

Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy (including Adoption Leave)

1. Application

This policy applies to all employees who are

- The mother/adopter of a child or
- The mother's partner, which can constitute one of the following:
 - The father of the child (in the case of birth) or
 - The spouse, civil partner or partner of the child's mother/ adopter.

2. Ante-Natal Appointments

A pregnant employee is entitled to take reasonable time off to attend ante-natal appointments made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered health visitor. All time off for ante-natal care will be paid at the normal rate of pay.

Except in the case of the first appointment an employee must be prepared to show:

- A certificate confirming pregnancy (MATB1 Certificate)
- An appointment card or other document specifying an appointment

The Company regards the right for time off for ante-natal appointments to apply to both expectant mothers and fathers. The father has the right to un-paid time off work to attend two ante-natal appointments.

3. Notification

In order to qualify for maternity/paternity/adoption leave, mothers and/or partners must inform their employer in writing by the end of the 15th week (8th week in cases of Shared Parental Leave) before the due date / placement date of:

- The pregnancy
- The expected week of the baby's birth / the child's placement
- When they intend the leave to start
- In case of Shared Parental Leave and Paternity leave: at what point they expect the leave to end

Forms for all notifications are available in the annex of this policy.

4. Leave Entitlements

4.1 Mothers (or main adopter)

Every pregnant member of staff is entitled to maternity leave, comprising of:

4.2 Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)

- Ordinary maternity leave is 26 weeks.

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- The start of maternity leave cannot be earlier than the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth or 14 days before the child's placement date.
- The first 2 weeks of leave following the birth/placement of the child are compulsory.
- The first 4 weeks of leave following the birth/placement of the child are compulsory if they work in a factory.

4.3 Additional Maternity Leave (AML)

- An employee is entitled to additional maternity leave of up to 26 weeks, regardless of the length of employment.
- AML starts at the end of OML with no intervening gap.

4.4 Fathers

An employee who is the biological father of the baby, or the mother's / main adopter's husband or partner (including same-sex partners), is entitled to paternity leave. Paternity leave entitlement is two weeks. Leave can be taken as two consecutive weeks or two periods of one week. It must be taken within 52 weeks of the date of birth/placement. This time off is for caring for the new baby or support to the mother/main adopter.

[OR]

4.5 Shared Parental Leave

Both parents (as defined above) must share the main responsibility for the care of the child at the time of the birth/placement for adoption.

Eligible employees may be entitled to take up to 50 weeks SPL during the child's first year in their family. The number of weeks available is calculated using the mother's/adopter's entitlement to maternity/adoption leave, which allows them to take up to 52 weeks' leave. If they reduce their maternity/adoption leave entitlement then they and/or their partner may opt-in to the SPL system and take any remaining weeks as SPL.

SPL can only be taken in complete weeks but may begin on any day of the week.

SPL can commence as follows:

- The mother can take SPL after she has taken the legally required two weeks of maternity leave immediately following the birth of the child
- The adopter can take SPL after taking at least two weeks of adoption leave
- The father/partner/spouse can take SPL immediately following the birth/placement of the child, but may first choose to exhaust any paternity leave entitlements (as the father/partner cannot take paternity leave or pay once they have taken any SPL or ShPP).

SPL must end no later than one year after the birth/placement of the child. Any SPL not taken by the first birthday or first anniversary of placement for adoption is lost.

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5. Pay

5.1 Eligibility

In order to be eligible for any payments, employees must have:

- A minimum of 26 weeks' service at the end of the 15th week before the child's expected due date/matching date
- Average earnings at least equal to the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions (although they do not actually have to have paid any contributions).
- Correctly notified the organisation of their entitlement and provide evidence as required.

In case of Shared Parental Leave, the employee's partner must also meet the 'employment and earnings test' requiring them in the 66 weeks leading up to the child's expected due date/matching date to have worked for at least 26 weeks and earned at least £390 in total in 13 of the 66 weeks (this is correct as of October 2022 but may change annually). The employee/employer may add up the highest paying weeks as the weeks don't need to have been in a row.

Employees must also be employed at the start of each SPL period.

5.2 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

SMP is payable for up to 39 weeks to employees who take maternity leave or who leave employment because of pregnancy. The amount of SMP is based upon length of service and average earnings:

- The first 6 weeks - 90% of their average weekly earnings (AWE) before tax
- The remaining 33 weeks - a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year or 90% of their AWE (whichever is lower)

Tax and National Insurance need to be deducted.

SMP is paid whether or not the employee intends to return to work and is payable only when an employee is absent from work.

5.3 Maternity Allowance (MA)

Employees who do not qualify for SMP with the Company but meet the qualifying conditions based on their recent employment and earnings record may claim Maternity Allowance for up to 39 weeks. Please refer to the gov website <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/how-to-claim> for details on how to claim this benefit.

5.4 Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)

During paternity leave employees may be entitled to Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) which is paid at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year. The same conditions as for SMP payments apply.

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5.5 Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)

Eligible employees may be entitled to take up to 37 weeks ShPP while taking SPL. The amount of weeks available will depend on the amount by which the mother/adoption pay period or maternity allowance period.

ShPP may be payable during some or all of SPL, depending on the length and timing of the leave.

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements for SPL, an employee seeking to claim ShPP must further satisfy each of the following criteria:

- The mother/adoption pay or maternity allowance and must have reduced their maternity/adoption pay period or maternity allowance period;
- The employee must intend to care for the child during the week in which ShPP is payable;
- The employee must have average weekly earnings for the period of eight weeks leading up to and including the 15th week before the child's expected due date/matching date that are not less than the lower earnings limit in force for national insurance contributions;
- The employee must remain in continuous employment until the first week of ShPP has begun;
- The employee must give proper notification in accordance with the rules in this policy.

Where an employee is entitled to receive ShPP they must, at least eight weeks before receiving any ShPP, give their line manager written notice advising of their entitlement to ShPP. To avoid duplication, if possible, this should be included as part of the notice of entitlement to take SPL.

In addition to what must be included in the notice of entitlement to take SPL, any notice that advises of an entitlement for ShPP must include:

- The start and end dates of any maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance;
- The total amount of ShPP available, the amount of ShPP the employee and their partner each intend to claim, and a non-binding indication of when the employee expects to claim ShPP;
- A signed declaration from the employee confirming that the information they have given is correct, that they meet, or will meet, the criteria for ShPP and that they will immediately inform the organisation should they cease to be eligible.

It must be accompanied by a signed declaration from the employee's partner confirming:

- Their agreement to the employee claiming ShPP and for the organisation to process any ShPP payments to the employee;
- (In the case whether the partner is the mother/ adoption) that they have reduced their maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance;

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- (In the case whether the partner is the mother/ adopter) that they will immediately inform their partner should they cease to satisfy the eligibility conditions.

Any ShPP due will be paid at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year.

6. Requesting Further Evidence of Eligibility

The organisation may, within 14 days of the SPL entitlement notification being given, request:

- The name and business address of the partner's employer (where the employee's partner is no longer employed or is self employed their contact details must be given instead)
- In the case of biological parents, a copy of the child's birth certificate (or, where one has not been issued, a declaration as to the time and place of the birth).
- In the case of an adopted child, documentary evidence of the name and address of the adoption agency, the date on which they were notified of having been matched with the child and the date on which the agency expects to place the child for adoption

In order to be entitled to SPL, the employee must produce this information within 14 days of the employer's request.

7. Fraudulent Claims

The organisation can, where there is a suspicion that fraudulent information may have been provided or where the organisation has been informed by the HMRC that a fraudulent claim was made, investigate the matter further in accordance with the usual company investigation and disciplinary procedures, and also without acting in a discriminatory manner in relation to any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

8. Return to Work and Changes to Leave Notifications

In case of maternity leave, an employee can change their return to work date as long as they give 28 days' notice to the employer in writing.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) will generally commence on the employee's chosen start date specified in their leave booking notice, or in any subsequent variation notice (annex) and automatically end as agreed.

Applications can be made for leave to be taken in one block or in separate blocks of full weeks (discontinued leave). Any changes will have to be submitted for approval 8 weeks prior to the start of the new SPL period. Please note that changes to discontinued SPL dates may be declined, if business needs require it.

Employees are entitled to submit up to 3 change notices throughout their SPL period. Any changes submitted due to the early/late birth/placement of the child do not count as one of the 3 change notices.

If the employee's aggregate total statutory maternity/paternity/adoption leave and/or SPL amounts to 26 weeks or less, he or she will return to the same job as the one they occupied

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immediately before commencing their leave, on the same terms and conditions of employment as if they had not been absent.

If their leave amounts to 26 weeks or more in aggregate, the employee is entitled to return to the same job they held before commencing the last period of leave or, if this is not reasonably practicable, to another job which is both suitable and appropriate and on terms and conditions no less favourable.

9. Annual Leave

Maternity-, Paternity- or Shared Parental Leave is granted in addition to an employee's normal annual holiday entitlement. Employees are reminded that holiday should wherever possible be taken in the year that it is earned.

Where a leave period overlaps two leave years the employee should consider how their annual leave entitlement can be used to ensure that it is not untaken at the end of the employee's holiday year.

10. Benefits

During the period of Maternity-, Paternity-, Adoption- or Shared Parental Leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force and they are entitled to receive all their contractual benefits, except for salary. In particular, any benefits in kind (such as use of a company car, laptop, mobile phone and gym membership) will continue and contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.

If eligible, pension contributions will continue to be made during any period when the employee is receiving statutory pay but not during any period of unpaid leave. Employee contributions will be based on actual pay, while the organisation's contributions will be based on the salary that the employee would have received had they not been taking paid leave.

11. Sickness During Pregnancy

An employee who is absent due to a pregnancy related illness within the 4 weeks before the baby is due will automatically begin their maternity leave. The employee must as soon as is practicable give the Company notice in writing that she is absent from work wholly, or partly, because of pregnancy, and of the date on which absence for that reason began.

Time off for sickness and Statutory Sick Pay apply as usual at any other time during pregnancy. Statutory Sick Pay cannot be claimed whilst an employee is claiming Statutory Maternity Pay.

12. Contact During Leave

Before an employee's leave begins, the organisation will discuss the arrangements for them to keep in touch. The organisation reserves the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with the employee from time to time. This may be to discuss the employee's plans to return to work, to ensure the individual is aware of any possible promotion opportunities,

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to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work or simply to update them on developments at work during their absence.

13. Keep in Touch Days

While on maternity leave, the employee has access to a total of 10 Keep in Touch (KIT) days.

If on Shared Parental Leave, employees are entitled to a total of 20 Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days.

These days are meant to create an opportunity for employees to undertake individual days of work without interrupting their leave period or payments. Days are arranged on mutual agreement. The organisation has no right to require the employee to carry out any work, and is under no obligation to offer the employee any work.

An employee taking a SPLIT day will receive full pay for any day worked. Any 'in Touch' days worked will not extend the period of SPL.

14. Miscarriage, still birth of the baby or dies soon after birth

Employees still have their right to maternity leave, paternity leave and shared parental leave (and applicable rates of pay) rights if the baby:

- is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy
- dies soon after birth

If the employee is eligible for parental bereavement leave and pay, they have the right to take this after they finish their maternity leave.

The Company will take all reasonable steps to support the employee in these circumstances.

If the Company needs to discuss work-related matters with the employee, this may be arranged with someone else (for example, a friend or family member). The Company and employee will agree:


- when this communication happens
- how it happens (for example, whether any urgent communication can be emailed to a friend or family member for a limited time)

The Company will also consider offering more time off or a phased return to work.

15. Special Circumstances and Further Information

In certain situations an employee's rights and requirements may change. In these circumstances the organisation will abide by any statutory obligations and an employee should clarify any issues or queries with their manager.

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Policy Issue Date	Director Signature
17 th April 2025	

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APPENDIX 1 Leave Notification Form

For Maternity, Paternity or Adoption Leave

Your Details	
Full Name	
Department	
Preferred contact number/email while on leave	
Relationship to child	

The Child's Details	
Expected Date of Birth / Placement Date	
Actual Date of Birth / Placement Date	

Declaration	
I intend to commence maternity / paternity / adoption leave on:	
I intend to return to work on:	
I am interested in taking advantage of my 10 Keep in Touch days.	Yes / No
If yes, I propose the following arrangement:	
I declare that I have been matched with a child for adoption and wish to take statutory adoption leave for that purpose.	
Signature	

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Date	
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APPENDIX 2

Notice of Entitlement and Intention to Take Shared Parental Leave

Please refer to the company’s Shared Parental Leave Policy for further information before completing this form.

Your Details					
Full Name					
Department					
Preferred contact number/email while on leave					
Relationship to child	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Main adopter</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Secondary adopter</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table>	Main adopter		Secondary adopter	
Main adopter		Secondary adopter			

Your Partner’s Details					
Full Name					
Address if different from the one held for yourself					
Employer’s details					
Relationship to child	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Main adopter</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Secondary adopter</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table>	Main adopter		Secondary adopter	
Main adopter		Secondary adopter			

The Child’s Details	
Expected Date of Birth / Placement for Adoption	

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Actual Date of Birth / Placement for Adoption (if known)	
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Shared Parental Leave Details	
The total amount available is 52 weeks minus the number of weeks' leave/pay already taken by the mother/main adopter according to the dates given in the previous section.	
Total number of weeks' SPL available	
Number of weeks' SPL you intend to take	
Number of weeks' SPL the other parent intends to take	
Indication of start and end dates of SPL that you intend to take	
<i>This indication is non-binding. You must submit a formal period of leave notice for each period of SPL you wish to request for it to be binding. Complete the section below if you wish your request for any/all of these periods of leave to be treated as a period of leave notice.</i>	
Do you wish the dates indicated for the period(s) of leave to constitute a formal (binding) period of leave notice? (delete as appropriate)	Yes / No for the following dates only:

Shared Parental Pay Details	
The total amount of shared parental pay (ShPP) which may be available is 39 weeks minus the number of weeks' pay already taken by the mother/main adopter according to the dates given in Section 1.	
Total number of weeks' ShPP available	
Number of weeks' ShPP you intend to claim	

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Number of weeks' ShPP the other parent intends to claim	
Indication of start and end dates of your ShPP periods	

Employee Notice of Curtailment of Maternity / Adoption Leave

Complete this section if you are the employee named in this notice and you are the mother or main adopter. You must give at least eight weeks' notice of your curtailment date. If you are entitled to maternity leave the curtailment date must be at least two weeks after the birth of your child (four weeks if you work in a factory).

I wish my maternity/adoption leave to end on _____ (insert date).

Employee Declaration

I confirm that I meet the following conditions:

- I am the mother, father, or main adopter of the child, or the partner of the mother or main adopter
- I have (or share with the other parent) the main responsibility for the care of the child and I am taking SPL in order to care for the child
- I have at least 26 weeks' continuous service at the 15th week before the expected week of birth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the 'relevant week')
- I intend to be in continuous employment until the week before any SPL is taken
- (If I am claiming shared parental pay) I have average weekly earnings equal to or above the Lower Earnings Limit over the eight week period ending with the relevant week
- I agree to inform the company immediately if I cease to meet the conditions for entitlement to SPL or ShPP.

If you are the mother/main adopter:

- I have submitted a curtailment of maternity/adoption leave notice by completing Section 4 above.

Signature

Date

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Declaration of Other Parent	
Name	
National Insurance Number	
<p>I confirm that I meet the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have least 26 weeks' employment (employed or self-employed) out of the 66 weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected week of birth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the 'relevant week') I have (or will have) earned in total at least £390 in 13 weeks of the 66 weeks before the expected week of birth I agree to inform your employee immediately if I cease to meet the two conditions above I consent to your employee taking SPP and ShPP as set out in Sections 2 and 3 above. 	
<p>If you are the mother/main adopter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have curtailed my maternity leave and pay/adoption leave and pay/maternity allowance or will have done so by the time your employee starts shared parental leave 	
<p>I consent to you processing the information contained in this declaration.</p>	
Signature	
Date	

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APPENDIX 3

Notice of Variation of Intention to Take Shared Parental Leave

Use this form to vary the information you have previously provided regarding the amount of shared parental leave/pay you and the other parent each intend to take.

You must have previously submitted the notice of entitlement and intention to take leave form, and had your entitlement to shared parental leave confirmed.

Name of Employee	
Name of Other Parent	

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) Details	
Number of weeks' SPL you intend to take	
Number of weeks' SPL the other parent intends to take	
Indication of start and end dates of SPL that you intend to take <i>This indication is non-binding. You must submit a formal period of leave notice for each period of SPL you wish it to be binding.</i>	
Do you wish the dates indicated for the period(s) of leave to constitute a formal (binding) period of leave notice? (delete as appropriate)	Yes / No, for the following dates only:
List any dates of SPL which you have already submitted to the company on a binding period of leave notice	
List any dates of SPL which the other parent has already submitted on a binding period of leave notice to his/her employer.	

Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) Details	
Number of weeks' ShPP you have	

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claimed/intend to claim	
Number of weeks' ShPP the other parent has claimed/intends to claim	
Indication of start and end dates of your ShPP periods	
Declaration	
We confirm that we agree to the variation(s) detailed above.	
Signature of Employee	
Date	
Signature of Other Parent	
Date	