



# Cancer Support

Caregiver Support Policy  
Template



# Caregiver Support Policy Template

Policies and resources to support those caring for a loved one with cancer can show that your company cares about your employees, that you respect their role as a caregiver, and that you will do what you can to help. Flexible scheduling, the latest cancer information, and other resources can help employees get back on their feet more quickly and can help caregivers to reduce and manage stress while giving attention to self-care responsibilities. Helpful policies and resources can help employees return to work as soon as possible.

This document provides information to help employers develop a caregiver support policy and identify associated resources. We recommend that the following four areas be addressed in a policy for employees who serve as caregivers: 1) the definition of caregiver, 2) workplace leave and alternative work arrangement policies to support caregivers, 3) benefits to support caregivers, and 4) a list of American Cancer Society resources for caregivers.

The American Cancer Society defines a caregiver as the person who most often provides support to someone facing cancer and who is not paid to do so. They may be a family member, a close friend, a coworker, or a neighbor. Since many aspects of cancer care happen on an outpatient basis, caregivers may take on a variety of different roles and responsibilities. Reliable, ongoing caregiver support is very important to the physical and emotional well-being of someone with a cancer diagnosis. Caring for someone with cancer can take a physical and emotional toll on the caregiver as well, so self-care and support for the caregiver are equally important.

If you already have an existing policy or policies, but you want to make sure they are up to date with the American Cancer Society recommendations or are more accessible to caregivers, use the template as a guide. Employers can also use this document to help their employees navigate the process of caregiving. Otherwise, use the template below to create a new caregiver support policy for your worksite.

***The information provided in this document, including the template policy provided, is intended to provide examples of policies, resources, and best practices to support the needs of your employees who may be serving as caregivers. It is not a substitute for legal advice and may not address all your employees' legal rights or your responsibilities as an employer under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or other applicable law. For information on legal rights and responsibilities, please consult with your legal counsel.***



## How to Customize the Example Policy Template

If you already have an existing policy or policies, but you want to make sure they are up to date with the American Cancer Society recommendations or are more accessible to caregivers, use the template as a guide. Employers can also use this document to help their employees navigate the process of caregiving. Otherwise, use the template below to create a new caregiver support policy for your worksite.

All items in [\[emphasized italics\]](#) should be customized to fit your worksite's policy preferences.



# An Example Policy Template

## PURPOSE

[Company Name] is committed to providing support for caregivers of persons with cancer. This policy applies to all employees, [interns, and volunteers] of [Company Name] regardless of age, cultural or religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, or status regarding disabilities.

## POLICY

[Company Name] is enacting a caregiver support policy as follows:

1. Caregiver defined. [Company Name] defines a caregiver as the person who most often provides support to someone facing cancer (or other illnesses or scenarios) and is not paid to do so.

*Caregivers may provide support for a sick [child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, stepparent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, parent-in-law, co-worker, neighbor, or friend].*

**2. Human resources policies to support caregivers. [Company Name] has the following policies to provide support:** [paid time off, family and medical leave, flexible scheduling/alternative work arrangements, sick leave policy, personal leave of absence policy, bereavement policy]

3. Benefits to support caregivers. Please contact Human Resources to discuss your policy benefits. [Company Name] has the following benefits for caregivers: [health insurance, disability insurance, employee assistance program (EAP)]

### **4. Information and resources to support caregivers**

- Caregivers can call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 for free information about cancer types, treatment and side effects, health insurance assistance, transportation and lodging requests, and referrals to caregiver support programs and local respite services.

*Disclaimer: Information provided by the American Cancer Society is not intended as medical advice and should not be relied upon as a substitute for the expertise and judgment of your healthcare provider and cancer care team. Patients and caregivers should consult with a qualified healthcare provider regarding their individual medical needs.*



- Additional information and resources for caregivers such tips on caring for cancer patients, self-care strategies, and online support communities, forums, and tools, may be accessed through the American Cancer Society's website at [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org):
  - o [ACS Caregiver Resource Guide](#) (comprehensive, online, and downloadable PDF)
  - o [ACS Caregiver Support Information](#)
  - o [ACS Caregiver Support Video Series](#)
  - o [ACS Cancer Survivors Network®](#) (an online community forum connecting people whose lives have been touched by cancer)
  - o [Springboard Beyond Cancer](#) (an online tool developed by ACS and the National Cancer Institute to empower people to play an active role in the management of their health).

### CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services are available to employees [\[and in some cases, dependents\]](#) serving as caregivers as defined under this Policy. Eligibility for certain services and resources might depend on health insurance coverage.

[\[Company Name\]](#) provides the following additional caregiver resources and support services:

*[\[Support groups for caregivers either through an on-site, employee-led group, or off-site community group\]](#)*

*[\[Stress reduction opportunities such as on-site yoga classes, a quiet room, or massage discounts\]](#)*

*[\[Health advocacy or patient navigation services either through health insurance or subsidized through an outside company that provides these services\]](#)*

*[\[Legal and financial counseling\]](#)*

*[\[Caregiver relief support \(e.g., respite care\) subsidized through a home care company\]](#)*

### COMMUNICATION AND QUESTIONS

Employees will be informed of this policy through [\[newsletters, inserts in pay envelopes, the employee manual, email, new hire orientation, and training provided by their supervisors\]](#).



Employees with questions regarding this Caregiver Support Policy should contact [\[insert Company contact.\]](#)

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