Sabbatical Leave Policy

Change Record

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<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<td>d1a</td>
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<td>Initial Draft</td>
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<td>i1a</td>
<td>February 2012</td>
<td>Issued for Review</td>
<td>Mary Anne Black</td>
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REVIEW DATE: February 2014

Reviewers

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Group/Name(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Review Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead Responsibility</td>
<td>Mary Anne Black</td>
<td>Feb 2012</td>
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Approvers

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>APF</td>
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Last Bi Annual Review Date

Last Technical Review Date

Dissemination Arrangements:
- APF Members
- Line Manager e-mail
- Team Brief
- AthenA / Intranet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a new policy?</th>
<th>No</th>
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| If ‘yes’ why is it required?  
i.e. to satisfy best practice/comply with new legislation | |
| If ‘no’, name of previous policy and reason for replacement | |
| **Summary of Substantive Changes Made** | |
| Section: | N/A |
| **Summary of Technical Changes Made** | |
| Section 7 | Change to Superannuation section to clarify eligibility to continue to contribute to the NHS Superannuation Scheme and for how long whilst on sabbatical leave. |
1. **Policy Statement**

NHS Ayrshire and Arran (hereinafter referred to as the Organisation) encourages and supports the development and training of staff to meet both the current and future needs of the organisation and employees.

It is the aim of the organisation to provide and support sabbatical opportunities in line with the organisations business and manpower strategies.

2. **Definition**

Sabbatical leave provides a facility where an employee can undergo specialist training/further education or seek work experience that enhances their skill/knowledge base.

3. **Eligibility**

All employees with at least one year’s service with the organisation can apply for sabbatical leave.

4. **Objectives**

- To provide staff with opportunities for personal development to maximise their effectiveness and meet organisational requirements, in line with the Organisation’s business objectives.
- To help effective employee induction into post widening experience, improving technical expertise and/or gaining an understanding of the organisation and its business in order to build confidence and develop competence.
- To assist in the management of change, and support developments in either the organisational structure or in service provision.
- To provide staff with the chance to develop new skills and increase their potential by experiencing alternative career opportunities.
- To help staff and managers to identify transferrable skills and competencies in the light of redeployment or redundancy situations.

5. **Procedure**

- Employees wishing to apply for sabbatical leave should use the application form (see Appendix 1) and forward the completed document to their Head of Department/Line Manager.
- A detailed application must be made setting out the employee’s reason for wanting the leave, the objectives they hope to achieve, how this will be done and the perceived benefits for both the employee and the organisation.
- While on sabbatical leave, staff will have all pay and conditions of service protected including for example, long service leave.
- Sabbaticals are unpaid and the terms for each application should be discussed with the member of staff.
- A period of sabbatical leave may be regarded as a break in service for some contractual arrangements i.e. Maternity/Paternity leave and pay. Employees
should discuss this in detail with the Human Resources Manager/Advisor for the area.

- Sabbaticals may be short or long term, which could range from a period of up to 2 months (short term) and would not normally be longer than 2 years (long term).
- All terms and conditions of sabbatical leave must be agreed, in writing, prior to commencement of leave.

6. Contractual Rights of Consultant Medical Staff with respect to Sabbatical Leave

- After 7 years service in the consultant grade, a consultant will be eligible to apply for one period of sabbatical leave of up to 6 weeks or after 10 years service, a consultant will be eligible to apply for up to 3 months sabbatical leave. If either of these options is granted with pay, no further period of paid sabbatical leave will be granted until retirement.
- Sabbatical leave has clear benefits for the individual and the service, enabling a period of development and refreshment. It will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the consultant proposes to use the leave in furtherance of a project that is in the interests of the NHS and contributes to his/her continuing professional, clinical or leadership development.
- The consultant applying for such leave must set out a stated case explaining how the leave will be used and how the sabbatical will benefit the MHS.
- Sabbatical leave will only be granted subject to approved arrangements having been made to cover the absence of the consultant.
- An application must be made a minimum of 6 months in advance of the intended date of leave to be taken. Where an application for sabbatical leave is rejected, a period of 12 months must elapse before a fresh application can be considered.
- Applications will be considered by the Medical Director/Director of Public Health and must have the written support of the Clinical Director/manager.
- Where travel and accommodation expenses will be incurred, the employer has discretion to meet these in part or in full.
- Sabbatical leave may be granted without pay in circumstances other than those set out above. The paid period of 6 weeks/3 months may be extended by a further unpaid period at the discretion of the employer. Any such extension will be considered on the same terms as the original sabbatical leave agreement.
- When sabbatical leave has been granted without pay, an employer has discretion to grant additional periods of sabbatical leave at intervals of no less than seven years after the first period.
- All employment rights will be preserved during periods of sabbatical leave.

7. Superannuation

Employees should seek advice in relation to the impact their sabbatical request may have on their eligibility to continue making superannuation contributions during the period of their time away from their substantive employment.

To continue to pay into the NHS superannuation scheme an employee would need to remain employed by NHS Ayrshire and Arran or another NHS employer and have not resigned or taken up other employment with a non NHS employer during the period of
leave.

8. **Sick Leave**

While on a career break employees would not be entitled to receive occupational sick pay except during the 10 days of paid employment which they are required to undertake each year.

9. **Annual Leave/Public Holidays**

There will be no entitlement to accrue annual leave or public holidays while on sabbatical except during the 10 days of paid employment which they are required to undertake each year.

10. **Maternity Leave**

While on a sabbatical employees will not normally be entitled to maternity pay as full pay is calculated on the average of the eight week period from the 22\(^{nd}\) week to the 15\(^{th}\) week prior to the expected date of confinement.

On return from sabbatical employees will retain the same entitlement to Maternity Leave as that accrues prior to going on sabbatical. Only reckonable service while on sabbatical will count towards additional entitlement.

11. **Communication and Training**

The employee and manager will agree, design and record a training programme for the employee to keep abreast with changes and development that occur during the period of leave.

This programme will encompass amongst other things, paid days of employment, training courses and professional updating, the exact number of days will vary depending on the individuals’ profession, medical, nursing, dental or other professional registration requirements.

The organisation will guarantee to provide sabbatical leave participants with at least 10 days paid employment per year (pro rata for shorter breaks) in order to keep up to date with changes and developments in the service. This may include training courses and professional updating. Employees on sabbatical leave must be available to attend work for 10 days in each year of the scheme (pro rata for shorter breaks) to undertake work, attend courses or receive professional updating.

The line manager of the employee must ensure an annual commitment is made to the scheme with the member of staff if the leave is extended beyond a year. Employees will be asked to make an annual commitment to the scheme and its terms and conditions.

The availability of the employee will be agreed prior to the leave.

The line manager should consider relevant information on a monthly basis and make
this available to employees on sabbatical leave, including any organisational change implications for their posts.

Employees who participate on the scheme will be obliged to advise their manager of any change in circumstances e.g. address, telephone number etc.

If the sabbatical leave break lasts for more than 1 year, employees will notify their line manager of their intention to continue the break at least 3 months prior to the end of each year.

12. Returning to Work

If the applicant returns to work within one year, the same job will be available, as far as is reasonably practicable. If the break is longer than one year, the applicant may return to as similar a job as possible. Return to work will be at the equivalent salary level, reflecting increases awarded during the break.

The employee must give the appropriate notice of their intention to return to work to their line manager. The notice period required before the return to work should be two months if the break is less than a year and six months if the break is more than a year. During this period copies of the internal vacancy bulletin will be sent to the individual by the department of O&HRD.

If, before starting a sabbatical, an employee worked in a part-time/job share arrangement every effort will be made to allow the employee to return on that basis. However, there is no guarantee that the hours of work will be the same as before the sabbatical, nevertheless a match as close as possible will be offered.

To ease the transition back to work the employee may be allowed to return to work on a part-time basis for up to 3 months before returning to full duties. This must be discussed with the manager at the time of notifying the employee’s wish to return to work.

Within 3 months of an employee returning to work following a sabbatical the line manager must arrange a personal development review meeting to create a personal development plan based on the post.

If the employee decides not to return to work after sabbatical leave, they must give notice of resignation as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms and conditions of their employment.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years or sooner in light of any legislative changes and in line with NHS changes such as Agenda for Change, to review its utilisation and impact on service provision.
APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE  
To be completed by the applicant

Full Name:
Pay Number:
Job Title:
Location:
Ward/Department:
Home Address:
Home Telephone Number:
Reason for sabbatical leave:

Objectives hoped to be achieved and how this will be done:

Perceived benefits for organisation and yourself:

Date commences employment:
Start date of Sabbatical leave:
Proposed return date:

Employee

I wish to apply for a period of unpaid leave under the Sabbatical Leave Policy. I understand that on return I will require to discuss with my manager the new skills learned and how they can be applied to my specific area.

Signed:                       Date:
Head of Department/Line Manager

Approved/Rejected (delete as appropriate)

I support/reject this application.

I will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to maintain contact with the applicant, including arrangements for training courses and professional updating, and general information for the duration of the Sabbatical Leave.

Signed: 

Date: 

If rejected, give reasons:

Signed: 

Date: 