



Exeter Food Action Leave of Absence Policy

1. Purpose

Exeter Food Action (EFA) recognises that there may be occasions when employees and volunteers require a leave of absence from work. This policy outlines the types of leave of absence available, eligibility criteria and the application process for employees. We have a separate Leave of Absence Policy for volunteers.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all EFA employees.

3. Types of Leave of Absence

The following types of leave of absence are available:

- a) Statutory leave, which includes maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave and parental bereavement leave.
- b) Unpaid leave, which may be granted for personal reasons, such as caring for a family member, or other exceptional circumstances.
- c) Compassionate leave, which may be granted in the event of the death of a family member or close friend.
- d) Jury service, which is a legal obligation and for which employees are entitled to paid leave.
- e) Study leave, which may be granted for approved educational or training purposes.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Employees may be eligible for leave of absence if they meet the following criteria:

- a) They have completed the required period of service, as set out in their contract of employment or volunteering agreement.

b) They have provided adequate notice and made a formal request for leave of absence.

c) They have provided appropriate evidence, where required, to support their request for leave of absence.

5. **Application Process**

Employees must discuss their request for leave of absence with the manager, stating the reason for the request and the proposed dates of absence. The request should be made as far in advance as possible and at least two weeks before the intended start date.

The manager will consider each request on an individual basis, considering the needs of the organisation and any previous leave taken. The manager will inform the employee of the decision within two weeks of receiving the request.

6. **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains effective and relevant. Any necessary changes will be communicated to all employees and volunteers.

By implementing this leave of absence policy, EFA aims to provide a supportive and flexible working environment for employees, while ensuring compliance with applicable UK law.

Agreed by Trustees on: 28.02.26

Date for review: February 2027