



The supply line to the automotive industry

PARENTAL LEAVE

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy summarises the Company's position regarding an employee's statutory entitlement to Parental leave. Parental leave is available to both male and female staff and is available to employees who have parental responsibility for a child or who are adoptive parents. This includes employees who are registered as a child's parent.

Employees on Parental Leave continue to be bound by their duty of fidelity and confidentiality to the Company.

Introduction

Parental Leave is the right to take time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. The right to parental leave is contained in the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999. The leave is unpaid.

Entitlement

Employees who comply with the following are entitled to unpaid Parental Leave:

1. 1 year's continuous service at date employee wishes to commence
2. Parental Leave;
3. Formal parental responsibility for child:-
 - Mother/Father, whether the natural or adoptive parents; or
 - Named on the child's birth certificate; or
 - Legal Guardian; or
 - Through a Parental Responsibility Agreement or Order under the Children's Act 1989

3. The Child is:
 - under the age of 5 throughout Parental Leave, or
 - is under the age of 18 and has been legally adopted (Parental Leave will apply until 5 years have elapsed following placement or the child's 18th birthday, whichever is the sooner);
 - a disabled child (a "Disabled Child") under the age of 18, and in respect of whom disability living allowance is paid.

4. Leave is taken for the purpose of caring for the child.

There are special rules for employees whose child was born or adopted before 15 December 1999 but whose fifth birthday or the fifth anniversary of their adoption is or will be after that date. They will be entitled to take Parental Leave under this policy until 31 March 2005 or until the child's 18th birthday if the child is a Disabled Child. If these circumstances apply and the employee does not have the required one year's continuous service with the Company but did work continuously for another employer for one year between 15 December 1998 and 9 January 2002, they will be able to rely on that period of service to satisfy the one year's continuous service requirement. The Company reserves the right to request evidence of the relevant period of service.

Duration of Parental Leave

Parents may take a total of thirteen weeks' unpaid leave up until the time of the child's 5th birthday. For parents of a Disabled Child, 18 weeks unpaid leave may be taken up until the time of the child's 18th birthday. For multiple births, 13 (or 18 if applicable) weeks is allowed in respect of each child. For adoptive parents, the Parental leave can be taken for 5 years from the date of placement for adoption or, if sooner, up until the child's 18th birthday (e.g. if adopted at 16 years old, Parental Leave can only be taken up to the 18th birthday). The purpose of parental leave is to allow a parent to care for a child. This may include:

- (a) spending time with the child, including a child which has been adopted;
- (b) settling a child into childcare arrangements;
- (c) accompanying a child to hospital;
- (d) viewing new schools.

The period of Parental Leave must be taken in blocks of one week, or in respect of a Disabled Child in blocks of one day, or more, up to a maximum of four weeks' in any one calendar year

Where an employee works less than 5 days per week, their normal working week will count as a week for the purposes of calculating Parental leave.

d)

Approval

An employee wishing to take Parental Leave must submit the request in writing, giving a minimum notice period of 21 days.

When requesting parental leave, employees must specify the exact date on which they wish parental leave to commence and the date on which they will return to work

There are special provisions that apply in the case of a father wishing to take parental leave on the birth of a baby, or parents waiting for adoption placements. For those employees in this category, there is no requirement to specify an exact date for starting leave but the Company must be given a minimum of 21 days notice before the week in which the birth or adoption is expected or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable. In this case, the written parental leave request should specify details of the expected week of childbirth or, in the case of adoption, placement and specify the duration of the Parental Leave.

Employees making their first request for parental leave will be asked to show the child's birth or adoption certificate. Evidence of legal parental responsibilities and/or the child's entitlement to disability living allowance will also be required where appropriate.

For new employees joining the Company, the Company reserves the right to request, from previous employers, confirmation of parental leave already taken and to deduct that leave from your entitlement once the qualifying period has been achieved.

Parental Leave and Maternity Leave

If an employee has taken Ordinary or Additional Maternity Leave, they may request Parental Leave to commence as soon as they return from their Maternity Leave, providing the requisite notice has been given in accordance with the terms of the Parental Leave Policy.

Postponement of parental leave

The Company reserves the right to postpone parental leave if the employee is required to carry out work to meet business requirements. The reasons for any postponement will be explained in writing to the employee and an alternative date will be arranged with the employee within seven days of the original request. Postponement will be for no more than six months (and in any event before the child's eighteenth birthday) from the date of commencement of parental leave specified in the original request.

In the case of fathers wishing to take parental leave on the birth of a baby, or parents waiting for adoption placements, leave will not be postponed.

Rights during and on return from parental leave

Employees will remain employed by the Company while on parental leave and will continue to be bound by any contractual terms and conditions relating to good faith, notice of termination, confidentiality and participation in any other business. During their leave employees will not be entitled to any remuneration or benefits.

Benefits

Salary:

Salary will not be paid during the Parental Leave.

Holidays:

Annual leave will accrue whilst an employee is absent from work on Parental Leave.

Sick Pay:

In the event of the employee who is entitled to Company sick pay being taken ill whilst on Parental Leave, in order to qualify for payment under the Company's sick pay scheme, the employee must provide medical evidence of the illness. In the event that the illness is for a duration of less than one week, one week will still be counted towards the accrual of Parental Leave. Where the illness is for a period of longer than one week, only one week will be offset against Parental Leave.

Private Medical Insurance:

If a member of the Private Medical Insurance Scheme, employee cover will automatically continue to apply.

Pension Scheme:

Employees who are a member of the Company Stakeholder Pension Scheme may be able to continue to make contributions during Parental Leave. However, if the employee intends to take the maximum 4 weeks leave in one block, then their contributions may be suspended for that month. If employee contributions are suspended for the period of Parental Leave, employer contributions, if appropriate, will also cease for that period. If the employee wishes, they may make a cheque payment to cover the period in question, or alternatively, opt to have an additional deduction made from their salary the following month to cover the payment. The pension status for the period should be indicated on the written parental leave request.

Training and Development:

Employees on Parental Leave will have the same access to training and development as other staff, both prior to, and following their period of leave.

Company Car/Car Allowance:

Where an employee receives a car allowance, this will continue to be paid during Parental Leave.

Return to Work from Parental Leave

Employees who take parental leave for a period of 4 weeks or less, other than leave taken immediately after additional maternity leave, are entitled to return from parental leave to the job in which they were employed prior to their absence. If this is not possible (for example, due to the termination of a client contract), the Company will offer, wherever possible, a suitable alternative position.

Except where during additional maternity leave it is not practicable by reason of redundancy for the Company to continue to employ the employee under her existing contract of employment, an employee who takes parental leave for a period of 4 weeks or less immediately after additional maternity leave is entitled to return from leave to the job in which she was employed before her absence unless:

- (a) it would not have been reasonably practicable for the employee to return to that job if she had returned at the end of her additional maternity leave period; and
- (b) it is not reasonably practicable for the Company to permit the employee to return to that job at the end of her period of parental leave

Otherwise the employee is entitled to return to another job which is both suitable and appropriate for her to do in the circumstances.

Disclaimer

This Policy does not form any part of the employee's contract of employment and the Company may amend this Policy at any time.