



# Parental leave

Human Resources

April [2024-2026](#)

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## Document history

Name of policy	Parental leave
Purpose of policy	To set out entitlements and support for parents wishing to use unpaid parental leave.
Policy applies to	All employees
Latest update	April 202 <del>6</del> 4
Update overview	April 2024: Policy review to reflect all updates to historic work and parents handbook.  <a href="#">April 2026: The Employment Rights Act 2025 removes the one year's service qualifying period of employment for parental leave, making it a day one right.</a>

## Parental leave

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction

Parents have the right to unpaid time off work when they need to look after their children, this is called parental leave. This is additional to other types of time off employees are entitled to including maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave and/or annual leave.

We are committed to supporting a positive work-life balance for all employees and recognise that time with children is important. If you are eligible for parental leave you can use it to care for your child, which might be to look after them during school holiday, be with them when they are unwell or enjoy more quality time with them.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we can amend it at any time. This may be in response to changing UK legislation or to ensure it remains supportive for our workforce.

#### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

## 2. Parental leave

### 2.1 Entitlement to parental leave

All employees ~~with one year's local government service~~ who have parental responsibility for their child can use unpaid parental leave. This can include step-parents where you have parental responsibility and it is agreed between all parties.

Each parent can take up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child until they are 18 years old. This must be taken in blocks of weeks up to a maximum of 4 weeks a year for each child. A week means a working week depending on your working pattern.

If your child is disabled and you receive Disability Living Allowance or a Personal Independence Payment for them, you can take unpaid parental leave in blocks of days rather than weeks.

### 2.2 Telling us you want to use parental leave

To take parental leave, you need to tell your line manager by email or in writing with at least 21 days' notice before the date you want to start a block of parental leave. This will need to include the exact dates you plan to start and finish your parental leave so we can work together to plan your absence.

We may ask for your child's birth certificate or certificate of adoption to support your request.

We would normally expect to support your request for parental leave on the dates you have requested. Your absence will be recorded on the HR management system and will be unpaid. The Payroll team will keep a record of your unpaid parental leave in a 12 month period to ensure it is not more than the 4 weeks maximum.

### 2.3 Postponing your parental leave

If taking parental leave at the time you have requested will cause undue problems at work, for example there's an important deadline, we will talk to you about this in the first instance. We will email or write to you within 7 days after receiving your request explaining why the leave needs to be postponed and give other suitable dates.

These dates can be for up to 6 months after you originally asked for, but we will support you to take the leave before your child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

If you are adding parental leave to your paternity leave, we will not postpone your parental leave.

## **2.4 If you need less than a week off to look after your child**

Review our [Support Leave SUPPORT LEAVE](#) policy to understand options available to you if your child is involved in an emergency or has a long-term care need.

If your circumstances do not fall within the support leave policy, we may be able to support you with annual leave, depending on operational needs.