



Nottinghamshire
Carers
Association

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Nottinghamshire Carers Association
Carers in Employment

Is your Employer Carer-friendly?



**Carer-friendly
Employer**

Do you struggle to balance work and caring responsibilities?

Nottinghamshire Carers Association's (NCA) Carers in Employment Initiative supports and encourages organisations to become Carer Friendly Employers and, in doing so, retain those 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 initiative is a free service open to organisations across Nottinghamshire.

Organisations taking part will pledge to nominate a key member of staff to attend training and events and become a Carers Champion. Each champion will become a point of contact between NCA and the employer and will be training in bespoke carer awareness to cascade through their organisation.

In return, NCA will provide information to support both the carer and the employer. NCA will help review existing policies to enable the organisation to offer appropriate levels of support within the workplace. Supporting unpaid carers will help skilled, experienced staff members to continue in employment and achieve a realistic work/life balance.



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
- car parking space at/near work
- unpaid and paid leave
- career breaks

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 NCA 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.

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?

Next Steps

If you are a carer in employment and struggling to balance your work with your caring responsibility, please **contact our Carers in Employment Team:**

Email: employers@nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk

Phone: 01773 833833