

PATERNITY POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy explains the entitlement and approach to Paternity Leave and Pay.

The policy is part of our strong commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive workplace for all. We want to enable everyone to contribute fully and develop professionally at work, whilst also managing their wider family needs and responsibilities effectively.

POLICY

Introduction

The policy outlines the statutory rights and responsibilities of employees whose partners are pregnant, have recently given birth or have adopted a child. It describes how we will manage the period of Paternity Leave and pay, and sets out the arrangements for requesting these.

There are a number of terms which are used in this policy. These are the terms used in UK legislation and across all organisations in relation to maternity and paternity policy.

EWC – Expected week of childbirth

The 'Qualifying Week' – the 15th week before the EWC

SPP – Statutory paternity pay

For the purpose of this policy 'Partner' is defined as someone who lives with the mother of the baby (or adopter) in an enduring family relationship, but is not an immediate relative such as a grandparent or sibling.

Eligibility for Paternity Leave

Paternity Leave is available employees who are one of the following:

- Employees whose partner gives birth
- The partner of an individual who adopts, or the member of a couple adopting jointly who hasn't chosen to take adoption leave.

To qualify for Paternity Leave, an employee must:

- Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- In the case where the partner or spouse is giving birth, they must be the biological father of the child or the mother's spouse or partner (either gender).
- In the case of adoption, they must be the adopter's spouse or partner (regardless of the gender of either of the couple).
- Have worked continuously for UONSU for 26 weeks ending with the Qualifying Week or the week in which the adopter is notified of being matched with a child.

Timing and Length of Paternity Leave

Paternity Leave consists of 1 or 2 consecutive weeks' leave. The leave must be taken in a single block and not in instalments.

Please tell us as soon as possible when you wish to take this leave. You can choose to start your leave:

- From the actual date of the child's birth or date of placement of the adopted child
- A chosen number of days or weeks after the actual date of the child's birth or date of placement
- From a chosen date later than the first day of the EWC, or the expected date of placement.

Paternity Leave cannot start before the birth and must be taken within 56 days of the actual date of the child's birth (or placement) or within 56 days of the EWC if the child is born earlier than expected.

Notification of Paternity Leave

You are required to notify us of your intention to take Paternity Leave by the 15th week before the EWC or within 7 days of the adopter being notified by their adoption agency that they have been matched with a child for adoption. You should do this by completing Form SC3 (found on the Forms website - <http://www.uonsu-forms.co.uk/>).

At the same time, you will also need to tell us:

- The week the baby is due or when the child is expected to be placed
- Whether you wish to take one or two weeks' leave
- When you would like your Paternity Leave to start.

You may change your mind about the date you wish the leave to start by writing to the Students' Union giving at least 28 days' notice of the new date.

Notification should be supported by a completed self-certificate. A blank self-certificate specifically for this purpose is available from HR.

Contractual Rights during Paternity Leave

Whilst you are on Paternity Leave, all your contractual rights, except pay, will continue as if you were still at work. When you return to work following Paternity Leave, you will be considered to have been continuously employed for the purposes of seniority, pension, redundancy and other similar rights.

- Pension rights and contributions will be dealt with in line with the rules of the Scheme.
- You will be entitled to receive any normal annual increment on your pay scale due to you, in accordance with your contract of employment, and at the normal incremental date.
- Annual leave entitlement, as set out in your contract, accrues during Paternity Leave.
- However, any Public or UoNSU-declared holidays falling during the period of Paternity Leave, will not be added as additional days of leave.

Childcare Vouchers are a non-cash benefit and will continue to be provided throughout the period of Paternity Leave.

Statutory Paternity Pay

If you are eligible to take Paternity Leave you will be entitled the following:

- 1 week paid at your basic salary
- 1 week paid Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), subject to eligibility.

Occupational Paternity Pay

If you are eligible for Statutory Paternity Pay your weekly wage will be topped up to full pay for the second week.

Payments will be pro-rata for part-time employees.

Staff with average weekly earnings above the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance Contributions as set by the Government will qualify for SPP. Please contact the HR team for details.

Staff who are do not qualify for SPP may be able to receive financial support through the Benefits Agency.

Time Off to Accompany Your Partner at Ante-natal Appointments

This is explained fully in our Maternity Policy.

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