



A new shape of lawyer

I run a small business and, although I don't have that many staff, I find that there are certain periods when I get a flood of holiday requests. What is the best approach if lots of my workers want the same time off?



Simon Crack

This can be a common problem for business owners, who tend to find that there are times of the year where lots of workers want to take the same time off.

While there is rarely a rush for the door in mid-February, juggling leave during the Christmas period can be a tough task and there is also usually a log-jam during the summer holidays. No doubt plenty of requests for July and August have already dropped in your Inbox.

The lighter nights, better weather and, perhaps most crucially, the fact that the schools are off can inevitably lead to a deluge of requests.

With this in mind it is very important to make sure that you have a comprehensive Holiday Policy in place. This will give staff a clear idea of the rules and avoid any accusation that one or more people are being given preference.

A well-drafted policy will make clear if there is a limit on the maximum length of time staff may take off in one go (ten working days is not uncommon) and how many people in any one team or department can be off at the same time.

You should also be clear whether you operate a "first come, first served" policy and on what grounds a holiday request may be turned down.

By putting this policy in place you will be best positioned to manage requests in such a way as to accommodate your staff where you can, while ensuring you have sufficient resources to meet your business needs.

Remember the importance of ensuring that the rules you have set out are applied fairly and consistently across your entire workforce. This will reduce the likelihood of a member of staff pursuing a grievance or claiming discrimination because the way you have handled their request.

If you would like advice on drafting or updating a holiday policy please call Hethertons employment team on 01904 528 200 and speak to Jo or Gill.