
Parental Leave Guidance

1. Policy Statement

We know that spending time with your children whilst they're growing up is an important part of you enjoying life's everyday moments. Unlike the other types of family friendly leave which must be taken in the first year, parental leave gives you the option to take time off up to your child's 18th birthday for the purpose of spending time with them.

This guidance is non contractual and may be changed in the future. If you have any questions about it please contact HR Services.

2. Policy Owner

The policy is owned by the Director of Reward & HR Services, Kevin Blake.

3. Who does it apply to?

This guidance applies to anyone with a GB contract of employment.

4. Policy Detail - What do I need to know or do?

Whilst your children are growing up you may want to take time off work. For example:

- To spend more time with them and your family
 - To settle children into new childcare arrangements / look at new schools
- You can take a total of 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child up to their 18th birthday. Your entitlement doesn't refresh when you change employers so you'll need to tell us what parental leave you've already taken.

Eligibility Rules

- You need to have been employed by us for at least 1 year
- You must be the parent and have care of the child
- Correct written notice and evidence needs to be given

Leave Entitlement

It's up to you how you wish to manage your leave. Parental leave must be taken in blocks of at least 1 week and you can't take more than 4 weeks per year (anniversary years). Your leave doesn't have to be taken in one go. If your child is disabled then you can take your leave entitlement in days.

Notice and Evidence

Please talk to your manager as early as possible about your plans. You need to make your request for parental leave on myHR at least 21 days before you want your leave to start. On your myHR leave request you must confirm the number of parental leave days already taken (including time off in any previous employment)

by writing this in the comments box. We may ask you to give us a copy of your child's birth or adoption certificate.

Leave Requests

If you're asking for leave to start immediately after the birth or adoption of your child, then we'll say yes to your request. If you're asking at another time, we'll try to give you your leave but there may be certain circumstances where we need to postpone it, for example:

- Critical time of the year for your job role and function
- Where we can't cover your role
- If resources are low

If we need to postpone your leave your manager should meet with you to talk this through and propose a new start date. This will be within 6 months of the original requested start date. We'll confirm this in writing within 7 days.

Benefits during Parental Leave

All contractual benefits, apart from your pay, will normally stay in place during your leave. You'll need to look at the benefit scheme rules for any benefits that you have. You need to be aware that any period of unpaid leave will change your bonusable pay. It's important that you review your flexible benefit selections; you'll need to talk to us about how you'll make up your contributions. As your time off work won't be very long you'll return to the same job.

5. Policy breach and consequences - What happens if I don't follow it?

If you don't follow the requirements you may lose your entitlement to family leave. If you give us false information to support your leave request then this will be treated as alleged fraud and may be a serious disciplinary matter.

6. Related Documents

The following related documents can be found on our [Policies and Disclosure](#) page on Focus:

- Family Leave Policy
- Time Off Policy
- Pay & Benefits Policy
- Companion Guidance