



Finance and Corporate Resources
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Personnel Services

Scheme of Enhanced Leave For Local Government Employees Only

1. Introduction

As part of the Council's Flexible Working policies, this scheme allows employees the opportunity to supplement their existing annual leave entitlement. The Council recognises the growing demands placed on employees to try and achieve a work-life balance and by allowing flexibility in working arrangements, can assist with accommodating individual circumstances in line with the needs of the service.

2. What is Enhanced Leave?

The scheme allows employees to bank and/or buy annual leave. The difference between 'banking' and 'buying' leave is as follows:-

2.1 Banking Leave

'Banking Leave' – an employee sacrifices a fixed amount of their annual leave and banks this over a set period of time, to be used at an agreed later date.

Banking Leave should be pre planned and requested from the annual leave entitlement from the year ahead to be used in the future. Banking untaken leave from the current leave year is not permitted under the scheme.

When banking annual leave, the amount sacrificed each year should not reduce that year's entitlement to less than the minimum set by the Working Time Directive (28 days for full time employees and pro-rata equivalent for part time employees).

For example, employees on the basic holiday entitlement of 20 days plus 2 floating, will have a maximum of 4 days they can bank.

2.2 Buying Leave

'Buying Leave' – an employee purchases additional days leave to increase their leave entitlement. Many employees, especially those on basic annual leave entitlement, will choose to enhance their existing entitlement by buying and using them throughout the leave year.

A maximum of 5 days annual leave entitlement can be bought per year.

2.3 Combination of buying and banking leave

Subject to the needs of the service, employees may have the option to bank and buy annual leave over a fixed period of time. Appendix one details the number of days that can be bought and banked depending on an employee's, annual leave entitlement.

3. Conditions for participation in the Scheme

Employees have the option to use their bought or banked leave either to supplement their existing annual leave entitlement or to take an extended period of leave i.e. a sabbatical. The general criteria for being able to apply for a sabbatical or supplemented leave, includes the following:-

3.1 Service Requirements

All approvals for enhanced leave under the terms of the scheme are subject to the needs of the service and will be considered by the appropriate manager within 14 days of receiving the request.

Applications should include the amount of leave to be banked / bought, the period in which it will be accrued and how it will be taken i.e. for a sabbatical or to supplement current annual leave entitlement.

Managers should take into account other leave requests submitted from employees and the number of periods of extended leave already taken by the employee and any service need requirements.

Employees participating in the scheme are expected to demonstrate a good level of attendance. To ensure consistency across the Council, the suggested level of attendance is 97%. However, managers are expected to review each case on an individual basis and take into consideration previous records of attendance and the reasons for any absence(s).

For example, a manager may authorise an application from an employee whose absence has fallen below 97% due to treatment for a medical condition, and who in previous years has demonstrated a good level of attendance.

Where the manager is unable to grant the request, the employee has the right to progress this through the grievance procedures.

3.2 Conditions for banking and buying leave

3.2.1 Banking Leave

When banking annual leave, the amount sacrificed each year should not reduce that year's entitlement to less than the minimum set by the Working Time Directive (28 days for full time employees and pro-rata equivalent for part time employees).

The maximum period over which leave can be banked is five years. Banking Leave should be pre planned and requested from the annual leave entitlement from the year ahead to be used in the future. Banking untaken leave from the current leave year is not permitted under the scheme.

3.2.2 Buying Leave

When buying annual leave, no more than 5 days of an employee's annual leave entitlement can be purchased in any one leave year.

Payroll will make deductions direct from an employees' salary every 4 weeks over the leave year.

3.3 Calculation of Pay

The deductions taken from an employee's salary, every 4 weeks over the leave year, are calculated as follows:-

Hourly rate x average hours worked per day x number of days bought = total deduction

For example, an employee on an hourly rate of £8.00 who works 35 hours per week, and wishes to buy 5 days leave, would have £21.54 deducted from their pay every 4 weeks, for the leave year. This is calculated as follows:-

£8.00 x 7 hours = £56.00 per day x 5 days leave = £280 / 13 pay runs = £21.54 every 4 weeks.

3.4 Attendance at Work

Employees on maternity leave are able to participate fully in the scheme. Periods of maternity leave do not count as non-attendance for the 97% attendance level. As with all other employees they must apply to take part in the scheme prior to the start of the new annual leave year.

Employees who enter into the scheme and subsequently fail to achieve an acceptable attendance record, will have their case reviewed under the Maximising Attendance Policy. Depending in the circumstances of the case, an employee's participation may be withdrawn.

4. **Sabbaticals**

A sabbatical is an extended break which allows an employee to pursue outside activities i.e. travelling, undertake courses, pursue sports/hobbies etc.

Employees must satisfy the following criteria in order to be able to apply for a sabbatical:-

- Employees must have five years service by the date they propose to take the sabbatical.
- The maximum period of enhanced leave whether bought, banked or unpaid special leave is for six months.
- The employee must apply for the sabbatical by the commencement of the leave year in which they intend to start banking, buying leave or both.
- Employees must be in post by the start of the leave year and have a contract of employment which extends beyond the period which they intend to bank leave i.e. if an employee is on a two year contract, they can only bank leave for one year so it can be used in their second year of employment.
- An employee who decides before the completion of their agreement that they no longer wish to take a sabbatical, will be required to use their leave over the period which it was bought or banked. For example, an employee who has saved 15 days over three years, will be required to use this leave over the same period of time, subject to the needs of the service.

Example

For example, **Employee A** wishes to go on a sabbatical for a period of six months to go travelling around the world.

Employee A's current annual leave entitlement is 25 days and decides to bank 5 days per year for the maximum period of five years. In addition the employee decides to buy the maximum of five days per year, totalling to 50 days after five years.

The employee will after five years, be on an annual leave entitlement of 30 days. Therefore, the employee will have banked twenty five days, will have bought twenty five days and will have thirty days current leave entitlement, a total of 80 days leave for a sabbatical.

The employee will be able to use the majority of these days for their sabbatical but will be expected to keep a small amount of leave to be used intermittently throughout the rest of the leave year i.e. 5 days.

5. Moving to an Alternative Post

Where an employee applies for an alternative post, the employee and the line manager must discuss prior to appointment, the ongoing arrangements of those participating in the scheme and intending to take an extended period of leave i.e. a sabbatical.

The appointing department must use the criteria outlined to help them decide whether the employee's arrangement can be honoured or not.

6. Supplementing Annual Leave

Many employees may choose to buy leave in order to supplement their current annual leave entitlement for the year. Employees must satisfy the following criteria in order to be able to supplement their annual leave each year:

- Application forms for bought leave must be submitted by employees to their line managers prior to the start of the new leave year. Employees must detail on the form the number of days leave they wish to buy.
- Where an employee withdraws from participating during a leave year, they will get a pro-rata entitlement for leave already bought and be expected to use this in that leave year. At that time, the agreement will cease and payments will no longer be deducted from the employees' pay.
- Normal rules will apply for annual leave for those who terminate their employment.
- Employees with fixed work requirements i.e. term time employees, are restricted in the days they can take annual leave, are excluded from banking leave but have the option to buy. Buying leave allows the employee to plan leave out with fixed holiday periods, subject to the needs of the service.

Example

For example, Employee B has a basic annual leave entitlement of 20 days plus 2 floating. They want to increase their current annual leave to spend more time with their children during their school holidays and match the annual leave entitlement of that of their partner. Therefore, the employee decides to buy an additional five days, providing Employee B with a total of 27 days to use in the leave year.

Appendix 1

Maximum leave which can be bought or banked

The maximum amount of banked and bought leave (per year) based on an employee's current annual leave entitlement- pro rata equivalent for part time employees (based on 35 hours per week).

Current Annual Leave Entitlement (days)	Maximum number of days which can be banked	Maximum number of days which can be bought	Maximum amount of enhanced leave per year (days)
22	4	5	9
23	5	5	10
24	6	5	11
25	7	5	12
26	8	5	13
27	9	5	14
28	10	5	15
29	11	5	16
30	12	5	17
31	13	5	18
32	14	5	19

Current Annual Leave Entitlement (days)	Maximum number of days which can be banked	Maximum number of days which can be bought	Maximum amount of enhanced leave per year (days)
154	28	35	63
161	35	35	70
168	42	35	77
175	49	35	84
182	56	35	91
189	63	35	98
196	70	35	105
203	77	35	112
210	84	35	119
217	91	35	126
224	98	35	133

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