



## **Furlough Workers – Frequently asked Questions**

These frequently asked questions have been specifically created to support employees who have been designated as furlough workers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **What is a furlough worker?**

Your employer may not be able to provide you work or cover staff costs for a temporary period due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this unprecedented time, employers have the option of offering affected workers to be designated as furlough workers. As a furlough worker you will be kept on the payroll, you will keep your length of service, you will remain employed, but you will not work. You will take authorised leave of absence for a specified time.

### **Do I get paid when I am a furlough worker during the covid-19 pandemic?**

The UK government has provided employers access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This scheme has been specifically set up to reduce disruption and financial worries for both employers and employees and will continue for 3 months from 01 March 2020 but may be extended. The UK government will allow your employer to claim 80% of your wage (up to a cap of £2,500 per month).

If 80% of your basic wage exceeds the government cap of £2,500 gross, Numatic International will fund the difference between the government grant and 80% of your basic wage. A discretionary additional 'top up' payment will be made so that you will receive 80% of your basic wage during the furlough period.

### **How long will I be designated as a furlough worker?**

It is difficult to place specific timescales on how long you will be designated as a furlough worker. This is a temporary measure to cover the exceptional employment circumstances due to Covid-19.

### **Can I work reduced hours whilst a furlough worker?**

You may not attend work at Numatic International whilst being designated as a furloughed worker.

### **What happens to my pension payment whilst I am designated a furlough worker?**

Your pension contributions arrangements will remain unchanged however will be calculated on the 80% of your basic wage figure.

### **Will my company benefits be affected, for example sickness provision and AAA?**

Company benefits will not be affected if you are designated as a furlough worker. AAA is a discretionary benefit and will remain unchanged. Please refer to the Annual Additional Allowance policy. AAA is calculated for each individual employee based on their absence rates for the preceding year.

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**What if I do not wish to or do not agree to be designated as a furlough worker?**

You will be offered the option of being designated a furlough worker if there is no work for you to do for a short specified period of time. If you do not agree to this option then other alternatives may be discussed with you, however during these unprecedented times it may not be possible to provide continuous suitable work. It is important to us to provide job security as best as we are able during these difficult times, as a furlough worker you will remain employed.

**How will I know when I can return to work?**

We will keep in contact with whilst you are not working and will communicate with you when it is suitable to return.

**Can I book holiday during the furlough period?**

Yes, you can. If you have pre-planned annual leave this will remain, and you will receive the appropriate holiday pay. If you would like to book annual leave during this time you are welcome to do so, please let your line manager or HR representative know and will arrange this for you.

**If I have pre-booked annual leave or request annual leave during the furlough period, will this be paid at 100% salary rate or the 80%?**

If you request holiday during furlough your pay will increase to 100%. Holiday payments will not be pro rata'd to 80% when on furlough.

**Can an employee seek or take another job (e.g. Supermarket work) during the period to support their pay?**

The employee cannot work for Numatic International during the furlough period. If an employee already has another job then they can be designated a furlough worker in one job and still work in the other.

If your contract allows, you may undertake other employment while your current employer has placed you on furlough, and this will not affect the grant that they can claim under the scheme. You will need to be able to return to work for the employer that has placed you on furlough if they decide to stop furloughing you, and you must be able to undertake any training they require while on furlough. If you take on new employment, you should make sure you complete the starter checklist form with your new employer correctly. If you are furloughed from another employment, you should complete Statement C. Any activities undertaken while on furlough must be in line with the latest Public Health guidance during the COVID-19 outbreak.

**How does the Numatic International choose which employees are to be designated as a furlough worker?**

Decisions are based around whether there is a job available in the first instance, then considerations such as skill set, availability, health have or will be reviewed. We have to look at the work to be done and the amount of labour required to do it. In many areas this will continue to diminish. In some cases, people have put themselves forward for furlough but as their skills are needed, we haven't agreed to this. We take into account personal circumstances, where possible such as those shielding individuals, health conditions and caring responsibilities. We also take into account the skills of individuals, matched to the work required.

**Will some of the team will still be working?**

Yes, some of the team may still be working whilst there are still tasks to be done. Decisions will be made dependant on circumstances and constant review.

**If I had to take all my holiday during the pandemic can I take unpaid for the rest of the year when I need holiday?**

Currently there is no requirement to use all holiday entitlement during furlough however pre-planned holiday will continue. Unpaid leave may be requested, and the business will look to support this, but it cannot be promised and will be done on a case by case basis.

**If the furlough period continues beyond the date given of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 would this be rotated between the other staff members or would I remain a furlough worker?**

Decisions will be made dependant on circumstances and constant review. Rotating workers with those on furlough is an option and will be considered, as appropriate, nearer the time. The date of the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 is the date given by the government we do not know if it will be extended or not.

**Will I be informed what other team members are designated as a furlough worker and when they have been informed?**

We do not intend to publish a list of workers on furlough; however, your line manager can answer any specific questions you may have. The business will be encouraging contact between colleagues on furlough using platforms like WhatsApp. The company will also be communicating regularly with furloughed employees.

**Can I carry over this year's holiday entitlement to next year?**

In most situations, employees should use their paid holiday (statutory annual leave) in their current holiday year. This is 5.6 weeks in the UK, including bank holidays. This is important because taking holiday helps with rest and supports good mental and physical wellbeing. During the Coronavirus outbreak, however, it may not be possible for all employees to take all their holiday entitlement and they may get to the end of the annual leave year with holiday still left to take. The government has introduced a temporary new law to deal with Coronavirus disruption that allows employees to carry up to 4 weeks' paid holiday into the next holiday year, if they cannot take the holiday due to Coronavirus.

**Do I have to do anything or make any claim to the government to ensure that I get 80% of my basic wage?**

No, you do not have to make a claim for your wages. Numatic International, as the employer, will pay you 80% of your basic wage into your bank account on your normal weekly or monthly payment times. The employer will make the claim to the government for wages they have paid through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and will be reimbursed appropriately.

**Can I do any work at home, or work part time for Numatic International during the furlough period?**

When on furlough an employee cannot undertake any work, in any capacity, for or on behalf of the organisation, including providing services or generating income.

**Can I use my work laptop or work mobile phone while on furlough?**

You must not use your work laptop or work mobile phone to undertake any work, in any capacity, for or on behalf of the organisation, including providing services or generating income. Access to work intranet and email account will be disabled. Any use of work equipment must be for personal use only during furlough. You may be asked to return your work equipment at any time.

**Where can I access Company information while I am on furlough?**

The new employee website page can be found here <https://numatic.co.uk/covid-19-employee-info>

**I am considering reducing my voluntary pension payments during the furlough period. How do I do this?**

If you are paying above the minimum employee pension contribution rate you may request to change this. Please email [Amanda.manley@numatic.co.uk](mailto:Amanda.manley@numatic.co.uk) with your written instructions regarding your pension.

**Can I halt the usual deductions from my wages for the cycle to work scheme?**

All deductions (e.g. Income Tax, National Insurance), salary sacrifice schemes (e.g. cycle to work) and attachment to earnings will remain throughout during the furlough period.

**How will I receive my payslips during the furlough period?**

Your payslips will be posted to your home address.

**What is the return address for the Furlough Worker Consent form?**

You may email to [hrteam@numatic.co.uk](mailto:hrteam@numatic.co.uk)

or

You may post to HR department, Building 13, Numatic International, Millfield Industrial Estate, Chard, TA20 2GB