



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



## National Ambulance Service (NAS)

(All Divisions)

### Policy for Structured Leave & Entitlements

Document reference number	<b>NASPO36</b>	Document developed by	Robert Morton and updated by NAS HR
Revision number	<b>2</b>	Document approved by	NAS Leadership Team
Approval date	<b>20<sup>th</sup> January 2010</b>	Responsibility for implementation	Director of the National Ambulance Service
Revision date	<b>31<sup>st</sup> December 2019</b>	Responsibility for review and audit	ACAO in Each Area

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## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 Leave is an important part of work life balance; equally the good management of leave by the individual and the Manager is essential to the health and safety of the employee and the National Ambulance Service (NAS)

## **2.0 Purpose**

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a uniform and equitable approach to the management and calculation of leave and bank holiday entitlements across the NAS

## **3.0 Scope**

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all Operational (EMT, Paramedic, Advanced Paramedic, Paramedic Supervisors) and Control (Emergency Call Takers & dispatchers including Clinical Nurse Specialists and Supervisor) staff entitled to the accrual of leave as outlined in the HSE Corporate Employee Relations guidelines.

## **4.0 Legislation/Other Related Policies**

- A. HSE Terms and Conditions Manual
- B. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- C. Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997
- D. S.I. No: 10/1999 Organisation of Working Time (Public Holiday) Regulations, 1999
- E. S.I. No: 475/1997 Organisation of Working time (Determination of Pay for Holidays) Regulations, 1997
- F. Holidays (Employees) Act 1973

## **5.0 Glossary of Terms and Definitions**

### **5.1 Leave Year**

- 5.1.1 The leave year is from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March

### **5.2 Calculation of leave entitlement in hours**

- 5.2.1 Employees have varying weekly hours of attendance or work shifts of varying lengths; consequently, all leave entitlement should be converted into hours
- 5.2.2 This is calculated by dividing the normal weekly working hours for the grade by 5, and multiplying this figure by the annual leave entitlement for the grade. e.g an employee who works a 39 hour week is entitled to 179.4 hours per annum, i.e 23 (days) / 7.8 (hours) =179.4 hours.
- 5.2.3 Each time an employee takes annual leave, the number of hours s/he would normally have been rostered to work on the day(s) taken should be aggregated to determine the amount of annual leave taken.

5.2.4 Leave hours are defined as leave taken on hours where the staff member was due to work (Working hours).

## **6.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Line Manager Responsibility**

6.1.1 Monitor and ensure that individuals are taking their leave at regular intervals.

6.1.2 To ensure compliant with the protocol on the requesting/granting of leave.

6.1.3 Ensure effective management and regular re-conciliation of annual leave records.

### **6.2 Staff Responsibility**

6.2.1 Ensure that their leave is planned in advance and taken at regular intervals throughout the leave year.

6.2.2 Comply with the leave application process.

## **7.0 Procedure/Protocol/Guideline**

### **7.1 Entitlement**

7.1.1 The annual leave entitlement for Operational and Control grades commencing in the 2007/2008 leave year is 23 days (179.4 hours)

7.1.2 The annual leave entitlement for existing staff in Operational and Control grades in the Eastern and Southern Divisions who were employed in those grades prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 commencing in the leave year 2007/2008, will be 24 days (187.2) hours. This arrangement is on a personal to holder basis.

7.1.3 In the interests of standardisation, the annual leave entitlement for all new recruits to the National Ambulance Service from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 onwards will be 23 days (179.4 hours.)

### **7.2 Annual leave & Public Holidays**

7.2.1 In addition to annual leave entitlement, some employees may be entitled to 9 paid Public Holidays (Bank Holidays). In the case of all part time staff this entitlement is pro rata to the full time allowance of 9 days.

7.2.2 The calculation of this entitlement is always proportional to the number of basic contracted hours worked.

7.2.3 Further Bank Holiday details are contained at section 8.0.

7.2.4 Annual Leave will be taken in periods of not less than 1 shift.

7.2.5 Annual Leave entitlement for part years must be pro rata to the number of months in the leave year since joining.

7.2.6 Annual leave is calculated based on 1/12<sup>th</sup> for each complete calendar month (subject to the terms of the paragraph above).

7.2.7 The Bank Holiday hours entitlement will be based on the number of Bank holidays remaining in the current leave year from the date of joining.

### **7.3 Entitlement on changing contracted hours**

- 7.3.1 Where staff change their contracted hours, this will result in a recalculation of their annual leave entitlement based on completed months on the new and the old contracted hours to give the full year entitlement.
- 7.3.2 Where staff change their contracted hours part way through a month they should not lose entitlement. The entitlement for the month in which the change takes place will be calculated on the basic weekly contracted hours that they predominantly worked for that month.

### **7.4 Entitlement on Leaving**

- 7.4.1 Staff who leave the NAS will receive 1/12<sup>th</sup> of their annual leave entitlement for each complete calendar month worked in the current leave year, less any annual leave taken plus the benefit of any outstanding Bank holiday hours for Bank Holidays that have occurred on the leave year prior to the date of leaving.
- 7.4.2 Where total leave taken exceeds the earned total leave entitlement an appropriate deduction will be made from final monies.

## **8.0 Public Holidays (“Bank Holidays”)**

### **8.1 Designated Days**

- 8.1.1 A Public Holiday shall be defined as a period of normal duty that starts within the period of 24 hours from midnight to midnight.
- 8.1.2 The 9 General Public Holidays in the Leave Year are:
  - A. Easter Monday
  - B. May Day
  - C. June Bank Holiday
  - D. August Bank Holiday
  - E. October Bank Holiday
  - F. Christmas Day
  - G. St. Stephen’s Day
  - H. New Year’s Day
  - I. St. Patrick’s day

- 8.1.3 When a Public Holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the following Monday or Tuesday is designated as a Public Holiday for leave purposes.

### **8.2 Entitlement**

- 8.2.1 NAS staff who works a ‘5 over 7’ roster usually receive nine additional days (9 x 7.8 hours) annual leave in lieu of their liability to work on public holidays.
- 8.2.2 In the case of part time staff, this will be a proportionate number of Bank Holiday hours based on their basic weekly contracted hours.

8.2.4 The total leave entitlement is calculated by adding their annual leave entitlement to the Bank Holiday hours entitlement.

## 9.0 Structured Leave Arrangements

9.1 A structured system for annual leave applies to all Operational and Control grades. The above grades are required to take a minimum block of their annual leave entitlements during the Summer, Autumn and Spring period as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> April to 30 <sup>th</sup> September	2 weeks	78 hours min (over 2 week period)
1 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	1 week	39 hours min (over 1 week period)
1 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> March	1 week	39 hours min (over 1 week period)
	Total	156 hours minimum

9.2 In the context of varied and diverse shift patterns (8,10,12 hour shifts etc) across the NAS, some minor local variation may be required in relation to the number of hours to be taken in each of the two smaller blocks and the one larger block, however, the minimum of 156 hours must be taken in 3 blocks.

9.3 The remaining balance of annual leave may be taken in periods of less than 39 hours, subject to the exigencies of the service and available cover.

9.4 A maximum of one person for every five staff (**20%**) in each location will be allowed leave at any one time, subject to the exigencies of the service and available cover.

9.5 Block periods will be specified locally by the relevant Line Manager or Line Supervisor and booked on a first come, first served basis.

## 10.0 Leave Application Timeframes

10.1 Block Leave requests should be made on the new leave application form well in advance as follows:

- A. Summer 1<sup>st</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> February
- B. Autumn 1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> August
- C. Spring 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> November

- 10.2 Single days should normally be booked two weeks in advance or at a minimum of 48 hours. The use of the minimum timeframe is expected to be the “**exception**” rather than the norm.
- 10.3 Staff are cognisant that routine application at the minimum timeframe (48 hours) may adversely affect the regularisation of hours for unrostered staff and inhibit/limit the approval of leave by those staff with designated authority to approve leave requests.
- 10.4 The Line Manager or Line Supervisor responsible for the approval of annual leave has the discretion to allocate annual leave periods where the above personnel do not apply for annual leave in accordance with these timeframes.

### **11.0 Carry Over of Leave**

- 11.1 The NAS expects that within the annual leave year staff should be provided with the opportunity to take all of their annual leave. In **exceptional** circumstances up to one week of basic contracted hours may be carried over to the following year, with the agreement of the Senior Manager following written application outlining the reason (see appendix IV). Individual exceptions may occur following agreement between the staff member and relevant manager.
- 11.2 Approval to carry over annual leave hours will be granted on the basis that the hours carried over are availed of within 6 months of the commencement of the new leave year. Individual exceptions may occur following agreement between the staff member and relevant manager.
- 11.3 This leave must be taken in addition to the leave that must be booked under structured annual leave arrangements.
- 11.4 Where staff have been prevented from taking their leave due to service demands then, again, the amount carried forward will be expressed in contracted hours and this should not exceed one week.
- 11.5 The Manager should explore the reasons why annual leave entitlement has not been taken and ensure measures are agreed ( on individual basis) to avoid the need to carry over annual leave in the following year.

### **12.0 Sickness Occurring During Annual Leave**

- 12.1 A member of staff who is absent on unpaid sick leave (exhausted paid sick leave benefit) will not accrue annual leave entitlement during the absence.
- 12.2 If a member of staff falls sick whilst on annual leave, and where a certificate (medical) is provided, the period covered will be treated as sick leave, allowing the member of staff to take the previously accrued annual leave another time.

### **13.0 Extended Period of Annual Leave**

- 13.1 There are occasions when a member of staff may wish to or need to take extended periods of annual leave in excess of their entitlement.

13.2 This must be discussed with the relevant Manager. Such requests should not be unreasonably refused by a Manager. However, the Manager should seek to ensure that the individual has regular planned annual leave/time out throughout the rest of the annual leave year and that it does not negatively impact on service provision or requests by other staff.

#### **14.0 Unpaid Leave**

14.1 There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for a Manager to allow an individual to take unpaid leave.

14.2 For Example:

- A. To enable the member of staff to take an extended period of annual leave.
- B. If a member of staff has just started with the NAS, and has a pre-booked holiday for which they would not have enough leave entitlement

#### **15.0 Special Leave (Personal Crisis and Emergencies)**

15.1 The HSE has Special Leave Policies which covers for example:

- A. Carer's Leave
- B. Force Majeure
- C. Paternity Leave
- D. Bereavement Leave

15.2 Where a member of staff finds themselves in an emergency, they may, in the first instance, be able to take advantage of special leave rather than need to use their annual leave.

15.3 Refer to the relevant Special Leave Policy.

#### **16.0 Implementation Plan**

16.1 This policy will be circulated electronically to all Officers, all Supervisors and Staff.

16.2 This policy will be placed in hardcopy in each Division's Policy Manual in each Ambulance Station and National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) for ease of retrieval and reference.

16.3 Each CAO will ensure that the Officer responsible for updating Policy Manuals will return the Confirmation Form to NAS Headquarters to confirm document circulation to all staff.



## 17.0 Revision and Audit

- 17.1 This policy will be reviewed informally on an on-going basis and formally every three years or when necessary following changes in procedures and/or legislation.
- 17.2 The Human Resources Department has the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy. Revisions, amendments or alterations to the policy can only be implemented after consideration and approval by the Assistant National Director, following consultation with the relevant Unions.
- 17.3 Appropriate monitoring of annual leave should be undertaken at both a local (e.g station) and strategic (i.e Division) level in the NAS to identify circumstances that would suggest excessive or unusual trends in the taking of annual leave and to ensure compliance with the working time directive.
- 17.4 Reconciliation of location records with Divisional Headquarters records should be reviewed on a monthly basis by a designated officer.
- 17.5 Operational Management Teams will review compliance with this Policy at regular intervals.
- 17.6 Formally, compliance issues will be reviewed through the National Ambulance Service Partnership Forum.
- 17.7 It is the responsibility of Line Managers/Line Supervisors responsible for the approval of annual leave to report difficulties with granting leave or issues around compliance.

### Revision History:

(This captures any changes that are made to a SOP when it has been revised. This may be placed at the back or close to the front of the document according to local preference.)

No	Revision No	Date	Section Amended	Approved by
1	2	30/01/2017	3.1, 7.2.1	NAS HR

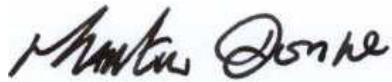
## 18.0 References

18.1 National Framework Agreement – Structured Leave Arrangements

## 19.0 Appendices

- Appendix I – Policy Guidance and Examples
- Appendix II – Leave Application Record Sheet
- Appendix III – Application to Carry over Annual Leave  
[http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/Resources/HR\\_Forms/HR\\_108\\_r\\_Carry\\_Over\\_of\\_Annual\\_Leave\\_form.pdf](http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/Resources/HR_Forms/HR_108_r_Carry_Over_of_Annual_Leave_form.pdf)
- Appendix IV – Document Control Forms 1-3

## 20.0 Signature of Approval



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National Ambulance Service Director  
On Behalf of the National Ambulance Service

## Policy Guidance and Examples

### Overall Entitlement

Annual leave entitlement will be calculated **in hours not days** for **all staff** regardless of whether the employee is full-time or part-time. The benefit for all NAS staff in calculating entitlement in hours is that this ensures equity for all by ensuring that staff who work variable hours/shifts do not receive either more or less leave than colleagues who work a standard pattern.

### Bank Holidays

All staff have a fair and equitable, static entitlement rather than eligibility based solely on the normal days of work which would result in some part time staff never receiving the benefit of Bank Holidays unless they fall on their normal days of work. A pro-rata calculation base on the number of basic weekly contracted hours removes any potential for inequity in the case of staff whose working days vary.

### Calculation of Total Leave Entitlement

To calculate an employee's total leave entitlement Annual Leave and days in Lieu of Bank Holidays should be added together. They are shown separately so that the composition of an employee's full entitlement is clear.

### Entitlement for New Staff

Example:

A Paramedic works 39 hours per week, their joining date is the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2007 and they are new to the HSE:

Their annual leave entitlement for a full leave year (212 days in the year) would be 179.4 hours. As they started on 24<sup>th</sup> August, they are entitled to 7 months of annual leave .i.e. 7/12ths of 179.4 hours which is 104.7 hours annual leave.

Bank Holiday hours must be added to this. This total will vary depending upon where Bank Holidays fall during the calendar year but for the purposes of this example, assume that there are 5 Bank Holidays remaining in the leave year. Therefore, using the calculation outlined in section 4.2.2, 5 Bank Holidays x 7.8 hours per Bank Holiday = 39 hours.

**So the total leave entitlement for the part leave year will be 104.7 hours + 39hrs = 143.7 hours to be taken by the 31<sup>st</sup> March.**







Health Service Executive  
National Ambulance Service

Form - Application to Carry Over Annual Leave

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Annual Leave Hours Applied For: \_\_\_\_\_

Stage 2 – Ambulance Officer (as appropriate to Grade) Recommendation

I have discussed this Application with the verifying Line Supervisor/Line Manager and I recommend approval

Or (If applicable)

I have discussed this Application with the verifying Line Supervisor/Line Manager and I DO NOT recommend approval. I confirm that the Applicant has been notified of the reason why and offered the opportunity of appealing this decision to the Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: Ambulance Officer

Stage 3 – Service Management Recommendation and Approval

Hours recommended for Carry Over: \_\_\_\_\_

Date by which this leave must be taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant CAO

Budget Holder Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Ambulance Officer

A copy of this approval must be returned to the Applicant through the Line Management structure to inform the Annual Leave Application and Approval process and to the Section Officer, Ambulance Headquarters to inform Leave Records and the preparation of Annual Leave allowances/Application Forms for the coming Leave Year

Revised 12/09

Side 2 of 2

**Document Control No. 1 (to be attached to Master Copy)**

**NAS**

**Reviewer:** The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to a peer reviewer (internal or external), in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have reviewed and agreed the content and recommend the approval of the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

**Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:**

**NAS**

I acknowledge the following:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline described above.
- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Block Capitals)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return this completed form to:**

**Name:** Niamh Murphy  
**Contact Details:** Corporate Office  
National Ambulance Service  
Rivers Building  
Tallaght Cross  
Dublin 24  
email [niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie](mailto:niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie)

**Document Control No. 2 (to be attached to Master Copy)**

**Key Stakeholders Review of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or  
Guidance Reviewer Statement**

**Reviewer:** The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to Managers of Employees who have a stake in the PPPG, in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have seen and agree to the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

**Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:**

**NAS**

I acknowledge the following:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline described above.
- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Block Capitals)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return this completed form to:**

**Name:** Niamh Murphy  
**Contact Details:** Corporate Office  
National Ambulance Service  
Rivers Building  
Tallaght Cross  
Dublin 24  
email [niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie](mailto:niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie)



