

Time Off For Personal Appointments

In my last newsletter I explained the Bank's policies on Sickness Absence, Compassionate and Emergency leave and Time off for Personal Reasons.

The latter in particular, which deals with paid time off to attend Doctors and Dentists appointments, has uncovered a practice within parts of Insurance which runs counter to agreed Bank policy. In a clear breach of the Bank's rules and practices some managers have told staff that the Bank's policy does not apply within Insurance and that they are required to work additional hours to cover any time taken to attend appointments.

Let me make it crystal clear: Insurance is part of the Bank and the terms and conditions agreed centrally with LTU apply to all staff in their entirety and are not at the whim of individual managers. Ignoring Bank policy is not only likely to constitute a breach of a member's contract of employment but is also a flagrant breach

of the Bank's rules and practices, which is a serious disciplinary offence.

Insurance has reiterated to LTU that it strives to works within Group Policy and takes seriously any instances where staff have been inappropriately treated. We are working with Insurance to ensure that members who have wrongly been made to work back hours are appropriately compensated.

Any member who has been made to work additional hours for attending Doctors, Dentists or Opticians appointments are entitled to be reimbursed for the additional hours they have worked and should contact the Union's Advice Team on 01234 262868 for advice on how to proceed.

Below I reiterate the Bank's agreed policy on time off for personal reasons.

The Bank's policy covering time off for personal appointments is separate from other policies

covering ordinary holidays or other leave for compassionate, emergency or other purposes. It can be best summarised as follows, which is a paraphrasing of what is set out in the staff manual.

- **As far as practicable, doctors', dentists' and other appointments of a personal nature should be made outside the normal working day. If a staff member has to attend an appointment during the working day, time off may be granted by his or her line manager. Provided these occasions are kept to a minimum, they will normally be paid.**

On that basis time off for normal check-ups with Doctors, Dentists, Opticians or the like should be allowed as paid time off.

In circumstances where an employee is going through a long period of treatment where regular and frequent appointments are required the Sickness Absence Policy should apply instead. In no circumstances should staff have to work unpaid overtime to make up the time spent attending such appointments.

Members requiring advice or assistance on these or any other issues, or who want clarification on anything they are told at work, should contact the Union's 24 Hour Advice Line on 01234 262868 to speak to a full-time official for independent, professional advice and guidance.

NICK HOLT
Assistant General Secretary

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