



# Parental Leave

## An EPM Guide

# A Guide to Parental Leave

While maternity and paternity leave are common occurrences, as are requests for dependants' leave, parental leave is less used. Although unpaid, it is another option available to employees when they need more time with their children.

## What is Parental Leave?

Parental leave is an unpaid time that can be taken to look after child's welfare or to spend more time with them. The entitlement is 18 weeks per child until they turn 18, to be taken as a whole weeks. The maximum that can be taken a year is 4 week per child, unless agreed otherwise with the employer, and it has to be taken in full weeks.

Note: The entitlement is per child, not employment.

## Who can take it?

- Employees who worked for you for more than a year
- Are named on the child's birth certificate/adoption certificate or have/are expected to have parental responsibility
- Are not a foster parent (unless they hold parental responsibility secured through the courts)
- The child is under 18

Note: An employer can extend this leave to groups who aren't eligible, this should be made clear in your policies/handbook.

## Who is responsible for what?

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| <b>Employee Responsibility</b> | Give 21 days' notice of intended start date and also provide end date in their notice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Employer Responsibility</b> | Confirm leave unless you have a significant reason to delay it.<br>Leave cannot be delayed if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- it's being taken by the father or partner immediately after the birth or adoption of a child</li><li>- it means an employee would no longer qualify for parental leave, eg postponing it until after the child's 18th birthday</li></ul> If postponed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- must write explaining why within 7 days of the original request</li><li>- suggest a new start date - must be within 6 months of the originally requested start date</li><li>- can't change the amount of leave being requested</li></ul> |

## Further questions?

Your EPM People Adviser is available should you have specific questions or require further advice so please get in touch with them.