Special Natural Disaster Leave

Head of Power

Local Government Act 2009
Disaster Management Act 2003

Objective

To ensure that employees are aware of their leave entitlements and work responsibilities resulting from a declared disaster situation such as flooding, cyclones or bush fires, where employees are unable to attend their usual place of employment or are directly affected as a result of the declaration of a disaster situation.

Definitions/Application

Definitions

“Declaration of a disaster situation” shall have the same meaning in this policy as that referred to under section 64 of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

“Immediate family” includes the employee’s spouse, child, ex-nuptial child, stepchild, adopted child, ex-foster child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the employee or employee’s spouse.

Application

This policy applies to all permanent or fixed term full time and part time employees, subject to the terms of Council’s industrial instruments.

Policy Statement

Moreton Bay Regional Council supports employees who have been affected by emergencies caused by natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, bush fires or other natural occurrences which may affect the well being and safety of themselves or their family. If employees are unable to attend their usual place of employment due to the declaration of a disaster situation, they should first and foremost report to another Council depot or office if at all possible. In such circumstances compensation for any significant additional travel shall be subject to, and in accordance with, Council’s relevant industrial instrument/s.

Special natural disaster leave is available to employees under the following conditions and/or circumstances upon the declaration of a disaster situation:

1. Where an employee is prevented from travelling from their place of residence to their usual place of employment due to such disaster where it would threaten the safety of the employee if they were to attempt to attend work by either their usual, or some other reasonably available means of transport; and

2. It is not reasonable for the employee to attend for duty at another Council depot or office; and

3. The employee has advised, or as soon as reasonably practicable, has advised their supervisor of the circumstances; or

4. Where the employee has a genuine domestic necessity that requires them to either remain at or return to their home, to prepare, protect or remove belongings etc from a personal dwelling or place of residence that may reasonably be affected by the disaster; or to another residence or premises to protect the safety of the employee’s immediate family due to such disaster; or

5. Where the employee must leave work early due to the likelihood that their normal mode of transport from work would likely be discontinued due to such disaster; or
6. To make or organise temporary repairs, or to clean up etc the employee’s personal dwelling that has been directly damaged as a result of such disaster; and

7. The employee has advised, or as soon as reasonably practicable, has advised their supervisor of the circumstances.

**ENTITLEMENT:**

An employee whose circumstances are defined by this policy shall be allowed up to five (5) days paid special natural disaster leave per calendar year (non cumulative), with access to a maximum of 3 days leave per declared disaster situation.

Special natural disaster leave is separate to all other paid leave entitlements and as such will not be deducted from annual leave, personal leave or any other paid leave entitlements available to eligible employees.

All applications for this leave are to be applied for using the Natural Disaster Application Form which can be accessed by using the related link.

**EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

Council may consider additional paid special natural disaster leave beyond the scope of this policy under exceptional circumstances. Approval of such ‘additional leave’ is subject to the discretion and approval of the Chief Executive Officer and will be considered on a case by case basis.

**VOLUNTARY EMERGENCY SERVICES:**

Employees who are members of voluntary emergency services and who, due to a natural disaster, attend to the community, shall upon request, be granted unpaid leave subject to the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. Granting of such leave will be dependant on the operational capacity of Council to grant such leave, however shall not be unreasonably withheld.

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**Review Triggers**

This Policy is reviewed internally for applicability, continuing effect and consistency with related documents and other legislative provisions when any of the following occurs:

1. The related documents are amended.
2. The related documents are replaced by new documents.
3. Amendments which affect the allowable scope and effect of a Policy of this nature are made to the head of power.
4. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this Policy is to be reviewed at least once every two years for relevance and to ensure that its effectiveness is maintained.

**Responsibility**

This Policy is to be:

1. implemented by the Manager Human Resources.
2. reviewed and amended in accordance with the "Review Triggers" by the Manager Human Resources.

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**Version Control**

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**Related Links:**

- Natural Disaster Leave Application Form