

WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

REDEPLOYMENT OF STAFF DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. Scope

This procedure applies, during the COVID-19 period, to all council employees with the exception of Teachers. It has immediate effect and replaces all previous instructions in operation in the council.

2. Purpose of this Document

Reorganisation of council services and effective redeployment of its employees is one of the core elements of the council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Critical services will come under particular strain due to increased absence. Therefore, in order to safeguard critical services, emergency redeployment measures are crucial as is co-operation from all employees. This procedure sets out the framework and principles for emergency redeployment of staff during this period.

3. Redeployment of Staff

- 3.1 Each service area will identify all essential activities that must continue in line with local business continuity plans and all non-essential activities or services.
- 3.2 Non-essential services should also be identified and where there is a requirement to cancel or postpone non-essential activities or services, employees in those areas will be deemed available to be redeployed to assist in other essential service areas that are experiencing staffing shortages.
- 3.3 Employees may be required to work different hours or in a different location and redeployment decisions will be based on service delivery needs. The personal circumstances of individual employees will also be key factors that are considered when decisions on redeployment are being made. The council's policy on Travel and Subsistence will apply where employees are required to change location or work across multiple locations.
- 3.4 In conjunction with Service Managers, local service managers will lead the redeployment of employees, including consideration of appropriate skill sets, experience and geographical location.
- 3.5 As redeployment needs may require assessment and amendment on a daily basis, notice requirements normally associated with changes to shift patterns, hours of work and/or changes to work locations will be suspended during the COVID-19 period. The personal circumstances of individual employees will be considered when decisions on temporary changes are being made.
- 3.6 In consultation with Depute Chief Executives, services may re-employ members of staff who have left the council during the past two years.
- 3.7 Employees with a professional health and social care background or other skills required during the COVID-19 period, no longer engaged in frontline duties, should be identified and may be redeployed to assist where their skills are most required.

- 3.8 Redeployed employees will continue to be paid by their existing/substantive service. However, approval must be given by the line manager for the post to which the employee is redeployed for associated overtime requests.
- 3.9 Redeployed employees will continue to be paid their substantive rate of pay, inclusive of any allowances.
- 3.10 Where employees are redeployed to posts at a higher grade, the higher grade will be paid for the period of deployment. Any allowances associated with the redeployment will also be paid.
- 3.11 Services may engage agency staff where it is not feasible to redeploy council employees. In accordance with the COVID-19 Emergency Workforce Planning Arrangements, the procurement of agency staff has been relaxed during this current period. Further guidance will be provided on the engagement of agency staff.
- 3.12 To ensure delivery of critical services, the cancellation of annual and discretionary leave may be necessary. Depending on the circumstances of the cancellation of holiday arrangements the council may meet any unavoidable costs which are not otherwise recoverable through insurance claims.
- 3.13 Line managers should consult the HR Policy and Advice team for support in managing circumstances where an employee refuses a reasonable request to undertake alternative duties, work different hours or work from a different location.

4. Trade Union Consultation

The recognised Trade Unions have a critical role during this period of emergency and the council will continue to consult with the recognised Trade Union on the council's response to COVID-19.

5. Monitor & Review

The situation regarding COVID-19 is changing rapidly so managers and staff should continue to check Council website <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/coronavirus> for further information.

This procedure will be subject to regular review and revision as required in light of the evolving situation concerning COVID-19.