



# Additional leave purchase scheme

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## Document summary

Eligible employees may apply to purchase additional annual leave, on top of their normal allowance. This document provides information on the application and approval process.

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**About this document:**

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<p><b>Accessibility help</b></p> <p>Zoom in or out by holding down CTRL and turning the mouse wheel. CTRL and click on the table of contents to navigate. Press CTRL and Home key to return to the top of the document Press Alt-left arrow to return to your previous location. References shown in <a href="#">blue text</a> are available on the Intranet and/or Czone. References shown in <a href="#">underlined blue text</a> are hyperlinks to other parts of this document.</p>	

## Additional leave purchase scheme

### Key points

- Eligible employees may apply to purchase additional annual leave, to be taken during the next leave year.
- Line managers and heads of service are responsible for approving additional leave applications, with regard to the business needs of their team or service.
- Once purchased, the cost of additional leave is deducted from the employee's monthly salary payments, in monthly instalments.

### 1. What is the additional leave scheme?

- 1.1. All employees have an annual leave allowance, which entitles them to take time off of work as required throughout the year. However, the Council understands that some employees may find it useful to take additional annual leave, in order to help accommodate outside interests, personal projects, special events or longer periods of travel.
- 1.2. The additional leave scheme provides a framework for employees to purchase annual leave in addition to their normal entitlement. Approval is subject to the business needs of their team or service, and managers may decline requests to purchase additional leave.

### 2. Who is eligible to apply for additional leave?

- 2.1. All ESCC employees can apply to purchase additional annual leave, with the following exceptions:
  - Teachers, schools employees;
  - Employees who have not successfully completed their first probationary review (normally held after 3 months of service).
  - Apprentices or other employees who are required to attend work for a minimum number of hours per year, in order to gain a qualification.
  - Employees for whom bookable annual leave is not a feature of their working arrangements, or who do not have any permanent contractual hours.

### 3. How much additional leave may be applied for?

- 3.1. All leave is purchased in hours.
- 3.2. Employees may normally purchase up to twice their total contracted weekly hours in additional leave. So, a full time employee working 37 hours per week could purchase up to 74 hours of additional leave. For full time employees, one day's annual leave equals 7 hours and 24 minutes.
- 3.3. A part time employee working 15 hours per week could potentially purchase up to 30 hours of additional leave.

- 3.4. Who needs to approve the employee's application will depend on the amount of leave being purchased:
- If the application is for up to the employee's total contracted weekly hours' worth of leave, this can be approved by their line manager.
  - If the application is for an amount which is more than the employee's total contracted weekly hours, the application must also be signed off by the relevant Head of Service.
- 3.5. While the expectation is that employees should not normally be granted more additional leave than the amounts laid out above, Heads of Service may approve greater amounts of leave at their discretion, subject to service need.

#### **4. How is additional leave applied for and approved?**

- 4.1. There is a formal process for applying for additional leave – a copy of the application form is attached in Appendix 2.
- 4.2. Where possible, employees are encouraged to apply for additional leave in advance of the start of a new leave year. As standard, an employee's leave year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.
- 4.3. As part of the application process, employees must state the number of hours additional leave they would like to apply for. However, at this stage, employees do not need to state the specific dates this leave will be taken.
- 4.4. Line managers/Heads of Service have final discretion to approve or decline requests for additional leave. Managers may agree to approve only a proportion of the hours an employee has applied for. For example, an employee might apply for 37 hours of additional leave, but their line manager may choose to only approve 15. In these instances, the line manager should seek written confirmation that the employee still wishes to purchase the lower amount of leave.
- 4.5. When considering additional leave applications, managers must ensure that they apply a fair and consistent approach to all applications.
- 4.6. In approving or declining applications, the manager/Head of Service's decision is final – there is no right of referral or appeal.
- 4.7. Once all applications have been considered and approved as appropriate, line managers must submit these to the payroll department.
- 4.8. A flow chart, illustrating the process for applying and approving additional leave, is included in Appendix 1.

#### **5. Using additional leave**

- 5.1. Once approved, the employee's annual leave card should be updated to show the amount of additional leave approved, and the total leave field should be amended as appropriate. An annual leave card template is available on the intranet – this includes a field for recording additional leave.
- 5.2. The process for booking time off, and carrying over any unused additional leave is the same as for standard annual leave, as detailed in the Annual Leave policy. Employees are therefore advised not to pay for any holidays, travel or similar until their chosen leave dates have been formally agreed by their line manager.

- 5.3. As per the Council's Annual Leave policy, employees are expected to use their full entitlement of standard annual leave throughout the leave year, as this can only be carried over in exceptional circumstances.

## **6. Paying for additional leave**

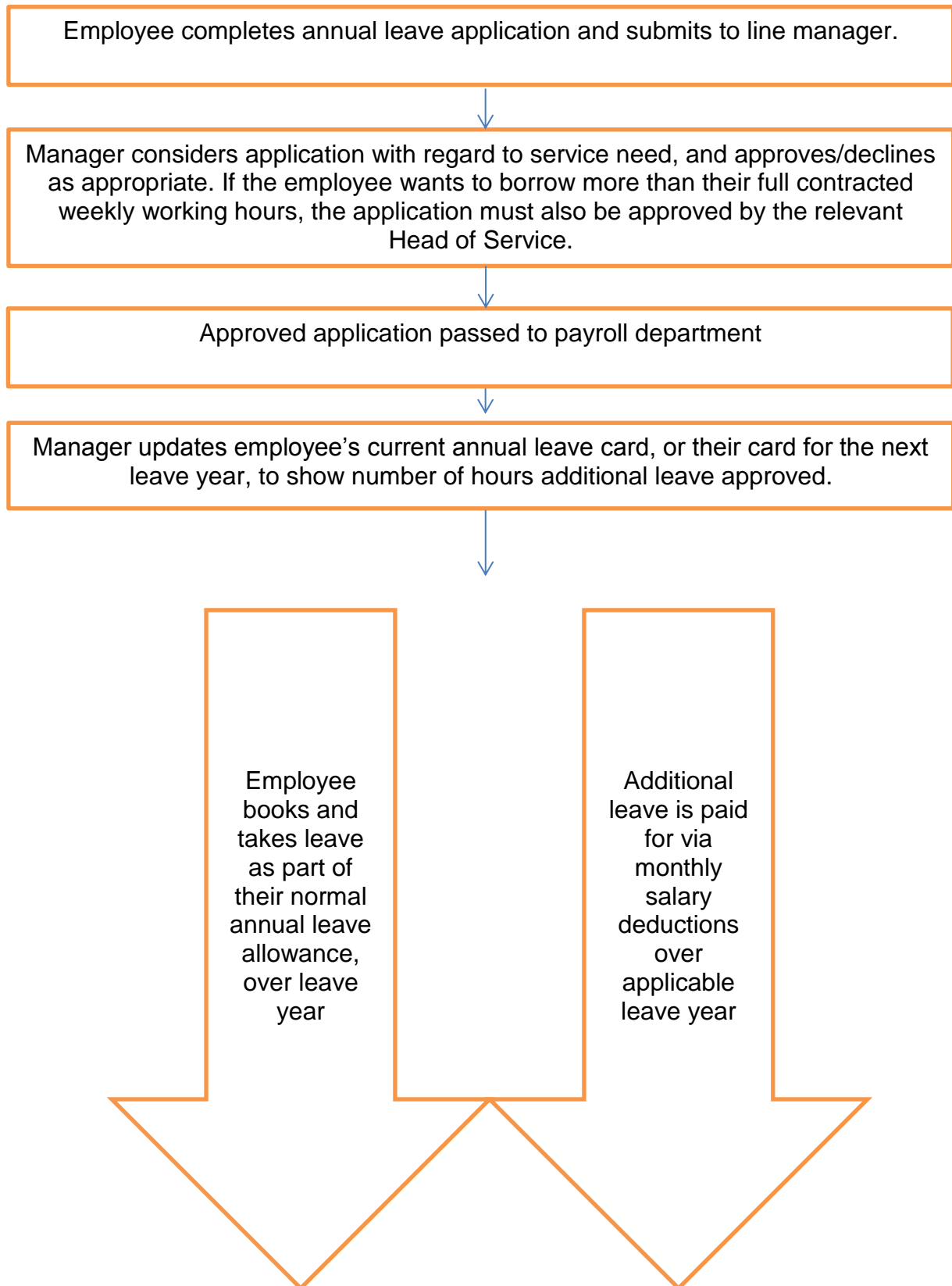
- 6.1. Additional leave is paid for by taking monthly deductions from the employee's salary. All additional leave must be paid for within the same leave year as it is intended to be taken in. As standard, an employees' leave year runs from 1st April to 31 March.
- 6.2. For example, an employee might apply in February, to take additional leave during the next leave year beginning in April. In this example, the total cost of the leave would be spread over 12 equal monthly deductions, with the first being taken in April and the last being taken in March.
- 6.3. Alternatively, an employee might apply in December for additional leave to be taken during the current leave year. The cost of this additional leave would therefore be spread over the remaining three months of the current leave year, with the first deduction taken in January and the last taken in March.
- 6.4. Additional leave is purchased per hour, at the same rate as the employee's hourly salary. An example table and leave purchase calculator, showing how much employees can expect to pay for additional leave, is available on the intranet.
- 6.5. As the cost of additional leave is deducted from the employee's gross salary, it is not subject to income tax or national insurance.
- 6.6. Once the application is processed by the payroll department, the value of the employee's monthly deductions is fixed. This means that, regardless of any changes to the employee's salary over the leave year, their monthly deductions will remain the same.
- 6.7. If an employee is absent from work for an extended period, and is only in receipt of statutory pay, or is unpaid, their monthly deductions will be suspended. These will then resume upon their return to work, until all remaining deductions have been repaid.
- 6.8. If a full time employee purchases additional leave, and subsequently moves to part time hours, they retain their existing entitlement to any leave already purchased, and this may be used as appropriate to their new working pattern.
- 6.9. As with standard annual leave, when an employee leaves the Council, their line manager should inform the payroll department of any additional leave they have taken, or still have to take. The payroll department will then calculate the appropriate refund or deduction from the employee's final salary payment. This same approach applies if the employee moves to a term-time only role, or another working arrangement which does not feature bookable annual leave.
- 6.10. In principle, once purchased additional leave cannot be refunded.

## **7. Effect on other entitlements**

- 7.1. The cost of purchasing additional leave is deducted from employee's gross salary. This means that for the purposes of calculating entitlements such as pension, maternity/paternity and sick pay, the employee's salary will be reduced.

- 7.2. In most cases, the impact of such a reduction will be minimal. However, employees are advised to speak to the payroll team if they have any questions before they submit their application.
- 7.3. Employees in receipt of other state benefits such as tax credits, are also advised to check the impact that purchasing additional leave might have on these, before submitting their application.

## Appendix 1 – Additional leave application process



## Appendix 2 – Additional leave application form

Part 1 – to be completed by the employee			
Name			
Job title			
Department			
Personnel number			
Number of additional hours <b>requested (Note – for a full time employee, a standard day is 7 hours and 24 minutes.</b>		hours	minutes
<p><b><u>Declaration</u></b></p> <p>By submitting this application, I agree to purchase the amount of additional leave indicated above, subject to approval from my line manager. I understand that this will be deducted from my salary via 12 monthly deductions, at the rate detailed in the Additional Leave Purchase scheme document. In the event that I leave employment with ESCC, I understand that my final salary payment will be adjusted to reflect any additional leave taken and not yet paid for.</p>			
Signature		Date	
Part 2 – to be completed by the line manager			
Number of additional hours <b>approved</b>		hours	minutes
Line manager's signature		Date	
Part 3 – to be completed by the Head of Service if more than the employee's total contracted weekly hours have been requested			
Head of service signature		Date	