

# Domestic Violence Leave Policy – University College Cork

Date: 31.01.23

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this leave is to provide for a period of paid time away from work for staff members who have suffered, are suffering or are at risk from domestic violence or abuse. This leave will enable the staff member to take the time they need to seek assistance in a structured and supported environment, where decisions are victim led.

University College Cork recognises the prevalence of domestic violence in our society and the impact it may have on our staff members. In line with our values and our commitment to the health and safety of our staff, the University opposes all forms of domestic violence and seeks to support victims and survivors of such violence through the provision of leave and other resources.

## 2. Description

Domestic violence leave will be granted to a staff member who has been the victim of an act or acts of domestic violence or abuse. For the purposes of this policy domestic violence will be defined as follows:

*“Domestic violence (sometimes referred to as domestic abuse, family violence, or intimate partner violence) involves violent, threatening, or otherwise abusive behaviour by a family member/intimate relation, including but not limited to physical and sexual assault, psychological abuse, coercive control, financial abuse, stalking or dating abuse.”*

The perpetrator may be the staff member’s current or former spouse/partner, parent, child, other family member or other person in an intimate relationship with the staff member.

Domestic violence leave will be granted in addition to all other available leaves to provide the staff member with time away from work to recover and to seek necessary supports.

Such supports may include but are not limited to:

- obtaining medical attention and/or counselling
- obtaining legal assistance
- providing for accommodation or protection of self, children and/or other family members
- attending court/legal hearings
- obtaining services from a victim services organisation or assistance from the Garda Síochána

## 3. Eligibility

All staff members of the University are eligible for domestic violence leave. There is no minimum service period required in order to qualify for this leave.

## 4. Employment Protections

The University cannot discharge or in any other manner discriminate against a staff member for availing of domestic violence leave, and no negative action will be taken against a staff member for availing of this leave.

## **5. Duration of Leave**

Paid domestic violence leave will be granted for up to 10 working days per 12 month period on a rolling basis. This leave may be taken as a block of leave or broken into separate days of leave as required. Requests for flexibility will be reviewed by the [Director of Human Resources](#) on a case-by-case basis. Thereafter, should further time away from work be required, the staff member may have recourse to one or more of the other [University leave schemes](#) as applicable, e.g. Sick Leave, Personal Unpaid Leave, etc.

## **6. Application Process and Notice Period**

The affected staff member should contact the [Staff Wellbeing & Development Advisor](#), as soon as practicable to request a period of domestic violence leave. Advance notification of leave should be provided where possible. The University understands that in some cases advance notification may not be possible and that the period of leave may have already commenced before notification can be provided.

The affected staff member is not required to provide proof of their abuse or documentary evidence for the leave needed. However, proof may be requested by the employer in some circumstances.

## **7. Line Manager Responsibilities**

Line managers are advised to support staff members who disclose to them that they are experiencing domestic violence in a sympathetic, non-judgemental and confidential manner.

If a staff member discloses that they are experiencing domestic violence, the line manager must act promptly. They should discuss domestic violence leave and other supports available (see point 10 below) with the affected staff member and must alert the [Staff Wellbeing & Development Advisor](#) to the need for this leave, if requested, as soon as possible.

## **8. Awareness and Information**

Information sessions will be available to staff on domestic violence issues including understanding the implications of domestic violence for the staff member in the workplace, and also how to recognise, respond and refer.

The Department of Human Resources are not positioned as experts on domestic violence but will provide the information to support line managers and staff members as required.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Any disclosure of domestic violence and subsequent request for leave will be treated with the strictest confidence by the University, unless there is an immediate risk to the safety of the affected staff member, their colleagues or others.

## 10. Additional Supports

Staff members experiencing domestic violence should note the following supports available to them:

- Flexible working arrangements: affected staff members may request a change of working hours, work location or other relevant conditions of their employment. Such requests will be accommodated where possible.
- Change of Work Contact Details: affected staff members may request a change of work phone number and/or work email address as necessary.
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):

UCC's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is provided by **SPECTRUM.LIFE**. This is a confidential counselling service, providing support to employees, in addition to their spouse, civil partner or dependant, where the family member can be described as a person over the age of 18 and residing in the family home.

It is available 24/7, 365 days a year covering numerous topics such as; counselling, infertility & pregnancy loss, elder care support, parent coaching, international employee support, legal information, financial information and more.

**Email:** [eap@spectrum.life](mailto:eap@spectrum.life)

**Freephone:** 1800 814 243

**SMS:** Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010

**WhatsApp:** Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010

Further information is available from the **[Staff Wellbeing & Development Advisor](#)** to provide support and signposting.

- Occupational Health Physician: An appointment can be arranged with a physician of the University's Occupational Health Provider in order to provide support and accommodations and/or necessary medical advice to the staff member. All referrals are treated with strict confidence. To arrange a referral for reasons related to domestic violence only, please email the **[Staff Wellbeing & Development Advisor](#)**.

## 11. UCC Contacts:

**Staff Wellbeing & Development Manager**  
**[Staff Wellbeing & Development Advisor](#)**

**[Dr. Anne Gannon](#)**  
**[Susan O'Mahony](#)**

### HR Business Managers

College of Business & Law:

**[Mags Walsh](#)**

College of Medicine & Health:

**[Niamh Healy](#)**

College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences:

**[Maeve Doyle](#)**

College of Science, Engineering & Food Science:

**[Helen O'Donoghue](#)**

Deputy President & Registrar, Building & Estates:

**[Kieran Creedon](#)**

President's Office, OVP Learning & Teaching, OVP External Relations, OVPRI,

Library & Information Services, OCLA, QEU, Finance:

**[Mary Ward](#)**

**Employee Relations Advisor:**  
**Leave Advisor**

**[Veronica O'Connell](#)**  
**[Kathy O'Connell](#)**

## 12. Union Support:

A staff member can also contact their Union Representative for support.

## 13. External Resources:

Survivors/victims of rape, sexual assault and domestic abuse will often want to talk to someone who can provide a specialist service tailored to their needs and circumstances. For that reason there are national and some local organisations who provide support based on specific experience of violence or abuse, as well as on identity characteristics such as gender identity, sexuality or cultural background.

ORGANISATION	WEBSITE	CONTACT DETAILS
Health Service Executive	<a href="#">Support for Domestic Violence &amp; Abuse</a>	
An Garda Síochána, the Irish Police Service, take domestic and sexual abuse very seriously and are there to help	<a href="#">Domestic Abuse</a>	Emergency Tel: 999/112 – 24hrs Report/Advice: Contact a <a href="#">local Garda Station</a> Visit: <a href="http://www.garda.ie">www.garda.ie</a>
<a href="#">Safe Ireland</a> SAFE Ireland is the National Social Change Agency working on Domestic Violence in Ireland. SAFE Ireland works with frontline domestic violence services across Ireland to provide state of the art and sustainable responses to women and children experiencing domestic violence in communities.	<a href="#">Where to get help in Cork</a>	National Helpline 1800341 900  Email: <a href="mailto:office@safeireland.ie">office@safeireland.ie</a>
<a href="#">Cork Sexual Violence Centre</a> 5 Camden Place Cork (formerly Cork Rape Crisis Centre)		Freephone <a href="tel:1800496496">1800 496 496</a> , text <a href="tel:0871533393">087 1533 393</a> Hours: Monday – Friday 9am-5pm <a href="mailto:info@sexualviolence.ie">info@sexualviolence.ie</a>
<b>Cork Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU)</b> provide specialist care for women and men aged fourteen years and over who have recently been sexually assaulted or raped. The specialist team of SATU staff provide easily accessible, holistic services which address the medical, psychological and emotional needs and appropriate follow up care for victims of sexual crime, in a supportive, sensitive manner.		Opening Hours: 24 hour service South Infirmary Victoria Hospital Mon-Fri 8.30 -16.30 Phone: 021 492 6297  Out of Hours and Weekends Phone: 021 492 6100

<p><b>OSS Cork</b> provides services to men and women who have experienced or are currently experiencing domestic violence. It provides a free and confidential service that includes: <b>Information; Support; Referral; Advocacy; and Accompaniment tailored to the needs and requirements of each person who contacts the Centre by walk-in and/or appointment.</b></p>		<p><b>Opening Hours (Centre): Mon-Fri 9.00–13.00</b>  <b>Email: <a href="mailto:advice@oss cork.ie">advice@oss cork.i e</a></b></p> <p><b>Helpline Freephone: 1800 497 497</b></p> <p><b>Location: 94 South Main Street, Cork</b></p>
<p><b>Mná Feasa Cork</b>  Mná Feasa was set up primarily by women who have themselves survived domestic violence and it is thus a crucial link in women’s challenges to violence. They are a community based project run by trained and experienced staff to help victims of domestic violence</p>		<p><b>Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 10.00-16.00</b></p> <p><b>Phone: 021 421 1757</b></p>
<p><b>MOVE Ireland</b>  Men Overcoming Violence works in the area of domestic violence, with a primary aim of supporting the safety and wellbeing of women and their children who are experiencing, or have experienced violence/abuse in an intimate relationship.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.moveireland.ie/">https://www.moveireland.i e/</a></p>	<p><b>Phone: 065 684 8689</b> (MOVE Ireland National Office)</p> <p>Office Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 9am-5pm</p> <p>Regional Contact Numbers:  MOVE Cork – 086 6044047  Email: <a href="mailto:move@moveireland.ie">move@moveireland.ie</a></p>
<p><b>Haven Horizons – National Education and Research Centre</b></p>	<p><a href="https://havenhorizons.com/">https://havenhorizons.com/</a></p> <p><b>Recommended Reading</b>  Invisible Chains: Overcoming Coercive Control in Your Intimate Relationship, by Lisa Aronson Font</p>	

<b>Women's Aid:</b>	<a href="https://www.womensaid.ie/services/helpline.html">https://www.womensaid.ie/services/helpline.html</a>  <a href="https://www.womensaid.ie/bright-sky/">https://www.womensaid.ie/bright-sky/</a> a free app for iPhone and Android devices that connects victims of domestic violence and abuse to advice and support services	24 Hour National freephone helpline 1800 341 900
<b>Men's Aid Ireland:</b>	<a href="https://www.mensaid.ie/">https://www.mensaid.ie/</a>	helpline 01 554 3811
<b>Parentline:</b>	<a href="#">Parentline</a>	helpline 1890 927 277
<b>LGBT Ireland</b>	<a href="https://lgbt.ie/">https://lgbt.ie/</a>	LGBT Helpline 1800 929 539
<b>LINC – Advocating for Lesbian and Bisexual Women in Ireland</b>	<a href="http://www.linc.ie">www.linc.ie</a>	11a White Street Cork Tel: 021- 4808600  email: <a href="mailto:info@linc.ie">info@linc.ie</a>
<b>Gay Project – Supports for gay, bi+, trans and queer men</b>	<a href="http://www.gayproject.ie">www.gayproject.ie</a>	South Parish Centre, Sawmill Street, Cork T12 CX32 021 430 0430 (office hours) <a href="mailto:info@gayproject.ie">info@gayproject.ie</a>

#### 14. Responsibilities & Version History

Name	Responsibility
Director of Human Resources	Policy Owner

Version History	
Version 1	UMT 1 <sup>st</sup> February, 2022
Version 2	GB Approved 4 <sup>th</sup> April, 2023.