



ANNUAL LEAVE POLICY

Policy Statement

This policy sets out employees' entitlement to annual leave and the Museum's rules on taking annual leave.

This policy applies to all permanent and fixed-term employees.

Entitlement

Full time employees are entitled to 33 days annual leave inclusive of public/bank holidays. For part time employees these will be prorated. Individual contracts of employment will detail an employee's personal annual leave entitlement.

The Museum's annual leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March. The Museum understands the importance of a good work-life balance, therefore employees are encouraged to take all of their annual leave entitlement within the current leave year.

Requesting Annual Leave

Hourly paid employees must request annual leave through Planday. Line managers will approve or deny annual leave requests through Planday and employees will receive a notification to confirm if their request has been approved or declined.

Salaried employees must request annual leave through Myhrtoolkit. Line managers will approve or deny annual leave requests through Myhrtoolkit and employees will receive a notification to confirm if their request has been approved or declined.

All holiday dates must be approved in advance by the employee's line manager. As much notice as possible of proposed holiday dates must be given to the line manager to ensure adequate staffing coverage at all times. Such notice must be at least twice the number of days that the employee wishes to take as annual leave.

In order to manage staffing and rota requirements, employees are requested to provide at least 8 weeks' notice of any annual leave equivalent to 2 consecutive weeks or more.

Employees should not make any firm travel or accommodation arrangements etc. until they have received confirmation that their request for leave has been granted. There may be circumstances where the Museum cannot grant the request, such as operational/staffing requirements. The Museum is not liable for any loss incurred by an employee, such as lost deposits, if they incur costs and make commitments prior to receiving confirmation.

The Museum will make every effort to accept requests for annual leave but must have regard to its operations and ensuring there is sufficient cover for all work to be undertaken. Where there are conflicting annual leave requirements, priority will be given to the employee whose request was received first, subject to the needs of the Museum.

All leave must be pre-authorised by the Museum. Taking leave without authorisation will be considered a gross misconduct offence. Gross misconduct offences may result in dismissal without notice.

Holiday Pay

During annual leave, employees will receive their normal pay.

For front line hourly paid employees whose hours of work differ during operational peak and non-peak periods, holiday pay will be based on contracted operational peak hours throughout the year regardless of whether the Museum is operating peak or non-peak hours.

Public and Bank Holidays

The Museum recognises public/bank holidays, the dates of which vary from year to year. All recognised public and bank holidays are included in an employee's annual leave entitlement.

As the Museum is a year-round operation, there may be occasions where employees are required to work on statutory holidays. In these circumstances employees will be allocated an alternative day off to be taken from their annual leave entitlement.

There will be occasions whereby the Museum is closed on statutory holidays such as Christmas Day and Boxing Day. In these circumstances employees will be required to use one of their annual leave days, if the statutory holiday falls on a contractual working day and the employee wishes to be paid for that day. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they have sufficient annual leave entitlement to cover this.

Museum Requirements

The Museum may reasonably require employees to take annual leave and, if this is the case, appropriate notification will be given and the reasons why will be explained to the employee(s) at the time.

The Museum may ask an employee to cancel any previously agreed leave. There may be various reasons for this, such as operational or staffing issues, or business commitments that require the employee's presence. The Museum recognises the inconvenience that this may cause an employee and, therefore, understands that the employee may refuse this request.

Holiday Entitlement for New Starters

Where an employee joins the Museum part way through a holiday year, they will be entitled to a proportion of their holiday entitlement based on the period of their employment in that holiday year.

During the employee's first year of service, they will not normally be allowed, unless otherwise agreed by their line manager, to take more holiday than they have actually accrued at the time holiday is taken. In this case, the employee and the line manager will agree how any time off in excess of accrued leave will be covered.

During the recruitment process, prospective employees may be asked whether they have any leave booked that would take place after commencement of employment. If the individual is recruited, the Museum will normally allow such leave to be taken. In the instance that the leave exceeds the employee's holiday entitlement, a combination of paid and unpaid leave may be agreed.

Entitlement during the employee's first year is calculated monthly in advance at the rate of one-twelfth of the full year's entitlement.

Sickness During Holiday

Where an employee falls sick or is injured while on holiday, the Museum will allow the employee to transfer to sick leave and take the holiday at a later time.

This policy is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of incapacity must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner (where it exceeds 7 calendar days).
- The employee must contact the Museum (by telephone if possible) as soon as they know that there will be a period of incapacity during a holiday.

- The employee must submit a written request no later than 10 calendar days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that the employee wishes to take at another time.
- Where the employee is overseas when they fall ill or are injured, evidence must still be produced that the employee was ill by way of either a medical certificate or proof of a claim on an insurance policy for medical treatment received at the overseas location.
- Where the employee fulfils all of the above conditions, the Museum will transfer the same number of day's annual leave as the number of holiday days lost due to sickness or injury.

If an employee is ill or is injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, the Museum will agree to the employee postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with the Museum's Sickness Absence Management policy. The employee must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday and provide a doctor's note (where the absence exceeds 7 calendar days).

An employee must request to take any reinstated holiday in accordance with this policy and should endeavour to take the reinstated holiday in the same holiday year in which it was accrued.

However, where an employee has good reason for not being able to do so, the Museum will allow the employee to carry that leave forward into the next holiday year. The Museum may require an employee to take all or part of their reinstated holiday on particular days and it is not required to provide the employee with any minimum period of notice to do this, although it will aim to provide reasonable notice.

Holiday Entitlement During Sick Leave

An employee on sick leave may apply to take their accrued holiday entitlement whilst absent due to sickness. The holiday must be approved in accordance with this policy. An employee who is absent on sick leave will continue to accrue their full statutory holiday entitlement.

If sickness means that an employee cannot take their full leave entitlement in a leave year, the employee may be able to carry forward some of the leave to the next leave year. This is usually limited to a maximum of four weeks leave, minus any leave already taken (including public holidays).

Family Leave

Employees may become entitled to either maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave. Entitlement to family leave is in addition to the employee's annual leave entitlement.

Annual leave will continue to accrue during periods of family leave and, as part of a pre-leave meeting that will be arranged between the employee and their line manager, a discussion will take place covering the taking of annual leave around family leave.

Untaken Leave

The Museum encourages employees to use all of their annual leave entitlement each year so that they have the opportunity to rest. Employees should ensure they take at least 4 weeks annual leave in each leave year.

Ordinarily, untaken leave cannot be carried forward into the next leave year and will be lost. In exceptional circumstances a maximum of 1 contractual week may be carried over from one holiday year to the next. The total holiday entitlement inclusive of carry over cannot exceed 38 days for full time employees or the equivalent for part time employees (irrespective of contractual holiday entitlement). In such circumstances, any holiday carried over must be taken by no later than the end of June, unless otherwise agreed with an employee's line manager.

Approval must be sought from an employee's line manager and the People & Culture Team if an employee wishes to carry forward any annual leave into the next leave year. Employees should complete a Carry Over of Annual Leave Request Form (available on the Museum's intranet) outlining the reason for their request, and must submit this to their line manager 4 weeks prior to the end of the current holiday year. The Museum has sole discretion to permit or decline this request.

Examples of exceptional circumstances may include;

- Where the Museum's operational requirements have prevented the approval of an annual leave request.
- Where holiday is postponed or cancelled at Museum's request.
- To support a formal study programme e.g. degree, masters.
- To undertake Museum approved Trustee or equivalent duties.
- For a significant event e.g. wedding, baby, extended holiday to go abroad to see family, honeymoon.

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other exceptional circumstances. Requests to carry over annual leave will be reviewed on a case by case basis and it remains at the Museum's discretion to accept or decline such requests.

Ordinarily, the Museum will not permit payment in lieu of annual leave unless exceptional circumstances apply. In every case, payment in lieu of the statutory minimum entitlement will not be permitted.

Holiday Pay on Termination of Employment

When employment terminates part way through a leave year, the employee's leave entitlement will be recalculated on a pro-rata basis. This will determine the amount of leave the employee would be entitled to for the period of service during the leave year.

Any outstanding leave accrued but untaken will be paid to the employee in their final pay. This is subject to the right of the Museum for the employee to take their outstanding leave during their notice period.

If the employee has exceeded their pro-rata entitlement to holidays at the time they leave employment, this will be classed as an overpayment and an amount to cover this will be deducted from the employee's final pay.

Buying and Selling Annual Leave

The Museum operates a discretionary Buying and Selling Annual Leave Scheme. Further details can be found in the Buying and Selling Annual Leave Scheme rules.