



Staff Report

Administration – Human Resources

Report To: COW- Admin, Corp and Finance, SI, Comm. Services
Meeting Date: June 30, 2025
Report Number: ADM.25.037
Title: Updates to Bereavement Leave Policy
Prepared by: Sarah Traynor, Manager of Human Resources

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report ADM.25.037, entitled “Updates to Bereavement Leave Policy”;

AND THAT Council approve the revised Corporate policy entitled “Bereavement Leave, POL.COR. 18.02”, as attached to this report.

B. Overview

This report is seeking Council approval of the Corporate policy entitled “Bereavement Leave, POL.COR. 18.02”.

C. Background

The Town's Bereavement Leave policy, POL.COR.18.02, last reviewed in 2018, is subject to a regular review cycle occurring once per term of Council or as necessitated by legislative changes. A recommendation was provided by a staff-led working group to update the policy's language through an internal review in 2024. Specifically, the working group suggested removing the term "consecutive" from the policy. This change aims to provide staff with the flexibility to take bereavement leave as required over non-consecutive days, aligning with individual needs and circumstances.

D. Analysis

The updated Bereavement Leave policy primarily focuses on revising language and integrating current best practices. There are no modifications to employee entitlements. The following provides highlights of the revisions to the Bereavement Leave policy:

Policy Statement Enhancements:

- Refined language to underscore the Town's commitment to compassion and support for employees experiencing bereavement, highlighting commitments to dignity, privacy, and confidentiality.

Procedural Adjustments

- Updated the procedures for requesting leave with more detailed guidance on the notification process, ensuring timely and clear communication between employees and supervisors.
- Clarified the option to utilize bereavement leave intermittently, providing employees with greater flexibility to attend later memorial services or observe significant dates related to bereavement.

Cultural Sensitivity

- Incorporated recognition of diverse cultural, creed, religious, and spiritual considerations, ensuring personalized requirements and that employees are encouraged to express their preferences.

Return to Work Provisions

- Added language to emphasize support for a gradual return to work when needed, offering adjustments in working hours or duties for employees facing challenges related to grief.

Support Resources

- Reinforced the availability of support resources, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides 24/7 confidential emotional and grief counselling.

Conclusion

The policy updates are intended to enhance clarity of existing processes and language while integrating best practices that accommodate diverse employee needs without altering bereavement entitlements.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A

G. Financial Impacts

None.

H. In Consultation With

Personal Benefits Working Group - Internal Staff

IDEA Committee

Senior Management Team

Service Area Managers

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre, as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Sarah Traynor, Manager of Human Resources hr@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Bereavement Leave Policy POL.COR.18.02 - Revised
2. Bereavement Leave Policy POL.COR.18.02 - Current

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Traynor
Manager of Human Resources

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	ADM.25.037 Updates to Bereavement Leave Policy.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment-1-Bereavement-Leave-Policy-POL-COR-18-02-Revised.pdf - Attachment-2-Bereavement-Leave-Policy-POL-COR-18-02-Current.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 16, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Sarah Traynor - Jun 13, 2025 - 3:33 PM

Adam Smith - Jun 16, 2025 - 1:35 PM