

Coronavirus – Temporary Working Arrangements

Working Arrangements and Banking of Time

We stated last time, with regards working arrangements, that the company will continue to follow government advice and instruction.

Taking cognisance of employees and business needs is of course important and we will continue to assess the appropriate requirements dependent on individual circumstances.

We recognise that new government initiatives have been introduced such as the **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** (Government Furloughed Scheme), however at this time information to employers is limited and it is unclear as to eligibility.

Other legislation exists as follows;

Sick Pay – This is determined and paid dependent on your contract of employment. It may be Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), an enhanced version of same e.g. JIB, or company sick pay.

Dependent Leave - As an employee you're allowed time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependent. A dependent could be a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent, or someone who depends on you for care.

You're allowed a reasonable amount of time off to deal with the emergency, but there's no set amount of time as it depends on the situation and this is without pay.

Parental Leave - You have the right to unpaid time off to look after your child up to their 18th birthday. This is called 'ordinary' or unpaid parental leave. Parental leave is usually unpaid. Each parent can take up to 18 weeks for each child. If you take it, it should be in blocks of a week at a time and for a maximum of 4 weeks a year for each child.

Flexible Working – This allows employee request to alter their working arrangements, there are varying options available, for example;

- Split time at home/workplace
- Varying hours of work e.g. start/finish time or over fewer/more days
- Reduction of hours e.g. to work part-time

We propose the following temporary arrangements, taking consideration of the above;

Working from home

In the main we are a customer site and/or factory based working environment making it difficult to 'work from home' however we recognise that the latest government announcement and in particular the new rules on staying at home and away from others will have an impact on people.

We have already advised on allowing working from home, where possible, for any employees with an underlying health condition or who is pregnant.

Following latest Government advice we have reviewed options and can confirm the company will take a practical, flexible and sensitive approach to requests for working from home because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

As part of this process we will;

- talk to employees about working from home arrangements which will include;
 - when employees will be available to work
 - If related to childcare, care of a dependent, how would this be managed
 - how they will keep in touch
 - rules around storing information and data protection
 - how performance will be managed and measured
- consider which roles and tasks can be done from home – this might involve change of working hours and/or agreeing that the employee may not be able to work a full day or a full week.
- consider individual employees' needs, for example anyone with childcare responsibilities, a long-term health condition or a disability.
- confirm the arrangements that have been agreed.

Any requests should be made to your Business Unit Manager, where it will be assessed and subsequently authorised by their relevant Director.

Banking of Time

We will allow 'banking' of time to offset the impact of time off work to care for dependents, lack of available work and where it is not possible to work from home. This will allow paid time off which will be repaid at a later date by agreed means e.g. working additional hours, relinquish unused holiday, clawback in pay or Government Furloughed Scheme. We will allow this for a maximum of **4 weeks**, and this will be subject to ongoing review.

Examples;

- Schools are closed, you have used all available holiday and you are unable to work from home. You require 1 week off which would normally be unpaid parental leave.
The company will authorise this time off, which will be paid as per your normal contract of employment (assume 38 hours). This would then be repaid over an agreed period e.g. 1 hour a day extra worked for 38 days.
- An elderly relative requires care at short notice. You require 2 days off which would normally be unpaid dependent leave.
The company will authorise this time off, which will be paid as per your normal contract of employment (assume 16 hours). This would then be repaid by varying working hours e.g. 7am till 6pm in lieu of 8am to 5pm, paying back 2 hrs per day for 8 days.
- There is a downturn in work in your area, this would normally result in temporary lay-off or short time working. It is evident that this situation will last for 4 weeks.
The company will defer decision on this approach and will offer paid time off equivalent to your normal contract of employment (assume 37.5 hours per week, total 150 hours). This would then be repaid over an agreed period e.g.

1 hour a day extra worked for 75 days. – 75 hours repaid

2 weekend working shifts Sat/Sun (7.5 hr day) - 30 hours repaid

You have unused holiday e.g. 3 days – 22.5 hours repaid

You forfeit pay – 3 days spread over 3 month's pay – 22.5 hours repaid

Again, any requests should be made to your Business Unit Manager, where it will be assessed and subsequently authorised by their relevant Director.

To re-iterate, we have outline information from the Government on the **Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme** for the protection of workers employment. At this time information to employers is limited and it is unclear as to eligibility. Please be assured that we will utilise any of this support where we are able. We must stress however we cannot assume that it is something we can rely on however should we be able to utilise same this will change our approach to working arrangements and the above examples.

There can be no guarantees on any temporary arrangements, we will continue to monitor the situation and advise.