

Parental Leave

Entitlement.

- An employee may be entitled to up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave to care for a child, or to make arrangements for the care of a child.
- The care of a child may include time off to settle them into playgroup or nursery school, or to care for them if they are sick.

Qualification.

- The employee must have at least one year's service in the Company.
- The child must be under the age of 5, or 18 if disabled.
- The employee must be the parent of the child, named on his or her birth certificate.
- Or, the employee will have adopted a child, under the age of 18. (The entitlement lasts for five years from the date they formally adopt the child, or until their 18th birthday – whichever is sooner.)
- Or, the employee will have taken over formal parental responsibility for a child under 5, in line with the Children Act 1989, or the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.
- Or, the employee is the parent, adopting parent, or has formal parental responsibility, for a child under 18, who is receiving disability living allowance.
- If both parents work for the Company, each one will be entitled to the leave at the same time.
- Managers must be satisfied that the employee has reasonable grounds for the leave, and may request evidence of this.

Notification.

- Employees must inform their Manager, in writing, at least 21 days before they want the leave to start.
- They will need to confirm both the start and end dates of the parental leave, and include any request for annual leave, if they want to combine the two.
- They will need to let their manager see any relevant documents which confirm:
 - they are the parent, adopting parent, or have acquired formal parental responsibility, for the child;
 - the child's date of birth;
 - the expected date of placement, if adopting;
 - the child's entitlement to disability living allowance (if applicable); and why they are requesting parental leave, for example to care for the child

Exceptions and variations.

- Employees may be limited to taking four weeks each year, unless their manager agrees, in exceptional circumstances, to the full 18 weeks.
- If the employee works part-time, their entitlement will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.
- If the employee does not work a five-day working pattern, their manager will work out an equivalent leave entitlement.
- If an employee wants to combine parental leave with other types of leave, such as maternity or adoption leave, they will still need to apply for those separately.
- Whilst on parental leave, an employee will still be entitled to their full annual leave entitlement. However, they won't be entitled to any public or general holidays that fall during the period of leave.
- Parental leave cannot be taken after the date of the child's 5th or 18th birthday, or from five years after the child was placed with the employee for adoption. The only exception is if a manager postpones their parental leave.

5.5 Postponement of parental leave.

- Managers may postpone a request for leave, for up to six months, if it can be shown that the Department would be significantly affected in a detrimental way.
- However, they cannot do this without the employee's agreement if the employee has already given notice to take leave immediately after their child is born, or placed with them for adoption.
- If parental leave is postponed, the employee will receive a letter within 7 days of their request, confirming why it has been postponed, and the alternative dates when they can take the leave.
- These alternative dates must be within six months of the start date of the original leave request.