*This tool provides a general example of a leave and time off policy to help you manage your human resources. You may adapt it to match your business needs and specific regulations in your country.* ***It is recommended to investigate on national regulations and ask for a lawyer’s/ expert’s advice.***

**LEAVE AND TIME OFF POLICY**

1. **Hours of work and Public Holidays**
	1. Employees are required to work for a minimum of 40 hours per week; that is 8 hours per day.
	2. Normal working hours are from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a one hour lunch break from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. This will vary depending on the nature of work.
	3. It is the duty of all staff to report for work and be punctual on every official working day. If they are unable to attend or are late due to unavoidable circumstances, they should inform their line manager as soon as possible.
	4. All absences from duty will require reasonable explanation from the employee and approval of the line manager. Absenteeism and habitual late coming are causes for disciplinary action under disciplinary code.
	5. Public and official holidays will be observed in accordance with the public holidays laws of each country
	6. Staff members may be required to work on official holidays. The staff may be compensated by taking a day off on another working day with approval from their immediate supervisor. Compensatory leave shall apply on public holidays. Compensatory day must be taken within two weeks and depending on work demands/ agreement with the line manager. The compensatory day is neither transferable to the next month nor can it be accumulated or added to leave days.
	7. In cases where staff members work beyond these working hours or during weekends, no over-time will be paid.
2. **Punctuality and Absence from duty**
	1. **Punctuality**
		1. If for any unforeseen reason a staff member is unable to report for duty it is their responsibility to notify their line manager no later than 12:00 hours on the day of the absence of their inability to report to work. Otherwise, the absence will be considered as desertion from duty. Leave form must be completed within same day upon resuming duty.
		2. Breaks for private purposes need appropriate authorization by the responsible line manager in advance. The time taken for such breaks does not count as time worked and should be made up by the staff member at a time mutually agreeable to the staff member and the line manager.
	2. **Daily attendance and punctuality**
		1. It is the duty of all staff to report for work and be punctual on every official working day. If they are unable to attend or are late due to unavoidable circumstances, they should inform their line manager as quickly as possible.
		2. All absences from duty require reasonable explanation from the employee and approval of the line manager. Absenteeism and habitual late coming are causes for disciplinary action.
	3. **Overtime**
		1. The nature of …………………operations means that staff will need to work irregular hours. Therefore, no overtime will be payable to any member of staff.
		2. In situation where staff is required to work hours in excess of the stipulated work hours, staff are encouraged to take time off to compensate the worked hours. Compensatory time is wholly discretionary and intended to compensate for excessive workload. It does not accrue and must be used within 14 days from when it is earned. In all cases, overtime work must be approved in advanced in writing by their immediate line manager. Staff is encouraged to maintain a work-life balance.
3. **Leave**

* 1. **Annual Leave**

3.1.1 staff members will be entitled to ……………working days of annual leave for each full year of service or ……… working days per month.

* + 1. A staff member is eligible for Annual Leave after completion of Probation, effective from the employment date.

* + 1. Annual leave may be taken in units of days or half days. Application to take leave must be duly authorized by the line manager at least 2 weeks before the period of leave commences, unless the requested leave is due to an emergency.

* + 1. All leave arrangements are subject to the exigencies of service, which may require that a staff member takes leave at a time agreed upon by the line manager. However, due consideration will be given to the personal circumstances and preferences of staff members whenever possible.

* + 1. The leave year will commence on 1 January and end on 31 December. Calculations of annual leave for service less than one year shall be made in proportion to the length of service. Staff shall be required to take their annual leave within the calendar year.

* + 1. Staff may carry forward no more than 10 days. Carry over beyond this limit will be allowed under special circumstances, with approval granted in writing by the Head of unit and the Managing Director.
		2. Leave carried forward should be utilized by end of the first quarter of the year or if not shall be forfeited.
		3. A leave schedule should be drawn up at the beginning of the year by line managers. The requirements of the work and wishes of staff must be given due consideration in scheduling annual leave.
		4. Encashment of unused leave will not be allowed. Any leave that is not utilized as provided for shall be automatically forfeited.
		5. However, in circumstances where it is not practical for staff to utilize all their leave days within a given contract, staff may be allowed to carry over their leave days with the approval of the Managing Director not his designate. Unused days must be utilized within the first three (3) months of the new contract.
		6. Leave Request Forms are available from the Administration Department. Leave forms must be filled in and signed by the staff member and approved by the line manager and the Managing Director or his designee.
		7. The company shall not pay staff unutilized leave days except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Managing Director.

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* 1. **Medical/Sick Leave**

* + 1. Staff members are entitled to paid medical/sick leave of up to twelve (12) working days annually with full pay.
		2. Such leave will be granted on production of a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner, covering the period of ailment.

* + 1. Any staff member who exhausts their sick leave will be required to utilize their annual leave in case of continued absence.
		2. Sick leave of longer than one month will require the approval of the Managing Director. A report from a doctor will be essential to determine whether a staff member may be retired on health grounds.
		3. Long sick leave request may be granted as per insurance provision.
		4. Staff on such leave will be given full pay for the first two months, then half pay for a further two months, thereafter retirement on medical grounds will be considered. Persons suffering from terminal ailments will be treated as provided for in the medical insurance document.
		5. Staff on sick leave for over three months due to an accident will be treated in accordance with the insurance policy and their case will be examined by the Managing Director.
		6. Any unutilized sick leave will not be carried over to the next year and shall not be en-cashed, even upon termination.
		7. In case of admission of children below five (5) years and whom the parent is required to accompany throughout the admission period, such period will be treated taken under sick leave entitlement.
	1. **Maternity Leave**

Female staff members shall be entitled to paid maternity leave as defined in the labor laws of the host country.

When applying for maternity leave the employee must submit a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner stating the expected date of delivery.

Expectant mothers shall be eligible for time off for ante and postnatal medical examination with prior approval of the line manager, until the child is six months old.

Breast-feeding mothers will be given two hours off in a day for nursing purposes, until the child is four (4) months old. The staff member and the line manager will agree on the appropriate timings.

A staff member granted maternity leave as set forth above are guaranteed reinstatement at the same level occupied at the time she commenced maternity leave upon resuming work.

A staff member wishing to stay away from work for longer than the stipulated period in order to care for the infant may apply for special leave without pay if no vacation leave credit is available, provided that upon return they have at least six (6) additional months of service on their appointment.

Provided the total absence does not exceed six months, The Company will reinstate the staff member upon return from such extended leave in the same position occupied at the time she commenced maternity leave, or in a mutually agreed comparable position with salary and benefits equivalent to those to which she was entitled at the beginning of maternity leave.

* 1. **Paternity Leave**

A male staff member shall be eligible to paid paternity leave of ten (10) working days per delivery by their registered spouse/partner.

The request must be supported by valid evidence of delivery or expected delivery and prior approval must be obtained from the line manager.

Paternity leave must be taken within four weeks period before or after the wife’s delivery. Paternity leave not taken during this period will be forfeited.

* 1. **Compassionate Leave**

Staff shall be granted up to a maximum of paid 5 calendar days to attend to personal misfortunes such as death of an immediate member of the staff member’s family (spouse, parents, parents-in-law, and child).

Such leave is not deducted from annual leave, and must be approved by the line manager.

All time over the five (5) days plus travel time must be charged to vacation leave or leave without pay.

* 1. **Leave without pay**

Unpaid leave may be granted in writing at the discretion of the Managing Director when a staff member wishes to interrupt service with the company for professional or exceptional personal reasons. Staff members may proceed on such leave upon receiving approval in writing. Eligibility for unpaid leave is generally limited to staff members who have rendered at least ………………. years of continuous service.

The maximum period of leave without pay shall not exceed six months for the entire period of employment with the company, except in special circumstances to be approved by the Managing Director.

During the period of special leave without pay, staff members are not entitled to their salaries or their allowances or benefits, with the exception of medical insurance, which remains intact but at the staff members’ expense. Leave without pay shall not be deemed to be continuous service for computing termination benefits of staff members or accrual of leave days.