

Employment Policy

Non Christian Religious Festival Leave Policy

Date approved by Board:	14 March 2005
Date approved by TCF:	21 March 2005
Review by date:	
Responsible Manager:	Director of Human Resources

Policy Statement

The Trust is committed to delivering work life balance through a range of employee leave/time off policies and flexible working arrangements. As part of this the Trust recognises that whilst the Christian religious festivals of Christmas and Easter are official bank holidays in the UK the main religious festivals of other religions are normal working days. To ensure equity and to enable staff of other faiths to celebrate their main religious festivals, managers are encouraged to give consideration to annual leave requests from these staff, unless service provision would be demonstrably compromised.

The Trust will circulate information, on an annual basis, identifying dates of the main non Christian religious festivals.

This policy has been agreed with the Trust Consultative Forum and approved by the Trust Board.

Procedure

Who is eligible for this leave?

It applies to **all** employees of Weston Area Health Trust (WAHT) who:

- are actively/demonstrably pursuing a non Christian religion or belief

What is the entitlement?

Non-Christian religious festival leave is either annual leave and/or unpaid time off for attendance at or observance of special religious holidays/festivals.

Up to 3 days of your existing annual entitlement may be granted where you wish to take time off for religious festival purposes. Requests for extended periods of annual leave (over 2 weeks) or short term unpaid leave to attend pilgrimages, overseas religious festivals etc will be sympathetically considered in line with the Trust's Work Life Balance and Equality and Diversity Policies.

Any requests made for this leave should give plenty of advance notice so that your manager can accommodate these with balancing other requests and service needs.

How do I apply?

You will need to complete the Trust's 'Application for Leave' form. A copy of this form can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

How will this policy be monitored and reviewed?

The Human Resources Department will provide updates on the take up of this leave at both Trust Board and Trust Consultative Forum meetings. Information provided will be 'anonymised'.

This policy/procedure may be reviewed at the request of management or the recognised Trade Unions by giving 4 weeks notice of the request and the reason(s) for the review.