

Leave & Pay for New Parents Policy

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What is in this policy?

The policy provides details about entitlements to leave and pay for Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, Shared Parental Leave, New Parent Support Leave (Paternity Leave) and Neonatal Care Leave.

Fast find to Key Guidance

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Document Change Control				
Date of Version	Version Number	Lead for Revisions	Type of Revision	Description of Revision
June 2025	1	HR Policy Manager	new	New policy combining Maternity Leave, Adoption leave, Shared Parental Leave and New Parent Support Leave (Paternity Leave) policies.

Sign off Process and Dates	
Groups consulted	Date agreed
HR Business Partners	23/05/2025
Joint Union Committee	08/05/2025
HR Policy Group	03/6/2025

Our Pro-equity approach

Pro-Equity is inclusion in everything we do, even when people aren't looking. It is embracing full hearted care by making UHBW a better place to work, building a place where everyone feels truly safe to be themselves. Where our differences are our strengths, and everyone feels like they belong here, because they do.

To be Pro-Equity:

- We must be against that which prevents it. We will be anti-racist, anti-ableist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic ... we will be actively against all forms of discrimination.
- We will address our practices and culture in a compassionate way.
- We will have difficult and uncomfortable conversations so that we can listen to learn, grow, and change to make things fair, because right now, they are not.

Our commitment

This won't be easy, but it will be worth it. Because by doing this we can make a real difference to the lives we touch. Not just for colleagues, but for everyone. Patients. Family. Community. We're all in. We're committed to Pro-Equity. We're committed to being and doing better, for everyone. We are Team UHBW.

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1. Introduction

UHBW is committed to providing support to you to manage your childcare for new-born babies or when you adopt a child. Under Employment Law, you and your partner have rights to a period of leave and statutory payments. This could be Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, Shared Parental Leave or New Parent Support Leave (Paternity Leave).

If you meet certain criteria, you may also be able to access one of the NHS Occupational Pay Schemes that will provide payment more than the statutory payments.

There is a table for definitions and abbreviations used throughout this policy in [REDACTED]

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide you with information about your entitlement to leave and pay for the birth or adoption of a baby or child. This includes information on the qualification requirements and provides guidance on the steps to take.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all UHBW colleagues and is based on the following principles

- You will be supported during your pregnancy or adoption leave and return to work.
- Your entitlement to the applicable benefits depends on your length of service with UHBW and the NHS.
- During your leave, both paid and unpaid, you retain all your contractual rights, except remuneration which depends on your eligibility for the appropriate pay.
- Any leave taken through this policy does not break your continuity of service.

4. Duties, Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Employees

- (a) To inform their manager of their intention to take leave and pay as described in this policy, including their planned dates for the leave and return to work.
- (b) Let their managers know of any changes to circumstances e.g. child born early or change of return date.
- (c) Provide 8 weeks' written notice should they wish to change their return to work date.

4.2 Managers

- (a) Carry out risk assessments for new and expectant mothers and carrying parents.
- (b) Notify Payroll by forwarding completed pay plans/application forms to [REDACTED]

- (c) Complete eforms as required with the leave start date. Ignore the instruction on the change of conditions eForm to send any paperwork to Employee Services.
- (d) Complete an eform if any KIT or SPLIT days have been completed.
- (e) Inform colleagues of any relevant work updates whilst they are away from work on parental leave.
- (f) Facilitate a return to work, including any applications for flexible working wherever possible and notify payroll by completion of an eform.

4.3 People Teams

- (a) Advise colleagues and managers on entitlements to leave and pay and the application of this policy.

4.4 Payroll

- (a) Adjust pay according to entitlement during the period of leave
- (b) Send confirmation of expected gross pay during leave to the employee
- (c) Process any KIT/SPLIT day payments.

5. I'm going to become a parent, what do I need to do?

As soon as you know you plan to take any leave covered by this policy you must tell your manager.

For pregnant employees, your manager will carry out a risk assessment to ensure any adjustments needed are made to your role using the [REDACTED]. Information about health and safety for new and expectant mothers and carrying parents at work can be found on the [HSE website](#).

You need to consider, discuss and agree the following with your manager.

- When you want to start your maternity or adoption leave
- If you wish to take any shared parental leave
- How long you will want to take off work
- What continuous service you will have, to work out the level of pay you will receive
- How you and your manager will keep in touch during your leave
- If you will have any Keeping in Touch (KIT) days or SPLIT days during your leave
- What annual leave you will have available prior to your leave and when this may be taken
- If you are planning to return to work after the leave
- If you want to consider flexible working on your return and if so, when you should submit your request

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Once you have discussed the above, you should complete a Maternity or Adoption Pay Plan, which can be found [REDACTED]. You should share your form, and accompanying documents with your manager by the following appropriate date

- before the end of the 15th week before the expected week of birth for maternity/surrogacy/surrogate adoption,
- no more than 7 calendar days after the day you are notified of having been matched with a child for adoption
- as soon as you can and normally within 28 days after having received your Official Notification if you are adopting from overseas

You should note how long you wish to take off work, on the form. If you are unsure at this stage, your manager will note your leave as the full 52 weeks. If you wish to change the start date of your leave or return to work date, you must tell your manager in writing, giving at least 28 days' notice wherever possible.

Managers should email the completed form to [REDACTED]. Please ignore the instruction on the change of conditions eForm to send any paperwork to Employee Services. This is the old process, and we are unable to amend the e-form.

You may choose, if you are eligible, to share the care of your child during the first 12 months with a partner by using Shared Parental Leave, see [REDACTED]

6. Maternity Leave

All pregnant employees have the right to 52 weeks maternity leave. Many of the maternity provisions are statutory or form part of the national NHS Terms & Conditions. All mothers and parents who were pregnant, must take Compulsory Maternity Leave of 2 weeks following the birth.

The 52 weeks of leave is made up of 26 weeks Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) and 26 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave (AML). Your AML will start the day after your OML finishes.

The earliest that your leave can start is 11 weeks before the week your baby is due, unless your baby is born early, when it will start the day after the birth.

Your rate of maternity pay depends on your individual circumstances.

For further information please see the [REDACTED]

7. Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is available to

- any colleague who is the primary carer of a newly and legally adopted child, either from the UK or overseas, under the age of 18
- any colleague who is the intended parent through a surrogacy arrangement and commits to applying for a [REDACTED]

If you're in a couple, only one of you can get adoption leave and pay. You should decide between yourselves who will get it. The other parent can take New Parent Support Leave (Paternity Leave), more information is in the guidance [REDACTED]

The 52 weeks adoption leave is made up of 26 weeks Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) and 26 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave (AAL). Your AAL will start the day after your OAL finishes.

The rate of your adoption pay depends on your circumstances. Please see the Adoption Leave & Pay Guidance.

Adoption leave can start

- on the date the child starts living with you or up to 14 days before the expected placement date (UK adoptions)
- when you have been matched with a child to be placed with you by a UK adoption agency
- when the child arrives in the UK or within 28 days of this date (overseas adoptions)
- the day the child is born or the day after (parents in surrogacy arrangements)
- when a fostering placement is made or when the child is matched with you (Fostering to Adopt)

For further information please see the [REDACTED]

8. Shared Parental Leave & Pay

Eligible parents who are sharing responsibility for a child can get Shared Parental Leave (SPL) in the first year after the birth of a child, adopting a child or getting a parental order if they have a child through surrogacy.

You must give your line manager at least 8 weeks' notice of your intention to take SPL using a Shared Parental Leave Booking Form which can be found [REDACTED]

Managers should email the completed form to [REDACTED]. Please ignore the instruction on the change of conditions eForm to send any paperwork to Employee Services. This is the old process, and we are unable to amend the e-form.

SPL can be taken at any time within 1 year from the birth or placement for adoption, providing that 2 weeks' compulsory maternity or adoption leave has been taken first.

The [NHS Employers Shared Parental Leave Guidance](#) has various scenarios illustrating how occupational shared parental leave and pay should work.

For full information please see the [REDACTED]

9. New Parent Support Leave (Paternity Leave)

If your partner is pregnant or is the primary adopter of a child, as the second parent, you may be eligible for up to 2 weeks' leave. Please see the [REDACTED] [link](#).

10. Neonatal Care leave

Neonatal Care Leave & Pay provides additional leave and pay for parents of babies who require neonatal care, with a right to up to 12 weeks' leave and pay. This allows eligible parents with dedicated time to care for their newborn babies during a challenging period, without impacting their existing parental leave entitlements. Please see the [REDACTED] for full details.

11. Accrual of Annual Leave

You will continue to accrue annual leave (including bank holidays) while on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave which you should try to take before you return to work. Should you apply for Flexible Working, and this is agreed, this will only become effective after you have used the annual leave you have accrued.

12. Time off for Appointments

If you are pregnant, you have the right to paid time off for antenatal care which includes relaxation and parent-craft classes. Your partner will be entitled to unpaid leave to attend two ante natal appointments.

If you are being assessed for adoption you have the right to reasonable paid time off for essential meetings that the adoption agency has arranged or asked for. The time off should be for part of the day if practicable, in which case travel time will also be paid.

You must discuss the time off with your manager in advance and you may be asked to confirm your relationship, and the appointment details.

13. Returning to Work

You have the right to return to your job under your original contract and on no less favourable terms and conditions following maternity, adoption or shared parental leave.

You will return to your normal role if returning within one year. If you choose to extend your maternity or adoption leave, then you may not be able to return to your original role but to a suitable and appropriate job on the same band with terms and conditions that are no less favourable.

If you wish to return to work on different hours, we have a duty to facilitate this, wherever possible. Please see the [REDACTED]. We encourage you to have early conversations with your manager around possible flexible working options on your return to work.

14. Returning to Bank Work

If you are in the unpaid section of your Maternity, Adoption, or Shared Parental Leave you can work Bank shifts before returning to your substantive role, only if:

- You have reached the end of your Statutory Maternity Pay or Adoption Pay.
- OR if on Shared Parental Leave, your Statutory Shared Parental Pay is exhausted.

Any bank work will not count towards your average weekly earnings used to calculate any future Occupational Maternity, Adoption or Shared Parental Pay.

Your manager must notify Payroll by submitting a Change of Conditions eform first when you start Bank work during leave and again on your return to your substantive role.

Bank shifts won't count toward the three-month return period required to avoid repayment of Occupational Maternity Pay or Occupational Adoption Pay. To meet this condition, you must return to a substantive role within UHBW or another NHS organisation.

15. Failure to Return to Work

If you do not return to work with UHBW or a different NHS employer within the following timescales for a minimum period of 3 months you will be liable to refund the whole of your maternity, adoption, or shared parental pay, less any Statutory Maternity, Adoption or Shared Parental Pay, received.

- i) within 15 months of the beginning of your maternity or adoption leave, or
- ii) within 3 months of the end of the shared parental leave

A return to work, for the purposes of avoiding the repayment of the occupational element of your pay, must be undertaken on a substantive post. This can be full or part time and accrued annual leave counts but it cannot be Bank work. The rights to recovery may be waived in cases where it is considered that to enforce this provision would cause undue hardship or distress.

16. Fixed Term Contracts or Training Contracts

If you are employed on a fixed term or rotational contract which is due to expire, your contract will be extended to enable you to receive the 52 weeks' leave and applicable pay. Please see Part 3, Section 15 of the [NHS Terms & Conditions of Service Handbook](#)

Absence on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave (paid and unpaid) up to 52 weeks before a further NHS appointment shall not constitute a break in service.

If there is no right of return to be exercised because your contract would have ended if your leave had not been taken, the repayment provisions will not apply.

17. Sickness prior to childbirth

If you are off work ill, or become ill, with a pregnancy-related illness during the last 4 weeks before the expected week of childbirth your maternity leave will normally start at the beginning of the 4th week before the expected date of birth on your MAT B1, or the beginning of the next week after you last worked, whichever is the later.

Pregnancy related illness before the last 4 weeks of your pregnancy will be treated as sickness absence.

18. When things sadly don't go as planned

The [REDACTED] has supportive information, advice and details of what leave may be available to you and your partner following the loss of your child.

If your baby is stillborn, or in the case of neonatal loss, you will be entitled to the same amount of maternity leave and pay as if your baby were alive.

In the unfortunate case of adoption disruption, where the adoption breaks down, you will be entitled to continue your adoption leave and receive the appropriate payment for that time.

19. Abbreviations & Definitions

AAL	Additional Adoption Leave – the second 26 weeks of adoption leave
AML	Additional Maternity Leave – the second 26 weeks of maternity leave
Childbirth	Resulting in a child after 24 weeks of pregnancy, either alive or stillborn
CML	Compulsory Maternity Leave – the first 2 weeks after the baby is born when maternity leave must be taken
EWC	Expected Week of Childbirth – the week the child is expected to be born
KIT day	Keeping In Touch Day
MA	Maternity Allowance (state benefit)
MAT B1	The certificate issued to confirm the pregnancy and the expected date of birth
Matching Week	The week you are notified of being matched with a child for adoption
OAL	Ordinary Adoption Leave - the first 26 weeks of adoption leave
OAP	Occupational Adoption Pay
OML	Ordinary Maternity Leave - the first 26 weeks of maternity leave
OMP	Occupational Maternity Pay
Qualifying Week	15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth
SAP	Statutory Adoption Pay
ShPP	Shared Parental Pay

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SMP	Statutory Maternity Pay
SPL	Shared Parental Leave
SPLIT day	Shared Parental Leave Keeping in Touch Day

20. References

[NHS National T&Cs Part 3 Section 15](#)

[Adoption pay and leave: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Maternity pay - how much you can get - Citizens Advice](#)

[Pregnant employees' rights - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Shared Parental Leave & Pay](#)

21. Associated Internal Documentation

All policies can be accessed on [REDACTED] , guidance documents are on People Services SharePoint

Family, Compassionate and Other Leave Policy

Flexible Working Policy

Pregnancy & Baby Loss Policy

Adoption Leave & Pay Guidance

Maternity Leave & Pay Guidance

Neonatal Care Leave & Pay Guidance

New Parent Support Leave & Pay Guidance (Paternity Leave)

Shared Parental Leave Guidance

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22. Appendix A – Monitoring Table for this Policy

Objective	Evidence	Method	Frequency	Responsible	Committee
To ensure policy remains fit for purpose	Feedback from managers, Staff side, and other stakeholders	Policy review	36 months	Head of People Services	Policy Group and Staff Partnership Forum
Monitoring of cases and calls to People Services in relation to Maternity, Adoption and SPL to identify clarity of documentation	Reports from Case Management System and Call logs.	Audit and analysis of data from CMS and call logs.	Quarterly, annually and ad hoc as required.	Head of People Services	People Learning & Development Group.

23. Appendix B – Dissemination, Implementation and Training Plan

The following table sets out the dissemination, implementation and training provisions associated with this Policy.

Plan Elements	Plan Details
The Dissemination Lead is:	Head of People Services
Is this document: A – replacing the same titled, expired policy, B – replacing an alternative policy, C – a new policy:	C
If answer above is B: Alternative documentation this policy will replace (if applicable):	Maternity & Shared Parental Leave Policy, Adoption & Shared Parental Leave Policy, New Parent (Paternity) Leave
This document is to be disseminated to:	All staff
Method of dissemination:	Viva Engage, People Services SharePoint, divisional cascade
Is Training required:	yes
The Training Lead is:	Head of People Services

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24. Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Tool

Query	Response
What is the main purpose of the document?	to provide information about entitlements to leave and pay for the birth or adoption of a baby or child.
Who is the target audience of the document? Who is it likely to impact on? (Please tick all that apply.)	Add <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patients <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors <input type="checkbox"/> Carers <input type="checkbox"/> Others

Could the document have a significant negative impact on equality in relation to each of these characteristics?	YES	NO	Please explain why, and what evidence supports this assessment in relation to your response.
Age (including younger and older people)		x	
Disability (including physical and sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental health)		x	
Gender reassignment		x	Policy applies to all colleagues regardless of sex or gender
Pregnancy and maternity		x	Policy applies to all pregnant colleagues
Race (includes ethnicity as well as gypsy travelers)		x	
Religion and belief (includes non-belief)		x	
Sex (male and female)		x	Policy applies to all parents whether pregnant, a partner or adopting regardless of sex
Sexual Orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, other)		x	
Groups at risk of stigma or social exclusion (e.g. offenders, homeless people)		x	
Human Rights (particularly rights to privacy, dignity, liberty and non-degrading treatment)		x	

Could the document have a significant positive impact on inclusion by reducing inequalities?	YES	NO	If yes, please explain why, and what evidence supports this assessment.
Will it promote equal opportunities for people from all groups?		x	
Will it help to get rid of discrimination?	x		Policy applies equally to all prospective parents regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender
Will it help to get rid of harassment?		x	

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Will it promote good relations between people from all groups?		x	
Will it promote and protect human rights?		x	

On the basis of the information/evidence so far, do you believe that the document will have a positive or negative impact on equality? (Please rate by circling the level of impact, below.)

Positive impact				Negative Impact		
Significant	Some	Very Little	NONE	Very Little	Some	Significant

Will the document create any problems or barriers to any community or group? ~~YES~~ / NO

Will any group be excluded because of this document? ~~YES~~ / NO

Will the document result in discrimination against any group? ~~YES~~ / NO

If the answer to any of these questions is YES, you must complete a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Is a full equality impact assessment required? ~~YES~~ / NO

Date assessment completed: 11/6/2025

Person completing the assessment: HR Policy Manager

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