

Carmarthenshire County Council

Standby Guidance Document

October 2017



1. Introduction

As a direct service provider to the Community, it is necessary from time to time for Council employees to respond to urgent and emergency situations. This document is designed to provide a clear guide to the arrangements, terms and conditions of employment and general procedures applicable to employees who participate in standby arrangements within the Council.

For some of the Council's services it is necessary to ensure that the capacity exists to deal with emergencies for example:-

- Situations which must be dealt with at short notice due to significant and immediate health and safety considerations,
- Responding to a civil emergency when the Council's Emergency Plan is activated.

There are other requirements where the Council needs to respond to situations and events outside of normal hours. The Council recognises that a structured standby and call out arrangement must be in place in order to respond as part of the Council's statutory duties, and for the Council to respond effectively in dealing with emergencies that arise within the County

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all County Council employees except those employed locally by schools.

These procedures cover those periods when an employee, either as part of their contract of employment, or because they have volunteered to be available, attend work outside of normal working hours. It also covers employees who within the key tasks of their job description are required to assist with the implementation of the Council's Emergency Plan.

There are 2 categories of standby arrangements:-

- **Regular Standby** – for providing cover outside of normal working hours to meet the Council's legislative requirements within specific Directorates.
- **Ad Hoc Standby** – to provide cover at specific times, for example supporting a Council event, additional cover during Bank Holidays etc.

The standby sessional rate is payable to those employees who:-

- a) out of normal working hours, will form part of a formal standby rota to act as the “*Duty Officer*” for a service to respond to calls received outside of normal working hours. There may be occasions when the Duty Officer will be required to leave his/her home to undertake duties commensurate with his/her substantive job role
- b) out of normal working hours, will form part of a formal standby rota to provide an emergency unplanned operational response by being “*called out*” to attend to unplanned and unforeseen incidents/occurrences.

As part of a rota employees receiving a standby sessional rate payment are responsible for providing advice and/or an operational response out of normal working hours. All employees receiving a standby sessional payment are required to remain available for contact and/or call out for the duration of the standby period.

3. Payment Arrangements for Standby and Callout

Claims for standby and call out should be made via Resource link My View self-service facility clearly indicating that the payment(s) relate specifically to standby and/or call out rather than normal overtime arrangements. Staff that do not currently have access should claim on either an overtime claim form or time sheet as appropriate and forward to the line manager for authorisation. Claims for payment cannot be processed without the necessary approval.

It should be clearly indicated on the form that the payment(s) relate specifically to standby and/or call out rather than normal overtime arrangements. Claims for payment cannot be processed without the necessary approval.

The same rate will apply to all employees required to be on formal standby. This will be **£40** for the full out of hours period or **£25** for a part period. A part period would be a session undertaken up to midnight or undertaken after midnight

Employees will not be able to claim for the first 30 minutes spent dealing with telephone calls at home, however the exception to this will be if multiple calls are received between midnight and 6.00 a.m. when actual time spent can be claimed for all calls received during this period.

Certain post holders within the Authority will be required to participate on a standby rota where the nature of the work requires the undertaking of their duties outside normal working hours. In such circumstances standby will be a contractual requirement of the post and confirmed within the statement of main terms and conditions

There may be service areas within the Authority where participation on a standby rota will be voluntary and on an ad hoc basis subject to the needs of the service. In such circumstances standby will be non-contractual.

If an employee is scheduled to work a standby session but does not attend due to sickness or any other reason, s/he will not be eligible for the sessional payment.

If '*called out*' an employee is expected to undertake duties which are commensurate with his/her substantive post. Employees should not be "*called out*" to undertake duties which could reasonably have been expected to have been planned as part of the normal working week. When '*called out*' the employee will be paid at their normal contractual rate of pay from the time of the call to the end of the call out duties.

Should the employee be called out and the hours worked exceed 37 hours per week then the overtime rate of pay would apply.

4. Employee Responsibilities

Whilst on standby, the Council's various employment policies would normally apply. You are reminded not to consume alcohol or take medication/drugs which could impact on your ability to respond to a callout or perform your work in the event of a call out.

A condition of accepting a standby payment is that you may leave your home but must still remain contactable and have transport available to return to work within the prescribed period.

If you become unwell or are unable to comply with your responsibilities during a period of standby for example due to an unexpected change in personal circumstances you must contact your manager as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Any standby payment made would not apply from the time you become unavailable.

If you are on standby you do so on the basis that you will be expected to deal with incidents that may arise.

5. Manager Responsibilities

As a line manager you must ensure that standby rotas are covered by employees at the appropriate level and with the appropriate skills and knowledge to respond to the situation. You should ensure that:-

- The necessary senior management approval has been given,
- Standby rotas are drawn up as appropriate in advance of any period of standby,
- The necessary contact details are available,
- Standby claims and payments are authorised in accordance with this procedure.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances hours worked are in accordance with the Working Time Directive.

- Risk assessments for the duties being covered are up to date and available for inspection.

6. Standby Sessions

There are nine standby sessions per week; the times are defined as follows although these may differ subject to the normal working hours within the service area concerned:

1. Monday 5pm - Tuesday 9am
2. Tuesday 5pm - Wednesday 9am
3. Wednesday 5pm - Thursday 9am
4. Thursday 5pm - Friday 9am
5. Friday 5pm - Saturday 9am
6. Saturday 9am - Saturday 9pm
7. Saturday 9pm - Sunday 9am
8. Sunday 9am - Sunday 9pm
9. Sunday 9pm - Monday 9am

7. Ensuring Equality of Treatment

This guidance must be applied consistently to all employees irrespective of race (including national or ethnic origins, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief.

If you have any concerns in relation to the application of this guidance, please contact a member of the HR Team.

If you require this publication in an alternative format please contact People Management on 01267 246184 or email PMBusinessSupportUnit@carmarthenshire.gov.uk .