

Paternity Policy

A) INTRODUCTION

If your partner becomes pregnant you may be entitled to take time off work for various reasons, and this policy explains what your rights are.

B) ANTE-NATAL APPOINTMENTS

Regardless of your length of service, you have the right to take time off to accompany your partner to ante natal appointments. An ante-natal appointment is one which has been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, nurse or midwife. Under this right, you are entitled to take time off to attend a maximum of 2 ante-natal appointments, to a maximum of 6.5 hours per appointment. This time is unpaid.

We may ask you to provide a declaration stating the date and time of the appointment, that you qualify for the time off in terms of your relationship with the mother of the child or the child, and that the time off is for the purpose of attending the ante natal appointment.

You must be the:

- Father of the child;
- The husband, civil partner or partner of the mother;

The right applies whether the baby was conceived naturally or via donor insemination.

C) ORDINARY PATERNITY LEAVE

You must have been continuously employed by us for a period of at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of the child's birth or, in the case of an adopted child, for at least 26 weeks leading into the week in which the adopter is notified of being matched with a child.

You must be the father of the child, or be married to, or the civil partner or "partner" of, the child's mother or adopter. "Partner" in relation to a child's mother or adopter means a person (whether of a different sex or the same sex) who lives with the mother, or adopter, and the child in an enduring family relationship but is not a relative of the mother or adopter (a relative is defined as a parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle).

You must have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

Only one period of leave is available irrespective of whether more than one child is born as a result of the same pregnancy or adopted as part of the same arrangement.

D) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

You are required to give us notice, in writing, of your intention to take paternity leave.

The notice must be given in on or before the 15th week before the expected week of the child's birth or, in the case of an adopted child, no more than seven days after the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with a child. In a case where it is not reasonably practicable for you to give notice in accordance with the above, it should be given as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The notice must specify:

- a) if applicable, the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child;
- b) the expected week of birth or placement for adoption;
- c) whether you wish to take one or two weeks leave; and
- d) when you want your leave to start.

You must also give us a signed declaration as to the purpose of the absence and that the eligibility conditions have been met.

You are able to change your mind about the date on which you want your leave to start providing you notify us at least 28 days in advance, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You must give us a further notice, in writing, as soon as is reasonably practicable after the child's birth or placement for adoption, of the date on which the child was born or placed.

E) SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

You may be entitled to take shared parental leave if both you and your partner meet the eligibility criteria. Shared parental leave enables you and your partner to divide almost a year's leave between you after the child is born/adopted and gives you more flexibility over who will take leave and when. If you choose to take shared parental leave, you are still entitled to take ordinary paternity leave.

If you would like more information on shared parental leave, please speak with your line manager.

F) COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION OF LEAVE

Leave may only be taken during the period beginning with the date of the child's birth or placement and ending 56 days after that date or, in a case where the child is born before the first day of the expected week of birth, 56 days after that day.

Subject to the above, you can choose to begin your leave:

- (i) on the date on which the child is born or placed with the adopter;
- (ii) from a specified chosen number of days/weeks after the date of the child's birth/placement (whether this is earlier or later than expected); or
- (iii) from a specified predetermined date which is later than the first day of the expected week of the child's birth or expected date of placement.

Leave can start on any day of the week, and you can choose to take a block of either one week or two consecutive weeks. You cannot choose to take two separate single week blocks. During paternity leave you are entitled to the benefit of your normal terms and conditions of employment, except wages or salary, and you are bound by any obligations arising under those terms and conditions except in so far as they are inconsistent with the right to paternity leave. Most employees will be entitled to statutory paternity pay whilst on paternity leave.

G) RETURNING TO WORK

If you return to work following an isolated period of paternity leave; or a period of parental leave of no more than four weeks, you are entitled to return to the job in which you were employed before the absence. In addition, seniority, pension and similar rights should be as they would have been had the absence not occurred, and other terms and conditions should not be less favourable than those which would have applied had the absence not occurred.