

PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy explains the entitlement to Parental Leave, which allows parents time off work to support their children's welfare and well-being as they grow up.

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 who wish to take time off work to look after their children's welfare. It describes the eligibility and rules for this leave, and sets out the arrangements for requesting it. Parental Leave is unpaid.

Note that 'Parental Leave' is different from 'Shared Parental Leave' in which the mother can switch part of her statutory maternity leave and pay to share it with her partner. Please see the Shared Parental Leave Policy for details.

Eligibility for Parental Leave

Employees who have at least 12 months' continuous service with UoNSU are entitled to 18 weeks' unpaid leave to care for and support their children. This leave can be taken at any time up to the age of 18 years from either the child's date of birth, the date of adoption or the date they gained or expect to gain formal parental responsibility. We may ask for proof of date of birth or adoption.

The allowance of 18 weeks applies to each child born or adopted.

Timing and Length of Parental Leave

The following conditions apply:

- You may take up to 18 weeks leave in the time up to the child's 18th birthday
- You may take up to 4 weeks leave per year within the overall total of 18 weeks.
- Leave is deducted in blocks of at least one week. The deduction will be in whole weeks only, irrespective of the number of days taken within a week.
- The only exception to this is for parents of disabled children who may take Parental Leave in single days.
- Any Parental Leave taken with previous employers will be deducted from the 18 weeks' total.

Notification of Parental Leave

You must give 21 days' notice of your intention to take Parental Leave. This should be in writing to your line manager.

We may need to postpone leave where we believe it's reasonable to do so because of the requirements of the union. However, we will not postpone leave for more than 6 months. Special provision is made for fathers to allow them to arrange time off straight after their baby is born and for adopting parents, provided that 21 days' notice is given of the expected date.

Contractual Rights during Parental Leave

Whilst you are on Parental Leave all your contractual rights, except pay, will continue as if you were still at work. When you return to work following Parental 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 Parental Leave.
- However, any Public or UoNSU-declared holidays falling during the period of Parental 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 Parental Leave as long as your pay does not fall below the national living wage.

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