave before they are due to start work on the first day of leave. From weeks eight to 56, leave requires at least a week's notice.

Maternity Leave: If you have a miscarriage or stillbirth before 24 weeks, you are not entitled to maternity leave and pay. You could talk with your employer and they might offer you other support, for example time off or flexible working. You will need to tell your employer as soon as you can. You can ask your partner, a friend, or a family member to do this if you need to. You do not have to give your employer any formal evidence, but your workplace might have a policy that needs you to contact them as soon as you can. You still get maternity leave and pay if:

- ✚ Your baby is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy.
- ✚ Your baby only lives for a short time after birth at any stage of pregnancy.

Paying an Employee Who Has Died: The McSence Group must make all outstanding payments when an employee die. This is processed as putting the date they died into the 'Date of leaving' field in our next Full Payment Submission (FPS), and deduct tax using their existing tax code but do not deduct and pay National Insurance or produce a P45. Payments to a person who has died are usually made to the personal representative or executor of that person's estate.

Reporting a workplace death:

You must report a death in the workplace (except in Northern Ireland) to the:

- ✚ Police
- ✚ Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
HSE Incident Contact Centre
0845 300 9923
Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm

Annual Leave: 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. Requests should be directed to the employee's line manager. 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.

Compassionate Unpaid Leave: Unpaid leave on compassionate grounds up to a maximum of 10 days may be granted after bereavement where an employee must consult with their line manager before starting compassionate unpaid leave.

Return to Work: 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 childcare arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee. In such instances McSence will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where practicable. Alternative duties may also be considered. Any such arrangement would need to be agreed in advance by the line manager, would be subject to an agreed maximum number of days and would be managed in line with McSence flexible working/part-time working policy.

Health and Safety: Bereavement can have an impact on concentration, sleep, and decision-making. The health and safety assessment of the workplace will include consideration of the impact of bereavement on employees, their duties and responsibilities, and the context in which they are working, e.g., do they operate heavy machinery? Any employee who is concerned about their ability to conduct their duties safely in the weeks following a bereavement must discuss this with their line manager. McSence reserves the right to request an employee to meet the organisation's doctor before resuming full duties.

Culture & Diversity: McSence recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways. Line managers will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible. Line managers who are unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

Employee Support: McSence acknowledges that bereavement leave is intended to support employees in the immediate period around the death of a relative. However, the process of grief, the natural reaction and adjustment to loss and change may take a significant time and will be personal to each individual. An employee with any concerns about the grieving process impacting on their work performance should discuss this in confidence with either their line manager to ensure that any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary are discussed and put in place and that the employee is supported in their return to the full range of duties and responsibilities that they had prior to the bereavement or their duties and responsibilities are adjusted (as necessary) with the prior agreement of line manager. Whilst McSence Group currently has no dedicated employee assistance programme, there are various organisations that the Line Managers may sign-post the employee to which includes but is not limited to:

- ✚ Cruse Bereavement Care is a national charity offering support to anyone who has been bereaved. Services are free and confidential. For more information go to www.cruse.org.uk/bereavement-at-work
- ✚ For a directory of end-of-life and bereavement support services, go to <http://help.dyingmatters.org/>
- ✚ SIMBA who helps families create new memories who have lost a child through sudden and tragic death and provide advice and training to employers and employees - www.simba.com
- ✚ Macmillan Cancer Support have comprehensive information and guidance for employers about cancer and bereavement at work www.macmillan.org.uk

For advice on employment rights and rules, best practice or about a dispute the following can assist.

- ✚ The ACAS Helpline can be contacted on 0300 123 1100.
- ✚ Child Bereavement UK produces guidance for employees and employers on returning to work. www.childbereavementuk.org

✚ The Dying Matters Coalition aims to raise public awareness about the importance of talking more openly about dying, death and bereavement. Dying Matters has produced a wide range of information about end-of-life issues www.dyingmatters.org on managing bereavement in the workplace.

Company Intranet – Staff Zone: All the McSence Groups policies, procedures, handbooks are available on-line to all employees on the McSence Group’s Staff Zone Intranet via our website [Login | McSence](#)

Compliance: Failure to comply with the provisions of this Policy may result in Disciplinary proceedings.



McSence Group Signatory:

David Maxwell | Chief Executive

McSence Group - *McSence Communication Ltd, McSence Ltd, McSence Services Ltd & McSence Workspace Ltd*

T: 0131 454 1500 | E: mail@mcsence.co.uk | W: www.mcsence.co.uk | FB: www.facebook.com/McSenceGroup

Policy Amendments & Revisions: This policy will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes. Improvements will be made by learning from experience and the use of an established annual review. Should any amendments, revisions, or updates be made to this policy it is the responsibility of the Company Senior Management Team (SMT) to see that all relevant employees receive notice and training if necessary.