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KNOW



Working carers have a legal entitlement to take up to **5 days carers' leave per year** to provide or arrange care for someone, usually a dependant, with a long-term care need. By law, this leave does not have to be paid but supportive employers can provide this as paid time.



The carers' leave entitlement is **for 5 days in a rolling 12-month period**. The days do not need to be taken consecutively and can also be taken in half day blocks. You also have the right to request flexible working arrangements from your employer.



Carers UK research found that **22% of carers in paid employment said they had been treated unfairly or unfavourably** at work.



**Workplace Campaigns**  
Can your union branch start a workplace campaign which asks for mandatory carer support training for staff and managers? And to call for paid carer leave?



As union reps, can you investigate whether carers' passports are being used in your workplace and how effective they are? Workers may have to balance caring for someone with their full-time job. Some people may not realise they are doing care roles e.g. when looking after adults or neighbours, and should have rights.



Negotiating a recognised carer's advocate or support network in the workplace could be one way to raise the profile of carers' rights in your workplace, union branch and wider community.



## Know your legal rights

There is primary and secondary legislation supporting the rights of carers.

BRISTOL  
**WOMEN'S**  
VOICE



**1. Carer's Leave Act 2023**  
amends Employment Rights Act 1996 and inserts sections 80J–80N ERA 1996 to create the right to carer leave in law.

**2. Carer's Leave Regulations 2024** – details the 5-days entitlement and practical provisions for taking the leave.

**3. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – section 2(1)** stipulates that employers must

ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of employees. 'Welfare' includes mental health, which could include carers' increased stress, exhaustion or burnout, and if carer's leave is refused, especially if the employee has notified the employer of caring pressures.



**4. Equality Act 2010:** Section 13 & section 6: discrimination by association, e.g. if the employee cares for a disabled person, and they are treated unfavourably because of that association or,



**Section 19:** any policy that flatly refuses flexible working and indirectly discriminates against women, as they are statistically more likely to be primary carers.

**Section 15:** if the employee is disabled themselves and a refusal of carer leave exacerbates this disability.



**Carer's Leave Benefits Everyone:** There are several benefits for both employers and employees.

**Productivity improvement:** Companies implementing carer support report a 35% improvement in productivity and a 43% reduction in unplanned absences.



**Employee sentiment:** 80% of carers say that 5–10 days of paid leave would help them juggle work and care.

Industry trends: 44% of UK workplaces surveyed offer between 1 - 10 days of paid leave, often exceeding the legal minimum (which is unpaid in some regions).



**Return on investment:** For every £1 spent on supporting caregivers (e.g. providing paid/unpaid leave or referrals), employers can save an estimated £2 in reduced sickness absence and improved productivity.



**Access the PCS article to learn more:**



**Bristol Women's Voice's Caring Economy**

