

HR Guide: Personal Days

Version: 1.3

Focus. Passion. Inspiration.



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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Related HR links

Annual and special leave
Adverse weather

Version Control

Version Number	Effective Date	Details of Last Revision
1.0	10/4/19	New Document
1.1	15/9/20	Updated to align with Accessibility Regulations
1.2	27/1/22	Updated links to new Connects
1.3	2/8/22	Moved to accessible template

Equality Impact Assessment:

Prepared by: HR Team

1. Introduction

As part of the High Impact Leadership Programme a group of Senior Managers were tasked to review sickness absence levels across the Council and recommend different approaches which would assist in the reduction of absence levels, building a culture of care and responsibility.

The Group identified a range of initiatives to tackle both short- and long-term absence; Personal Days were identified as a possible solution to tackle short term absence.

A pilot was undertaken within Finance and Corporate Support during May to November 2018, the results were positive; there was a reduction in single day absences and employees benefitted from being able to take one day annual leave at short notice. These findings were reported through the Chief Executives mid-year performance meetings where, the Chief Executive requested that Personal Days be rolled out across the Council.

2. Personal days

In general, employees should submit a request for annual leave to their designated manager in line with service arrangements and in the appropriate format, giving reasonable notice of request. There may, however, be **exceptional** cases where an employee cannot give the appropriate notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

It is recognised that the ability to request annual leave (or, where applicable, flexi leave) at short notice, i.e. on the morning that an employee is due to come into work, may prove useful to employees and managers if it were to avoid what might otherwise be an employee sickness. **However, this would not replace a genuine sickness absence where an employee is unfit to come to work.**

Personal Days allow an employee to take up to three days of their annual leave entitlement (per leave year) at short notice. The needs of the service and the possible costs associated with cover arrangements must be considered by the manager prior to authorisation and there is no guarantee that requests can be accommodated. Employees do not require to provide details of the reason for the request.

Examples of Personal Days

- Unplanned personal or private matters
- Illness of dependent (e.g. whole day is needed to provide care and the paid time off is not covered by Special Leave)
- Feeling under the weather and preferring not to come to work
- Emergency situation (e.g. car/boiler breakdown where employee wants to make repair arrangements)
- Severe weather conditions where employee prefers not to travel (out with the Adverse Weather Policy)

Personal days are **not** an additional entitlement to annual leave but a way of requesting leave at short notice. Personal days are deducted from the employee's annual leave entitlement as normal.

When requesting a Personal Day employees must consider any diary commitments they have for the day and the impact on their workload and colleagues.

Key Points

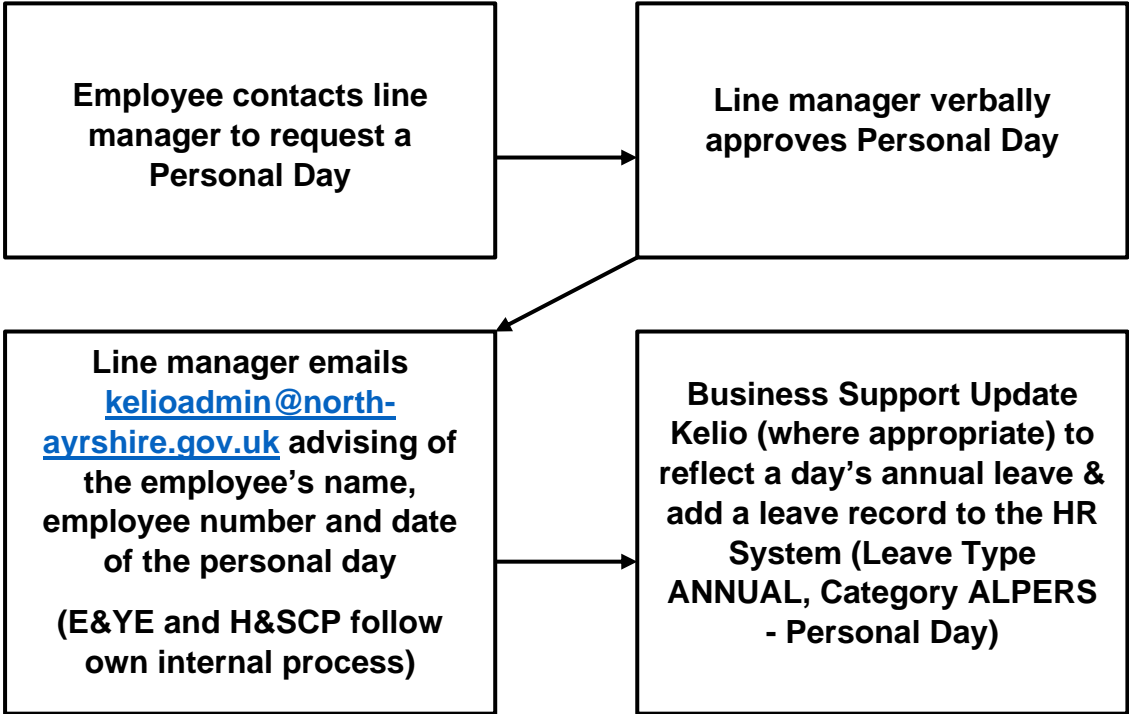
Planned absence is covered in several policies including Annual Leave, Special Leave, Carers Leave and Flexi Leave. Personal day requests are for unplanned, short notice circumstances where an employee can request to use leave for “personal reasons” without having to expand on the reason.

Considering a Request

The decision to agree to a short notice request for a Personal Day rests with the Line Manager. Any decision taken by the Line Manager will not set a precedent. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and will take the needs of service delivery into consideration. It is recognised that not all services lend themselves to personal days. Managers who require to provide replacement cover for a Personal day must balance the difficulties in arranging this cover against the potential need to arrange replacement cover for two occurrences had the employee taken a day sickness absence and then annual leave at a future time (e.g. 1-day cover for Personal Day v 2 days cover - sick leave then annual leave later).

Line managers must ensure that all leave is recorded within the HR Payroll System, this includes the categorisation of annual leave as a Personal Day where appropriate.

3. Process



4. Recording Personal Days

All Personal Days must be recorded with the Council's HR Payroll system. Employee Services will be responsible for recording details for any employees within Democratic Services, People & ICT, Connected Communities, Finance and Place.

Managers within Education and Health & Social Care should follow existing leave recording arrangements within their Directorate to ensure their employee's leave record within the HR Payroll System is updated accordingly.

Details must be recorded within the Leave screen as Leave Type: **ANN** (Annual Leave) and Category: **ALPERS** (Personal Day).

5. Monitoring

To continue to evaluate the impact of Personal Days, a report will be produced monthly for review by Senior Managers. People Services will in addition provide an update to Heads of Service quarterly at Workforce Planning Meetings and six-monthly to Executive Directors and the Chief Executive at Directorate performance meetings.