

Paternity Policy

AIM

The aim of this policy is to set out the employee's and the Organisation's obligations which must be fulfilled when an employee wishes to take paternity leave. The policy also provides details of statutory entitlements to which the employee may be eligible. This policy is applicable to all employees who wish to take ordinary paternity leave and who meet the eligibility requirements as detailed below.

PRINCIPLES

- The Organisation wishes to detail the procedures that must be followed where an employee wishes to take ordinary paternity leave
- Details of any benefits and paternity pay that an employee may be entitled to during his/her ordinary paternity leave are provided within the policy along with the length of paternity leave entitlement and the notification requirements.

ELIGIBILITY

Employees are eligible for ordinary paternity leave if they have responsibility for the baby's upbringing and are:

- the biological father of the baby; and/or
- the mother's husband or partner

In addition employees must have continuously worked for the Organisation for:

- 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the baby is due; and
- continued to work for the Organisation up to the date of birth

In the case of adoption, the adopting parents must decide who will take adoption leave and who will take ordinary paternity leave. Where the adopting parent is taking ordinary paternity leave he/she must have 26 weeks continuous service with the Organisation at the time:

- that the adopter is told that they have been matched with a child for adoption; or
- in the event of adoption from overseas, the time that the adopter receives official notification of the adoption

The employee must be taking the time off to either support the mother or adopter; or to care for the new baby or child.

ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS

An employee may take unpaid time off to accompany a pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment if he/she has a "qualifying relationship" with the woman or the child. This means that either the employee is:

- the baby's father;
- the pregnant woman's spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner;
- one of the intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement and expect to obtain a parental order in respect of the child.

Employees must give the Organisation as much notice of the appointment as possible and provide a signed statement detailing the date, time of the appointment and confirming that:

- he/she meets one of the eligibility criteria as detailed above;
- the purpose of the time off is to accompany the pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment; and
- the appointment has been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered nurse.

Employees may take unpaid time off to accompany a pregnant woman to up to two antenatal appointments in relation to each pregnancy. Each appointment must not be longer than six and a half hours off, including travel and waiting time.

ENTITLEMENT

Where eligible, employees who wish to take ordinary paternity leave will be entitled to take one or two weeks consecutive paid leave. Ordinary paternity leave cannot be taken as odd days or as separate weeks.

Employees will only be entitled to one period of leave even where more than one baby is born as a result of the same pregnancy, or where more than one child is being adopted.

Ordinary paternity leave can start once the baby has been born, employees can choose to start their leave:

- on the date of the baby's birth; or
- on a date following the baby's birth, providing that the leave is taken within 56 days of the actual date of birth (or in the case of a premature birth, 56 days from the date that the baby was due to be born)

In the case of adoption employees can begin their ordinary paternity leave:

- on the date that the child is placed with the adopter (or in the case of adopting from overseas, on the date that the child enters the UK); or
- on a date following the date that the child is placed (or the date that the child enters the UK), providing that the leave is taken within 56 days of this date.

NOTIFICATION

It is important that employees notify the Organisation that they wish to take ordinary paternity leave as soon as possible, so that arrangements can be made where necessary to cover the absence.

Employees must notify the Organisation in writing by the 15th week before the week in which the baby is due that he/she wishes to take ordinary paternity leave. In the case of adoption employees must notify the Organisation once they have received confirmation that they have been matched with a child, or in the case of adoption from overseas, when they have received official notification of the adoption. The employee must tell the Organisation:

- the expected week of the baby's birth (or in the case of adoption the date that the child is expected to live with them or enter the UK)
- whether he/she will be taking one or two weeks leave
- the date that the employee would like the leave to start

Where an employee wants to change his/her planned date of ordinary paternity leave he/she must give the Organisation at least 28 days notice of this change.

Employees must inform the Organisation as soon as possible if it becomes known to them that the adopter will not be adopting the child.

STATUTORY PATERNITY PAY AND BENEFITS

Employees must comply with the notification requirements and meet the eligibility requirements as detailed above, in addition the employee's pay must be either at the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) or above. The employee must give the Organisation at least 28 days notice of the date from which he or she expects to receive ordinary statutory paternity pay.

The employee will be entitled to two weeks at the Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) amount.

BENEFITS

An employee's contractual benefits will continue to accrue during the ordinary paternity leave period.