

Parental leave

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Parental leave must be for the purpose of “caring” for a child. This might include:
 - 1.1.1 accompanying the child during a stay in hospital;
 - 1.1.2 spending more time with the child in their early years;
 - 1.1.3 settling a child into new childcare arrangements;
 - 1.1.4 spending more time together as a family e.g. with grandparents;
 - 1.1.5 looking at new schools.
- 1.2 This entitlement is separate from maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave and annual leave.
- 1.3 Parental leave is an individual right and cannot be transferred between parents.

2. Entitlement

- 2.1 All employees are entitled to take unpaid leave from work to care for a child if all of the following requirements are met:
 - 2.1.1 one year’s continuous service
 - 2.1.2 the employee is named on the child’s birth or adoption certificate or they have or expect to have parental responsibility
 - 2.1.3 they are not a foster parent (unless they have secured parental responsibility through the courts)
 - 2.1.4 the child is under 18

3. The amount of leave

- 3.1 An employee will be entitled to a total of 18 weeks’ parental leave in respect of each child, up to their 18th birthday. Leave must be taken in complete weeks, except for parents of a disabled child who can take leave for one or more days at a time.
- 3.2 The total amount of leave an employee can take per child is 4 weeks, however this could be increased in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.3 A “week’s leave” is calculated according to your normal working week. For example, if you work two days a week on a Tuesday and a Friday, this would be one week’s leave. If you are in any doubt of your entitlement, please contact HR.
- 3.4 Each leave year commences on the anniversary of the child’s birthday, or in the case of adoption, the anniversary of the child’s adoption date.
- 3.5 The right to parental leave applies to each child not to an individual’s job, therefore, if an employee moves to a new employer they will carry forward the balance of leave already taken to their new job.

4. Notice provisions and postponing leave

- 4.1 Employees must give 21 days’ notice before their intended start date by completing the special leave form, stating the start and end date of the leave. If this is linked to the birth/adoption of a child it is 21 days before the week the baby or child is expected.

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- 4.2 For the first request of leave for a child, employees must provide proof e.g. a birth certificate, MATB1 or adoption letter.
- 4.3 The line manager should contact HR on receipt of the request, prior to giving approval. Confirmation of the leave will be provided via the electronic system.
- 4.4 The line manager may wish to discuss the request with the employee, and with the Head of Team/ Director/ CEO if the leave request is for a substantial period of time, such as requests for 3-4 weeks leave.
- 4.5 HEFCW reserves the right to postpone parental leave if they have a 'significant reason' such as the leave would cause serious disruption to the organisation.
- 4.6 Leave cannot be postponed by HEFCW if:
 - 4.6.1 it's being taken by the employee immediately after the birth or adoption of a child
 - 4.6.2 it means an employee would no longer qualify for parental leave, eg postponing it until after the child's 18th birthday
- 4.7 Should the leave be postponed, HEFCW will write to the employee within 7 days of the original request giving details of the reason for postponement. A suggested new start date would be provided which must be within six months of the original requested start date. HEFCW cannot change the amount of leave that was requested.

5. Contract of employment

- 5.1 During parental leave the employee will remain employed by HEFCW and their length of service will not be affected by them taking parental leave. The following terms and conditions will still apply:
 - 5.1.1 the implied duty of mutual trust and confidence;
 - 5.1.2 Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest;
 - 5.1.3 notice requirements;
 - 5.1.4 Disciplinary and Grievance procedures;
 - 5.1.5 contractual redundancy entitlements.
- 5.2 During periods of parental leave, annual leave will accrue at the normal rate (pro rata for part-time employees). Any Bank Holidays that have occurred during parental leave will be accrued and the time added on to the employee's annual leave balance on return to work.
- 5.3 After taking parental leave the employee is entitled to return to the same job in which they were employed to before the leave.

6. Monitoring leave

- 6.1 HR retains a record of any parental leave that has been taken by the employee on the HR/Payroll database and should the employee leave HEFCW, this information will be passed on to the new employer.

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Version	Date	Description
0.1	N/A	Inherited policy
1.1	April 07	Policy updated in line with legislation
2.0	Feb 08	Style guide, OD, EIA and IS Control update of policy
2.1	Sept 2011	Impact Assessment
3.0	Jan 2012	Update following pay and grading 2010-11
4.0	March 2013	Update following change in legislation as of 8 March 2013
4.1	Nov 15	Updated in line with policy review project