

Annual Leave

Considerations for Managers



Annual leave is vital to promote good physical and mental health in the workplace and will improve employees work-life balance. It allows individuals to take time to rest and re-energise which can result in stress reduction and improve mood, benefiting staff morale. However, it's not possible for everyone to take time off at the same time and managers need to ensure that there are safe staffing levels for service delivery. This briefing sets out some things managers need to consider to ensure annual leave is allocated fairly and appropriately in their area:

✓ DO:

- Be transparent! Make sure you have a departmental protocol which has been written in partnership with staff representatives.
- Have parameters rather than rules – there will always be exceptions!
- Have agreed quotas – how many people can be off at one time? How much leave should be booked by when?
- Have clear arrangements for busy times e.g. school holidays and Christmas – if you prioritise some requests be clear about your reasons for this
- Watch out for unintentional or hidden bias
- Although annual leave should be taken throughout the year, do recognise that staff value a 'buffer' and may want to save a couple of days to take towards the end 'just in case...'

✗ DON'T:

- Make threats e.g. if you don't book it we'll book it for you – try to adopt a compassionate management approach
- Don't assume that treating everyone the same is always the fairest approach – if using systems like first come, first served make sure everyone (including staff away from the workplace, part timers) etc has the same opportunities

For more information about annual leave refer to the online toolkit or contact People Services

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TOOLKIT**

