



Derbyshire Carers Association
Carers in Employment



Is your Employer Carer-friendly?



Do You Struggle to Balance Work and Caring Responsibilities?

Derbyshire Carers Association (DCA) launched their Carers in Employment initiative to support and encourage businesses in retaining staff who, due to their unpaid caring responsibilities, are at risk of leaving the workforce as a result of stress, ill health, lack of understanding and/or simply lack of time.

The Carers in Employment project has recruited over 100 businesses across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, all of whom have signed the Carers Pledge. The pledge states that the employer will acknowledge and support Carers within their organisation and that they will review their policies and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive of Carers.

In return, DCA will provide up-to-date information and resources as well as providing training and support to a nominated member of staff (Carers Champion) within their organisation. DCA recommend that this member of staff creates a Carers register/passport to ensure that if the Carers Champion is absent from the workplace there would still be the same support plan in place.



Is Your Employer Carer-friendly?

Our Carers in Employment project has found that working Carers who received support from line managers and colleagues were less likely to report feeling isolated in the workplace. This shows the crucial role that managers and team members can play in recognising and supporting their colleagues with caring responsibilities.

As an employee you do not need to make your employer aware that you are a carer, however they may be able to support you in ways you hadn't considered, or even just have regular catch-ups to see how you are.

Knowing that your employer is happy to listen and provide support if you need it, particularly if circumstances may change for you due to your caring role, can have a huge impact. For example, it could be easier for you to request time off or flexible working. It is also a good idea to find out about your company's policy for supporting Carers.

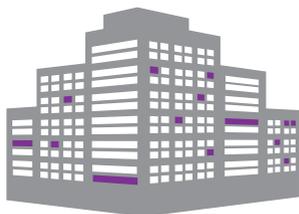
At first, you should discuss your situation with your manager. During this initial conversation, your employer will want to find out if your caring duties could potentially impact on your work. You should use this opportunity to think about possible work arrangements that would help you balance both work and your caring responsibility.

Many employers support Carers in various ways. They can also provide you with information regarding:

- Flexible working and work adjustments
- Access to a telephone
- Unpaid and paid Leave
- Career breaks
- Car parking space at/near work

Companies offering a flexible working approach could enable carers to carry on working effectively. A flexible approach can:

- attract and retain staff (reducing recruitment and training costs)
- reduce stress
- increase resilience and productivity
- reduce sick leave
- improve service delivery



Not all companies offer the same level of support, but they may be able to signpost you to other sources of information. Changes to the agreement you have made with your employer will need to be discussed. It is helpful to decide who should be your main contact at work in case your situation changes. Your employer may already have a nominated member of staff, a 'Carers Champion', who will...

- Be aware of legislation relating to Carers
- Be a point of contact for Carers within their workplace
- Liaise with Carer support services including DCA to ensure they are up to date with local and national knowledge and aware of changes to carer support services

Businesses supporting the emotional wellbeing of their staff is not only the right thing to do as a responsible employer, but also has a positive impact on their business. Offering flexible working arrangements can;

- attract and retain staff (reducing recruitment and training costs)
- reduce stress
- increase resilience and productivity
- reduce sick leave
- improve service delivery
- increase staff morale



Next Steps

With an ageing population, more and more people are finding themselves with caring responsibilities and businesses are finding themselves having to consider requests for flexible working.

Carers have the right to ask for flexible working patterns. This right to ask isn't a burden and can only be an advantage to businesses as they want to retain skilled staff. So why not request to meet with your line manager?



If you are a Carer in Employment and you're struggling to balance your work with your Caring responsibility, then please get in contact with our:

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