



Cloch Housing Association

Sabbatical Policy

Policy Name	Sabbatical
Policy Category	C-HR
Policy Number	014
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This Review	02/06/2022
Next Review	June 2025
Equalities Impact Assessment Required	None
Link to other policies	No
Consultation	No
Need for Procedure	Appendices attached

1. INTRODUCTION

Cloch Housing Association recognises that many people, at some stage in their working life, wish to take time off work for a number of reasons.

A sabbatical which may also be referred to as a career break, is when an employee is guaranteed re-employment with the organisation at the end of the break, provided that they have adhered to the terms and conditions of the agreement. The job the staff member returns to will be of equal status, but there is no guarantee of returning to the same post.

2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a Sabbatical an employee must:-

- Have completed at least 2 years continuous service;
- Have a satisfactory performance record in line with Cloch's policy;
- Have a satisfactory attendance record in line with the Cloch's policy;
- Indicate a firm intention to return to work;
- Have no live disciplinary warning.

Each case will be considered on its own merits in light of personal circumstances and the business operational needs. The commencement and time allowed for each career break will be dictated by the needs of the business.

3. LENGTH OF CAREER BREAK

A sabbatical is available for a minimum of 3 months to a maximum of 12 months.

An employee can take a maximum of 2 sabbaticals. If an employee wishes to apply for a second sabbatical, they must have a further 2 years continuous service from the first break.

4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

An application for a sabbatical must be made to the Director at least 3 months before the requested start date of the sabbatical. The employee should complete a Sabbatical Form which is attached to this policy.

Confirmation of acceptance or non-acceptance will be made in writing, to the staff member, within 30 days of the application.

5. EFFECTS ON TERMS & CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT

During the leave of absence employees will have no entitlement to payment of salary, holiday or sick leave or any other mandatory benefits.

- **Death Benefit Scheme** – If the employee is entitled to the Death Benefit Scheme as per their terms and conditions it shall continue to apply during the employee's period of leave of absence and shall be calculated by reference to their earnings immediately before such period of absence commenced.
- **Pension Scheme** – Employer pension contributions will be suspended for the duration of the leave and the period will therefore not count towards the pensionable service.
- Upon return from the employees leave they will be entitled to make good all contributions to the Association's Pension Scheme omitted during the leave of absence within a period agreed by the Scheme Trustees. The employer will not however invoke contributions for that period.
- **Professional Membership Fees** - During the period of unpaid leave of absence, Cloch will not pay any professional subscriptions in respect of membership of professional bodies.
- **Redundancy** - If redundancy should occur during a Sabbatical, the employee will be contacted, in writing, and the appropriate process will be used under Cloch's redundancy procedure.
- **Increments** – Staff returning from sabbatical will not be entitled to an incremental increase unless they have been back at work for 6 months prior to 1st April. Staff will, however, be eligible to receive Cloch's cost of living rise in place at the time of their return to work.
- Failure to return to work will be treated as a resignation.
- The period of the sabbatical will not count towards calculating any statutory or contractual benefits.
- If the organisation makes any changes to the employee's post/grade/salary or any other conditions during the sabbatical break, they will write to the employee informing them of any changes.

6. MAINTAINING CONTACT

Where possible regular contact should be maintained with your Employer throughout the break. The frequency and method of contact will be agreed between the employee and their line manager. A monthly email containing any circulars, newsletters and other relevant material will be sent to any employee on a sabbatical by their line manager. Any relevant information will be sent to the employee's personal email account.

7. ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT

The period of unpaid leave of absence is granted on the understanding that the employee will not take up any paid work during this period nor set up a business. If they should do so then they will automatically lose their right to return to work unless previous approval is granted by the Director and confirmed in writing.

8. POSTPONING THE DATE OF RETURN

(1) By the Employer:

If there are no suitable vacancies your Employer may postpone the date of return for up to 28 days. The employee will be informed of the revised date in writing. If the organisation postpones the date of return, the employee will not be paid any salary or other benefits during the postponement. However, the period of postponement will count towards the continuous service.

(2) By the employee on Medical Grounds:

The date of return may be postponed by the employee on medical grounds only. The maximum period of postponement allowed is 28 days. If an employee is unable to return to work after this period the organisation may review the right to return to work. The employee will not be paid any salary or other benefits during the postponement but the period of delay will count towards continuous service.

9. RETURNING TO WORK

An employee must give 3 months' notice in writing to the Director of their intention to return to work. Failure to do that will be treated as a resignation.

If a member of staff fails to return to work after their sabbatical they will lose their right to return to work. Cloch Housing Association will assume that the employee has resigned from their post which will be effective from the end of their sabbatical.

When the employee returns to work the Line Manager will conduct a re-entry meeting and cover areas such as changes within the organisation, salary and holiday entitlement.

Cloch Housing Association reserves the right to alter or withdraw the scheme at any time.

APPLICATION FOR A SABBATICAL LEAVE PERIOD

FULL NAME:

START DATE:

PRESENT POSITION & DEPARTMENT

I would like to start Sabbatical Leave on/...../..... and would like the Sabbatical Leave to last for months.

I am requesting Sabbatical Leave for the following reason(s):

.....
.....

I have read Cloch Housing Association's Sabbatical Leave Policy and understand and accept the terms and conditions of the Group's sabbatical scheme.

Signed: **Date:**/...../.....

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

Dear NAME

SABBATICAL

Further to your request for a career break and your meeting with INSERT NAME on DATE, I am writing to confirm that your request has been approved for a period of XXX months.

The terms of your Sabbatical are as follows:

- Your sabbatical will be unpaid and will last for a period of XX, and will commence on DATE and end on DATE.
- Your date of return from your sabbatical will be effective from DATE.
- You agree to return to work at the end of you sabbatical. If you fail to return to work on, DATE, and, unless on medical grounds, you will lose your right to return to work.
- The Association will aim to keep your post open for you, however, we cannot guarantee this. In the event that it is not possible, we will guarantee a return to a post at with no less favourable terms and conditions of employment as the one you left.
- You will not continue to accrue length of service. You *will not* accrue any annual leave or public holiday entitlement from DATE to DATE.
- You will not be entitled to an incremental increase as you will/will not have worked at your current salary for a period of 6 months. (delete if appropriate)
- Pensions: Employer pension contributions will be suspended for the duration of the leave and the period will therefore not count towards the pensionable service. We can not advise further as this is a private matter.

- You will have an option to make voluntary National Insurance Contributions. These contributions can be spread over a six year period if you are unable to make the contributions whilst on unpaid leave. It is not advisable to have a gap in your National Insurance Contributions. We are unable to advise you further, however, advice can be obtained via your tax office.
- You may be entitled to an Income Tax refund. The tax year runs from 1 April to 31 March. To enquire if you are eligible for this please contact your relevant tax office.
- The Association will not pay any professional subscriptions in respect of membership of professional bodies during your Career Break.
- If any organisational changes occur during this time that may impact you, you will be notified and consulted, where appropriate, in line with the relevant the Association's procedures.
- The period of your Sabbatical is granted on the understanding that you will not take up any **permanent** contract of employment during this period, if you do so you will automatically lose your right to return to work.

Yours sincerely,

NAME

JOB TITLE