



Maternity and other family related leave policy

1. Maternity and other family-related leave rights

*Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.
(Psalm 127:3)*

- 1.1. Employees have statutory rights to time off for family related reasons.
- 1.2. For convenience, and to reflect our ethos and view of marriage, we have used the terms “parent”, “husband”, “wife”, “mother” and “father”, and “married” below, however the following rights may legally extend to others in a qualifying relationship. For more detail on who else may benefit from these rights, please follow the links given.
- 1.3. Please let your Line Manager know as soon as possible if you are pregnant, seeking to adopt or wanting to take statutory time off.
- 1.4. This is particularly important if you are pregnant as this will help us plan and to meet our health, safety and welfare obligations. We will assess the risks to you and your baby, for example from: heavy lifting or carrying; standing or sitting for long periods; or from working long hours. Where there are risks, we will take reasonable steps to remove them.
- 1.5. If you take Paternity Leave, up to 26 weeks of Maternity/Adoption Leave, up to 4 weeks of Parental Leave or up to 26 weeks Shared Parental Leave (combined total for both eligible parents), you have the right to return to your job.
- 1.6. If you take a longer period, and it is not possible to give you your old job, you have the right to a similar job.
- 1.7. The following sets out the statutory position.

2. Maternity

Antenatal appointments

- 2.1. All pregnant employees are entitled to reasonable time off with pay for the purposes of receiving antenatal care, which may include relaxation classes and

parent classes where recommended by a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered health visitor.

- 2.2. Employees whose wives are pregnant are entitled to 2 occasions of unpaid time off (of up to 6.5 hours each occasion) to accompany their wife to an antenatal appointment.
- 2.3. To ensure a request to attend antenatal care can be accommodated, you should give your Line Manager as much notice as possible.
- 2.4. Except for your first appointment, you should show your Line Manager, if requested, an appointment card or other document confirming the pregnancy and that an appointment has been made.

Maternity Leave

- 2.5. Qualifying employees are entitled to up to 52 week's maternity leave.
- 2.6. More detail can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave>
- 2.7. To qualify for maternity leave, you must tell your Line Manager no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth:
 - that you are pregnant
 - the expected week of childbirth, by means of a medical certificate
 - the date you intend to start maternity leave. This can normally be any date between 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth and the birth.
- 2.8. When you receive the MAT B1 form from your doctor or midwife, confirming that you are pregnant and when the baby is due, you need to pass this to your Line Manager.
- 2.9. Once notification has been given your Line Manager will write to you, within 28 days of the notification, setting out your return date. You must normally give 8 weeks' notice if you wish to change that return date.

Statutory Maternity Pay

- 2.10. Statutory maternity pay (SMP) will be payable if:
 - you have been employed continuously for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth; and

- for the 8 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth you had average weekly earnings of at least the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions.

2.11. SMP is payable for up to the first 39 weeks of maternity leave:

- For the first six weeks of maternity leave it is paid at 90 percent of your average weekly earnings;
- For the next 33 weeks of maternity leave it is paid at whichever is lower of the prescribed SMP rate or 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings.
For more detail, see <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay>

Maternity Allowance

2.12. Women who do not qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay may be entitled to Maternity Allowance. For more details, see <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance>

Keeping in Touch

2.13. During maternity leave, we may offer you the option to work for up to 10 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days without bringing your Maternity Leave to an end. Working for any part of a day will count as a full KIT day.

2.14. KIT days:

- Are to enable employees to keep in touch and keep up to date with developments at work, and may include working, attending training or meetings.
- Are optional and must be agreed in advance with your Line Manager
- Do not extend your maternity leave period
- Will be paid at your normal basic rate of pay (inclusive of maternity pay).

2.15. We may also make reasonable contact with you to discuss return to work arrangements or to communicate important information, such as news of changes at the workplace that might impact you or your return.

3. Paternity leave

3.1. Paternity leave is only available to eligible employees. For more detail on eligibility, see <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/eligibility>

- 3.2. If you want to take paternity leave, you must tell your Line Manager as soon as possible and make a written request. For detail on the notice you must give and the form you need to complete, see <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/how-to-claim>
- 3.3. Paternity leave can only be taken in a block of 1 week's leave or 2 weeks' leave.
- 3.4. It cannot be taken until the actual date of birth and must normally be taken within 56 days of the date of birth. For adoption cases, see <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/adoption>

Paternity pay

- 3.5. Eligible employees will receive paternity pay at the statutory prescribed rate or, if lower, 90% of their average weekly earnings. For more details, see: <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/pay>

4. Adoption

Adoption Appointments

- 4.1. If you are the main adopter, you will be able to take reasonable paid time off for up to five adoption appointments.
- 4.2. If you are the secondary adopter, you will be entitled to take unpaid time off (of up to 6.5 hours each occasion) for up to two appointments.
- 4.3. To ensure a request to attend an appointment can be accommodated, you should give your Line Manager as much notice as possible.

Adoption Leave

- 4.4. Qualifying employees may be entitled to up to 52 weeks adoption leave.
- 4.5. For more details, see: <https://www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave/eligibility>.
- 4.6. Adoption leave can start up to 14 days before the date your child starts living with you.
- 4.7. You must provide your Line Manager with proof of adoption and you must, where possible, tell your Line Manager no later than 7 days from being matched with your child:
 - the expected/actual date of placement

- the date you intend to start adoption leave
 - the amount of leave you want to take.
- 4.8. Once notification has been given your Line Manager will write to you, within 28 days of the notification, setting out your start and return dates. You must normally give 8 weeks' notice if you wish to change your return date.
- 4.9. Different rules apply to overseas adoptions.
- 4.10. If you jointly adopt a child, one adopter may be able to take adoption leave and the other may be able to take paternity leave or shared parental leave.

Adoption Pay

- 4.11. Statutory adoption pay is paid for up to 39 weeks.
- 4.12. Eligible employees will receive adoption pay at the statutory prescribed rate or, if lower, 90% of their average weekly earnings. For more details, see: <https://www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave/pay>

Keeping in Touch

- 4.13. During adoption leave, we may offer you the option to work for up to 10 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days without bringing your Adoption Leave to an end. Working for any part of a day will count as a full KIT day.
- 4.14. KIT days:
- _Are to enable employees to keep in touch and keep up to date with developments at work, and may include working, attending training or meetings
 - _Are optional and must be agreed in advance with your Line Manager
 - Do not extend your adoption leave period
 - Will be paid at your normal basic rate of pay (inclusive of adoption pay).
- 4.15. We may also make reasonable contact with you to discuss return to work arrangements or to communicate important information, such as news of changes at the workplace that might impact you or your return.

5. Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave - General

- 5.1. Shared Parental Leave (SPL) enables eligible employees to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of birth/adoption.
- 5.2. Qualifying employees may be entitled to up to 50 weeks' SPL - taken from their wife or husband's Maternity Leave/Adoption Leave allowance, which is then curtailed.
- 5.3. For more detail, see: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/eligibility-for-birth-parents>; or <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/eligibility-for-adopters>
- 5.4. To be able to take SPL, your wife/husband must have returned to work from maternity/adoption leave or given binding notice that they are doing so. For more detail, see: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/when-you-can-start>
- 5.5. You must provide your Line Manager at least 8 weeks' written notice by providing the written form at: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/applying-for-leave-and-pay>

Further evidence of eligibility

- 5.6. Your Line Manager may, within 14 days of the SPL entitlement notification being given (or within 14 days of a request for Statutory Shared Parental Pay), request certain additional information (see: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/applying-for-leave-and-pay>) which you must provide within 14 days in order to remain eligible for SPL.

Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)

- 5.7. Eligible employees may be entitled to up to 37 weeks ShPP whilst taking SPL. The amount of weeks available will depend on the amount by which the mother/adopter reduces their maternity/adoption pay period or maternity allowance period.
- 5.8. Eligible employees will receive ShPP at the statutory prescribed rate or, if lower, 90% of their average weekly earnings. For more details, see: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/what-youll-get>

Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days

- 5.9. Whilst on SPL, you can agree to come to work (or attend training) for up to 20 days without bringing their period of SPL to an end. Any work carried out on a day or part of a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.
- We are under no obligation to invite you to come to work or attend training. Where we do, you are under no obligation to agree.
 - Where you take a SPLIT day, you will receive full pay (inclusive of any ShPP) for that day regardless of how long you work.
 - Any SPLIT days worked do not extend the period of SPL.
 - SPLIT days are separate from and additional to any KIT day entitlement whilst on adoption/maternity leave (see above).

6. Parental Leave (Unpaid)

- 6.1. Parental leave enables eligible employees to take unpaid time off work to look after a child's welfare.
- 6.2. Qualifying employees may be entitled to up to 18 weeks' _Parental Leave for each child under 18. Normally, no more than 4 weeks per child can be taken each year. Normally Parental Leave must be taken as complete weeks.
- 6.3. You will need at least one year's employment. For more detail, see: <https://www.gov.uk/parental-leave/eligibility>
- 6.4. You must normally give your Line Manager at least 21 days written notice and must confirm the start and end date.
- 6.5. If you make a valid request, we can turn it down, provided:
- You are not taking it immediately after the birth/adoption of your child
 - Postponing it would not take you beyond your child's 18th birthday
 - We have a significant reason, for example serious disruption
 - _We inform you within 7 days that we have turned down the request and we offer new dates (covering the same duration) within 6 months of your original requested period.