

UNISON COVID-19 NJC Frequently Asked Questions

Employer annual leave schemes

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, staff may find themselves unable to take their annual leave at a time of their choosing - or they may wish to carry over more days than would usually be allowed. This FAQ provides some guidance for staff.

Frequently asked questions	
What is the government's new statutory scheme for carrying over leave?	Staff who have not taken all their statutory annual leave due to COVID-19 may now carry over up to 20 days of unused leave into the next 2 leave years.
Who is the government's new statutory scheme aimed at?	This scheme is aimed at staff supporting the national effort against COVID-19. It is intended to provide employers with flexibility at a time when granting annual leave could leave them short-staffed while providing key services to the public.
My employer provides more annual leave than the statutory minimum - can I carry over more than 20 days of leave?	<p>The NJC for Local Government Services (the Green Book) gives staff more annual leave than the statutory minimum. On top of that, most local authorities have agreed annual leave entitlements higher than the Green Book entitlement.</p> <p>Employers could introduce a local scheme allowing staff to carry over more than 20 days, but it can only apply to leave which is in excess of the NJC minimum* not the statutory minimum**.</p> <p>Wherever possible though, staff need to be allowed to take leave - we all need regular periods not at work.</p> <p>*NJC minimum leave 22 days + 8 days public holidays + 2 extra statutory days. After five years' service the 22 days rise to 25.</p> <p>**Statutory minimum leave 20 days + 8 days public holidays</p>
My employer plans to offer staff the option to sell excess leave back to the employer – do NJC terms allow this?	<p>Any trading system that left some people with more than the statutory minimum but less than the NJC minimum mentioned above would be a breach of NJC terms. All staff in employers that follow the Green Book must receive the NJC minimum annual leave entitlement.</p> <p>But if staff could only trade leave that is above the NJC minimum, that would be allowed.</p> <p>However, this would still be a change to whatever was already in place by local agreement, so a new collective agreement between the employer and recognised trade</p>

	<p>unions would be needed to implement it, rather than just a policy change by the employer.</p> <p>Remember, annual leave is there for a reason. We all need to take time away from the stresses and challenges of work. It also gives us the opportunity to spend more time with our family and friends. Using all the annual leave you are entitled to - either now or later - is still the best option. Trading it away should be thought of as a last resort.</p>
<p>Is it better to sell leave, carry it over or use it now?</p>	<p>How you use your annual leave is up to you. While the COVID-19 crisis may not seem like an obvious time to take annual leave, taking occasional leave over the course of the lockdown will let you take time away from the stresses and challenges of work, which have been magnified by this crisis.</p>