

Circular Title: Bereavement Leave in the Civil Service

File Reference: DPE202-020-2016

I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to say that the following revised arrangements will apply in relation to Bereavement Leave in the Civil Service.

Circular Number: 01/2017

Purpose: To set out the revised Bereavement Leave Scheme in the Civil Service.

Status: This Circular revokes Circular 22/2009 – *Bereavement Leave*

Circular Application: To all civil servants.

Effective Date: 26 January 2017

Responsibility for Implementation: HR Units/Heads of Department

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CSHR Policy Unit

1. This Circular is issued pursuant to the power contained in section 17 of the Civil Service Regulation Act 1956 (as amended).

2. The purpose of the Circular is to set out the revised provisions regarding special leave with pay which may be allowed to a civil servant in the event of the death of a relative. Such leave shall be called 'bereavement leave'.

(a) Where there is the death of a spouse (including a cohabiting partner), child (including adopted children and children being cared for on the basis of 'in loco parentis') or any person in a relationship of domestic dependency, the amount of bereavement leave shall be twenty working days.

(b) Where there is the death of another immediate relative¹ the amount of bereavement leave shall be five working days.

(c) Where there is the death of an uncle, aunt, niece or nephew the amount of bereavement leave shall be one day. In exceptional circumstances, where the civil servant lived with the deceased at the time of their death, or has to take charge of funeral arrangements, this limit may be extended to five working days.

(d) In the event of a stillbirth or prenatal death of a child after twenty four weeks pregnancy, bereavement leave of ten days may be granted to (i) the father of the child, (ii) the spouse, civil partner or cohabitant, as the case may be, of the mother of the child, or (iii) a parent of the child under Section 5 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 where the child is a donor-conceived child within the meaning of Part 2 of that Act.

(e) In a case where a civil servant has to travel abroad to make funeral arrangements in respect of an immediate relative, special leave with pay in excess of the limits for bereavement leave may be granted at the discretion of the Local HR Unit, having consulted with the relevant manager.

There is no requirement for a civil servant to avail of the full amount of special leave outlined above. In certain situations, a civil servant may wish to return to work sooner.

3. Bereavement leave is granted only at the time of the bereavement. Bereavement leave cannot be substituted for any form of leave, other than annual leave. If the bereavement occurs when a civil servant is on annual leave, the annual leave can be replaced with bereavement leave and the annual leave restored.

4. With regard to worksharers, the granting of bereavement leave and the amount granted will depend on whether or not the civil servant was scheduled to work for the period in question.

¹ For the purposes of bereavement leave "immediate relative" means (a) father, step-father, mother, step-mother, brother, step-brother, half-brother, brother-in-law, sister, step-sister, half-sister, sister-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandfather, grandmother or grandchild of an officer; (b) a similar immediate relative of a cohabiting partner.

5. All civil servants are reminded of the fact that the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) offers both practical and emotional support to staff who have experienced a bereavement. The CSEAS can be contacted via <http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie/>

6. For those organisations in PeoplePoint, all applications for bereavement leave, with the exception of circumstances outlined in paragraph 2 (e) above, will be processed by PeoplePoint following approval of the application by the line manager. Requests under paragraph 2 (e) above should be processed by the Local HR Unit. All applications will be processed by HR Units in those organisations outside PeoplePoint.