



FAQs ON URGENT FAMILY LEAVE

Department for Industrial and Employment Relations

Is Urgent Family Leave provided by law, and when does it come into effect?

Yes. Urgent Family Leave is provided by S.L.452.88 – Urgent Family Leave Regulations, this goes in effect 4th April 2025.

What is Urgent Family Leave?

Urgent Family Leave is time off from work on grounds of force majeure for urgent family reasons in cases of sickness or accident making the immediate presence of the employee indispensable.

Who is entitled to take Urgent Family Leave?

All employees who have an employment contract or employment relationship.

Which relatives qualify as family?

Family members who qualify for urgent leave are generally immediate family members, such as parents, children, siblings, spouses, and grandparents.

Does the family need to be living in the same household as the employee?

No, the family member does not need to reside in the same household as the employee.

How do I request urgent leave?

Employees should formally request urgent leave by informing their employer in advance. If prior notice is not possible due to the nature of the urgency, the employee must notify the employer at the earliest opportunity and provide evidence if requested.

How much advance notice is to be given to the employer?

No advance notification is required to be given by the employee except in those cases where it is possible for the employee to give at least twenty-four hours notice of an event which is to take place, and which requires the absence of the employee from the place of work for urgent family reasons.

Can Urgent Family Leave be utilised in hours and not in whole days?

The employer has the right to establish the maximum number of hours of time off from work in each particular case. However, the minimum time should not be less than one hour per case unless there is the specific agreement of the employee.

Is the employer to be given evidence substantiating the reason why urgent leave was utilised?

Yes. The employer has the right to demand such evidence as may be necessary to verify and confirm the request for urgent leave by the employee.

How much urgent family leave is an employee entitled to?

A full-time employee is entitled to 32 hours urgent family leave per year. Part-time and full-time working reduced hours employees are entitled to urgent family leave on a pro rata basis. Pro rata means the proportion that the weekly number of hours for which the part-time employee is engaged bears to the number of weekly hours, excluding overtime, of a comparable whole-time employee.

Is urgent leave paid or unpaid?

Urgent leave is paid by the employer as it is taken from the employee's annual vacation leave and sick leave entitlement.

Are the hours of Urgent Family Leave an extra entitlement?

No. Out of the 32 hours urgent family leave to which a full-time employee is entitled to, the first 16 hours taken as urgent family leave are deducted from the annual vacation leave entitlement of the employee. The second 16 hours taken as urgent family leave are deducted from the annual paid sick leave entitlement of the employee.

What happens once the 32 hours urgent family leave have been utilised?

Once the employee has utilised all his/her hours of urgent family leave then he/she will not be entitled to any more urgent family leave during that same calendar year.

Do other factors qualify as urgency, aside from medical reasons?

Yes, urgent leave can cover other emergencies beyond medical reasons. Urgent leave is defined as leave granted for unforeseen and essential personal matters requiring immediate attention. Where possible, the employee should notify the employer in advance. If prior notification is not possible, the employee must inform the employer as soon as they take urgent leave. The employer may request evidence to support the reason for the leave.

Can I combine urgent leave with other types of leave?

Yes, urgent leave can be combined with other types of leave, provided the employer approves it.

Does Urgent Family Leave apply to cohabiting partners?

To be eligible, the cohabitation must be legally recognised and registered in accordance with CAP 614 – the Cohabitation Act.



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