



PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of parental leave is to care for a child. This means looking after the welfare of the child and that can include making arrangements for the good of the child. Caring for a child does not necessarily mean being with the child 24 hours a day. The leave might be taken simply to enable parents to spend more time with young children. The following are examples of the way leave might be used:

- Spend more time with the child in early years
- Accompany the child during a stay in hospital
- Investigate new schools
- Settle the child into new childcare arrangements
- Enable the family to spend more time together, for example, when taking the child to stay with grandparents

Parental leave is **unpaid**. The right to statutory parental leave is an individual right so both parents are entitled to statutory parental leave for **each** child, i.e. a parent with two children under the age of eighteen would be entitled to a total of 36 weeks parental leave (2x18 weeks).

ELIGIBILITY AND ENTITLEMENT

To qualify for parental leave you must have completed one year's continuous employment with us.

You are entitled to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave up to the child's 18th birthday (subject to a maximum of four weeks in any one year).

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

You must make your request for parental leave a minimum of 21 days before you would like the leave to start. You must give notice of the exact day on which you wish your parental leave to start.

Fathers who wish to take parental leave straight after the baby is born or prospective adoptive parents who want to take parental leave straight after the child is placed with them for adoption must give 21 days' notice of the expected week of childbirth or the expected week of adoption.

Leave cannot be taken in blocks of less than a week (unless the child is disabled) and you cannot take more than four weeks leave in respect of any individual child during a particular year.

If the child is disabled you will have the flexibility to take leave a day at a time if you wish.

DEALING WITH YOUR REQUEST

We may postpone your request for parental leave when the leave would, in our view, unduly disrupt the operations of the business, or organisation, or if you do not give

the appropriate notice. If we do feel it necessary to postpone the date upon which the leave is taken we will supply in writing and within seven days of receipt of your request, our reasons as to why the leave has been postponed.

We will not delay the leave for more than six months.

We will not postpone parental leave in respect of a father wanting leave immediately after the birth of a child, or for individuals who require leave immediately after the date that an adoptive placement takes place, as long as the appropriate notice requirements are given.

We may ask for evidence to support your request for the parental leave.

Parental leave is an individual right and is not transferable, this means that both parents will be able to take up to 18 weeks' leave if both are working, but they will not be able to add together their leave entitlements so that one parent can take more than 18 weeks and the other less.

RIGHT TO RETURN

If you return to work after an isolated period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less, or after a period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less which consecutively followed another period of statutory leave (e.g. holidays, paternity leave etc.) and which did not include any period of additional maternity leave, or additional adoption leave, you are entitled to return to the job in which you were employed before your absence.

If you return to work after a period of parental leave lasting more than four weeks, or after a period of parental leave lasting four weeks or less, which did consecutively follow a period of additional maternity leave or additional adoption leave, you are entitled to return from leave to the job in which you were employed before the absence or, if that is not reasonably practicable, to another job which is both suitable and appropriate for you in the circumstances.

Paul Battershall
General Manager