

# CARERS' RIGHTS AT WORK

**Working for Carers is a London-wide project supporting unpaid carers to move closer to employment.**

## Who is this for?

Unpaid carers who are job-searching, starting a new job, or already in employment.

## Overview of carers' rights

You have statutory rights if you are balancing work and caring for someone, including

- The right for time off to deal with emergencies involving dependants.
- The right to take parental leave.
- The right to request flexible working.
- Protection from discrimination.

Carers also have the right to an assessment of their needs. Contact your local council about organising an assessment.

You may also be entitled to benefits if you are not working or on a low income, such as Carer's Allowance, Universal Credit and Income Support.



## Flexible working

If you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks in a row, you have the statutory right to request flexible working.

Examples of flexible working include:

- Working from home.
- Starting/finishing work earlier or later.
- Changing your shift patterns.
- Reducing your hours of work.

You can only make a statutory request once in a 12 month period. See **Working for Carers Factsheet 7** for more information about flexible working.

If you are looking after someone who is elderly or disabled, you are **protected from discrimination or harassment** because you are 'associated' with someone protected from direct discrimination by the law.

If you have experienced discrimination in the workplace you should consider making an informal complaint to your employer, before deciding to raise a formal grievance. You may then decide to escalate the complaint to an independent organisation or take legal action. Contact ACAS Early Conciliation before making an employment tribunal claim.

**Working for Carers** is a London-wide project that supports unpaid carers and former carers, aged 25 or over, to move closer to employment. To find out more visit [carers.org/workingforcarers](http://carers.org/workingforcarers) or contact your local carers centre.



## Taking time off work

You may need to take time off work because of your caring responsibilities:

**Time off for dependants:** Employees have the statutory right to take unpaid time off work to deal with emergencies involving dependants. The length of time must be agreed with your employer, but is normally no more than one or two days.

**Parental leave:** If you have been working somewhere for at least a year, you can take unpaid leave to look after a child under the age of 18. You can take 18 weeks leave per child in total, and a maximum of four weeks per year. You must give 21 days notice.

**Flexible working:** If you need to take regular time off for your caring role, you should consider making a flexible working request, for example changing your hours or work pattern.

Some organisations offer paid time off for dependants and/or time off for caring responsibilities. Check your contract, staff handbook, or your employer's HR policies.



## Further information

### **Carers UK**

[www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/work-and-career](http://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/work-and-career)

### **Flexible working:**

[www.gov.uk/flexible-working](http://www.gov.uk/flexible-working)

### **ACAS early conciliation:**

[www.acas.org.uk/early-conciliation](http://www.acas.org.uk/early-conciliation)

### **Carer's Assessment:**

[www.carers.org/carers-assessment/carers-assessment](http://www.carers.org/carers-assessment/carers-assessment)

### **Carer's Allowance:**

[www.gov.uk/carers-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance)

### **Carers Trust:**

[www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) – find your local carers centre

### **Working for Carers:**

[www.carers.org/workingforcarers](http://www.carers.org/workingforcarers)

## Your notes

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