

1180 PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

The following policy sets out the Parental Leave entitlements available to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) operational, support, part time, full time and fixed term employees (where they meet the continuous service requirements).

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1222 Maternity Scheme; 1181 Paternity Leave Policy; 1179 Adoption Leave; 1225 Flexible Working; 1230 Pay and Recognition Policy; 1214 Reorganisation Policy; 1215 Redeployment Policy; 1197 Special Leave; 1989 Shared Parental Leave Policy; NJC for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service ('Grey Book'); Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999; The Parental Leave (EU Directive) Regulations 2013; Children and Families Act 2014. CFRS Core Values and NFCC Code of Ethics

CONTENTS

PART 1 - POLICY SECTION

Section	Title	Page
1	Introduction and Scope of Policy	2
2	Roles and Responsibilities	2
3	Entitlements	3
4	Eligibility	3
5	Parental Leave Requests Process	3
6	Postponement of Parental Leave	4
7	Parental Leave and Terms and Conditions of Employment	4
8	Misuse of the Parental Leave Policy	5

PART 2 - PROCEDURE SECTION

1	Confirmation of Parental Leave Entitlements	6
2	Parental Leave Request	7
3	Postponement of Parental Leave	7
4	Pension Contributions During Parental Leave	8

PART 3 – GUIDANCE SECTION

<u>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</u>	10-14
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
Appendix 1 Flowchart for Parental Leave Process	15

Appendix 2 Parental Leave Information Form	16
Appendix 3 Parental Leave Request Form	18
Related Entitlements	21

PART 1 – POLICY SECTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Scope of Policy

This Parental Leave Policy forms part of a group of policies under 'Family Leave'. This policy sets out the Parental Leave entitlements available to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) operational, support, part time, full time and fixed term employees (where they meet the continuous service requirements).

The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to:

- Explain and outline the entitlements and eligibility criteria in relation to Parental Leave.
- Ensure that managers are aware of their responsibilities to employees covered by this policy.
- Provide clear guidance on employee rights and responsibilities in relation to Parental Leave.
- Ensure that both employees and managers are aware of the processes in place in relation to Parental Leave.

Please note this policy should not be confused with **Shared Parental Leave** (which may be paid leave). Further information can be found in the Shared Parental Leave policy, document number 1989.

1.2 For simplicity throughout this policy "**mother**" shall refer to the pregnant person who gives birth to a child or the main adopter (the main adopter can be any gender).

"**Partner**" shall refer to the child's biological father or the partner of the mother/adopter and can be a spouse, civil partner; or a partner who is living with the mother and has responsibility for the child/children.

Where this policy refers to spouse, partner or parent this is regardless of gender and includes same sex spouses, partners and parents. All reference to 'mother' includes all people who can become pregnant.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 **Employees** must recognise the importance of keeping management informed of their intentions at the earliest opportunity and provide all necessary documentation as required. Employees must also adhere to

the requirements in relation to providing notice of intention to take Parental Leave.

- 2.2 **Line Managers** are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the procedure and ensuring that it is adhered to consistently.
- 2.3 **Human Resources** are responsible for ensuring this procedure is implemented across the organisation and to provide advice and guidance on its interpretation.

3. Entitlements

CFRS recognises the importance of supporting employees with parental responsibility to maintain an effective balance between their work and family life. In line with this, CFRS aims to ensure that the Parental Leave Policy is promoted to all operational and support employees who are eligible.

Parental Leave, as stated in the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 is for the purpose of caring for an employee's child. This may include time taken to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare.

Eligible employees are entitled to **18 weeks' unpaid** Parental Leave in respect of each individual child until the child's 18th birthday. This must be taken in blocks of a week or more (unless the child is disabled in which case leave can be taken in multiples of one day), with a maximum of four weeks in one year.

4. Eligibility

Employees are eligible for Parental Leave if the employee:

- Has worked for the Service for at least one year's continuous service
- Has parental responsibility for a child under the age of eighteen, or
- Has adopted a child under the age of eighteen.

(Please refer to the Guidance Section for further information)

5. Parental Leave Requests

It is important for the Service to be provided with as much notice as possible of employees' requests in relation to Parental Leave, so that these can then be considered and planned for effectively. In line with this, employees are required to provide at least 21 days' notice in writing to their Line Manager of their request, or to provide as much notice as is reasonably practical (using the 'Parental Leave Request Form' as in Appendix 3).

On an employee's first request for Parental Leave with CFRS, an employee must produce evidence of parenthood or parental responsibility for the request to be considered.

(Please refer to the Procedures and Guidance Sections for more information concerning the Parental Leave Requests process and evidential requirements).

6 Possible Postponement of Parental Leave

Although CFRS will ensure that requested Parental Leave can be taken by an employee, flexibility will sometimes be needed in determining when the Parental Leave is taken. Therefore, whilst every effort will be made by the Service not to postpone Parental Leave, it can be postponed for up to six months, where there are pressing operational reasons, or where undue disruption to work would be caused if the Parental Leave request is agreed. If Parental Leave is postponed, this should be discussed with the employee. Within seven days of submitting the Paternity Leave request, the employee will then be advised in writing of the reason for the postponement and the new dates for leave.

However, there will not be any postponement of Parental Leave where the leave is requested immediately after childbirth, or immediately after placement for adoption. (Please refer to Procedure 3 and the Guidance Section for further information).

7. Parental Leave and Terms and Conditions of Employment

During Parental Leave, employees continue to benefit from their statutory employment rights and are entitled to the benefit of CFRS's implied obligation of trust and confidence and any terms and conditions relating to notice of termination of employment, compensation in event of redundancy, and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Employees are similarly bound by their implied obligation to CFRS of good faith, and any terms and conditions relating to notice to terminate their contract, acceptance of gifts or other benefits, disclosure of confidential information, or participation in any other business. Parental Leave is taken for the purpose of caring for an employee's child – and therefore, it should not be taken for any other purpose, including undertaking other paid work elsewhere.

Any employee receiving car user allowance or car lease scheme will continue to receive this during periods of Parental Leave.

At the end of Parental Leave the employee is guaranteed the right to return to their current post if the leave was for a period of four weeks or less.

If the leave was for a longer period, or it preceded or followed either additional Maternity, Paternity or Adoption Leave, the employee is entitled to return to their current post or, if that is not reasonably practicable, a similar post that has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the current post.

If any reorganisation takes place which may impact upon an individual's substantive post whilst an employee is taking Parental Leave, CFRS will ensure that the employee will be kept informed and involved in any consultations that are required and employees on Parental Leave will be treated no less favourably due to their absence.

8. Misuse of the Policy

If an employee requests parental leave to spend time with their child, but it is later discovered that the time off was used for a different purpose, the Service will be entitled to take disciplinary action against the employee on the basis that the application for parental leave constituted an act of deception.

PART 2 - PROCEDURES SECTION

Procedure 1: Confirmation of Parental Leave Entitlements

	Process/Action	Responsibility
1	When an employee wishes to apply for Parental Leave for the first time, they should complete the 'Parental Leave Employee Information Form' (as in Appendix 2).	Employee
2	Employee should confirm on this form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many children they have under the age of eighteen, if the child is adopted or has a disability • Dates of birth of these children, or the dates of the adoption • If and when Parental Leave has already been taken with a previous employer • Signed declaration that employee consents to CFRS carrying out checks on the amount of Parental Leave which was taken when working for a previous/other employer 	Employee
3	Employee should attach evidence of entitlement to Parental Leave, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of child's birth certificate • And for a disabled child, a record of Disability Living Allowance eligibility Or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers confirming a child's adoption, or the date of placement for adoption 	Employee
3	Form should be provided, with attachments to Line Manager, who will then need to send it to HR Advisor as soon as possible	Employee and Line Manager
4	HR Advisor will log the employee's eligibility/ entitlements onto HR System and place a record of the form onto employee's personal file	HR Advisor
5	If employee is not eligible to apply for Parental Leave, the HR Advisor will write to employee to explain this	HR Advisor
6	If considered necessary, the HR Advisor can contact employee's previous employer, to confirm details, by attaching a copy of the signed declaration	HR Advisor
7	Employee can then proceed to procedure 2, to submit written request for Parental Leave	Employee

Procedure 2: Parental Leave Request

	Process/Action	Responsibility
1	If employee is applying for Parental Leave for the first time, they should complete the 'Parental Leave Employee Information Form', in line with the procedure 1 outlined above	Employee
2	Employee should discuss their requested Parental Leave with their Line Manager as soon as possible	Employee and Line Manager
3	The employee should then complete Section 1 of the 'Parental Leave Request Form', at least 21 days prior to the date on which the requested period of Parental Leave is due to commence and employee should submit this to their Line Manager	Employee
4	Line Manager should discuss request with the employee's Grandparent Manager (which should include the Head of Department).	Line Manager and Grandparent Manager (including HOD)
5	If there are pressing operational reasons why the Parental Leave cannot be agreed, or the taking of Parental Leave may cause undue disruption to work, Procedure 3 should be invoked (as below).	Line Manager
6	If the request can be agreed, the Line Manager should complete Part A of Section 2 of the Parental Leave Request Form and Line Manager should also sign and date the form.	Line Manager
7	Line Manager should then send the completed form to their HR Advisor as soon as possible	Line Manager
8	HR Advisor will write to employee to confirm the Parental Leave request in writing and to record the Parental Leave on HR system.	HR Advisor
9	HR Advisor completes 'Leave Form' and emails to Payroll, to adjust pay accordingly.	HR Advisor

Procedure 3: Postponement of Parental Leave

	Process/Action	Responsibility
1	If it is considered that there are pressing operational reasons why the Parental Leave cannot be agreed, or where undue disruption to work would be caused if the Parental Leave was agreed, the Line Manager (or Grandparent Manager) must discuss this with the employee to agree an alternative date for the leave. This should be done within four days of the request being made. Before discussing with the employee, the Line Manager can also discuss the request for Parental Leave with their HR Advisor.	Line Manager (or Grandparent Manager)

	(Note that Parental Leave cannot be postponed where the employee has given relevant notice to take Parental Leave after the birth of their child/ expected week of placement).	
2	The new arrangements must then be recorded by the Line Manager on Part B, Section 2 of the Parental Leave Request Form within four days of the request being made (- NB. the Parental Leave must be re-arranged to be taken within six months of the requested dates and must be for the same length of time as the original request)	Line Manager
3	The reasons for the postponement must also be recorded on the Parental Leave Request form by the Line Manager	Line Manager
4	The Parental Leave Request form should then be sent to HR Advisor within four days of the request being made	Line Manager
5	HR Advisor writes to the employee within seven days of the date of the initial request to take Parental Leave, to confirm that the original request was postponed – and confirm the new arrangements which have been agreed.	HR Advisor
8	HR Advisor records the Parental Leave on HR Pro system.	HR Advisor
9	HR Advisor completes 'Leave Form' and passes to Payroll, to adjust pay accordingly.	HR Advisor

Procedure 4: Pension Contributions during Parental Leave (for Local Government Pension Scheme and the Old and New Firefighters' Pension Schemes)

	Process/Action	Responsibility
	Local Government Pension Scheme (Cheshire Pension Fund)	
1	For authorised unpaid leave of 30 days or less, employee will pay normal contributions on the pay they would have received had they not been absent.	Employee
2	If leave is for more than 30 days, employee must pay contributions for the initial 30 days and has the option of paying for any absence over and above the 30 day period on the pay they would have received had they not been absent.	Employee
3	If employee decides not to pay, there will be a break in their pensionable service.	Employee
4	For the period above 30 days the employee will then have 30 days to ask (via Payroll) for the deductions to commence from their salary.	Employee

5	If employee elects to pay these contributions, they must be paid within 6 months of asking to make the deductions.	Employee
Old and New Firefighters' Pension Schemes		
1	For any authorised unpaid leave, the member of the Firefighter Pension Schemes may elect to pay all or none of the contributions within 6 months of return.	Employee
2	If the Employee wishes to re-pay contributions, they have a 6 month period to repay the contributions from the date of election to repay the contributions – and the employee should ask the Business Support Unit for the deductions to commence from their salary.	
3	If employee decides not to pay, there will be a break in their pensionable service.	Employee

PART 3 – GUIDANCE SECTION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q:	Who is entitled to take Parental Leave?
A:	<p>An employee who has a year's continuous service, or for Grey Book Employees has successfully completed initial training (or has at least a year's service if that is sooner) - and who is one of the following shall be entitled to unpaid Parental Leave. Either parent (regardless of gender) can take Parental Leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) The mother of the child(2) The father of the child if they were married to the mother at the time of birth or is registered as the child's father(3) The father (if not covered above) if he has acquired parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989 or Children (Scotland) Act 1985. This is done either by a court order or an agreement between the mother and father that complies with legal requirements(4) A guardian appointed under Section 5 of the Children Act 1989(5) An adoptive parent(6) Any other nominated carer where the fire and rescue authority is satisfied that that person is taking parental responsibility(7) A step-parent if they have acquired parental responsibility under the Child Act 1989 either through a court order or an agreement between the mother (or mother and father) and the step-parent which complies with certain legal requirements(8) A special guardian as referred to in section 14C of the Children Act 1989.(9) Any other person who has or expects to have parental responsibility for a child under the Children Act 1989. <p>The parent does not have to be living with the child to qualify.</p>
Q:	Can a same-sex partner take Parental Leave in respect of their partner's child?
A:	<p>Same-sex partners as well as all other gender types are eligible to take parental leave if they have parental responsibility for the child (provided the other eligibility criteria are met).</p> <p>Civil Partners may automatically have parental responsibility in some circumstances. In other cases, you can apply for parental responsibility. Further information on parental responsibility for same-sex partners can be found on www.gov.uk</p> <p>In any case, you may be eligible to take Parental Leave if you satisfy point 6 above.</p>
Q:	For Grey Book Employees, what counts as 'Initial Training'?
A:	For the purposes of this policy, for Grey Book employees, 'initial training' is completion of both the 'training' and 'development' stages.

Q:	Why might a parent decide to apply to take Parental Leave?
A:	<p>Parental Leave is time taken off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. Examples of when Parental Leave may be appropriate include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be with a child during a hospital stay • To settle a child into a new school or child care arrangements • To spend more time with a child in their early years.
Q:	What is the maximum amount of Parental Leave a parent can take in a year?
A:	<p>The maximum amount of Parental Leave which a parent can take in a year is four weeks per child. For these purposes, a 'year' is the period of 12 months beginning when the employee first becomes entitled to Parental Leave in respect of the child in question, and each successive period of 12 months beginning on the anniversary of that date.</p>
Q:	Why might an employee have their Parental Leave request postponed?
A:	<p>A Parental Leave request can be postponed where there are pressing operational reasons to do so, or where undue disruption to work would be caused. Such circumstances may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a replacement cannot be found during the notice period for a post that has to be filled • Where a significant number of employees have applied for Parental Leave at the same time • Where there are a high number of other employees who have requested leave over a particularly busy period. <p>(Please note that this list is not exhaustive).</p>
Q:	What happens if a Parental Leave request is postponed?
A:	<p>The situation will firstly be discussed between the Line Manager and the employee. Following this, the employee should be advised, in writing, no later than seven days after giving notice to take leave, of the reason for the postponement and the new dates for the Parental Leave. The length of the re-scheduled Parental Leave should also be equivalent to the employee's original request. If no agreement can be reached on the re-scheduled dates of Parental Leave after discussion with the employee, the Service can then determine the appropriate dates and inform the employee of these dates.</p>
Q:	When can Parental Leave <u>not</u> be postponed by the Service?
A:	<p>Leave cannot be postponed where the employee has given twenty-one days' notice prior to the beginning of the Expected Week of Childbirth to take the leave immediately after the birth. In the case of adoption, leave cannot be postponed (except in exceptional circumstances) where the employee has given twenty-one days' notice of the expected week of placement.</p> <p>Parental Leave can also not be postponed so that it ends after a child's eighteenth birthday.</p>
Q:	Over what length of time can Parental Leave be taken?

A:	Leave can be taken up until the child's 18 th birthday. A maximum of four weeks leave can be taken per year.
Q:	If an employee has more than one child, how much Parental Leave are they entitled to?
A:	The entitlement of 18 weeks' unpaid leave over the 18 years applies to each child the parent may have. For example, if an employee has two children, they would be entitled to 18 weeks leave per child, totalling 36 weeks.
Q:	If an employee has twins are they entitled to Parental Leave for each child?
A:	Yes, if you have twins you will be entitled to 36 weeks unpaid parental leave during the period when the children are under eighteen years old.
Q:	What constitutes a 'week's leave' for Parental Leave?
	<p>Parental Leave may be taken in blocks or multiples of one week or tour.</p> <p>A week's leave for the employee is a period of absence from work which is equal in duration to the period for which the employee is normally required to work, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five days for an employee working Monday – Friday • Two days for an employee working Tuesday and Wednesday only <p>Where the period for which an employee is normally required to work under their contract varies from week to week or over a longer period, or where they are normally required under their contract to work in some weeks but not in others, a week's leave for the employee is a period of absence from work which is equal in duration to the period calculated by dividing the total of the periods for which they are normally required to work in a year by 52.</p>
Q:	What evidence is required for a Parental Leave request?
	<p>All employees applying for Parental Leave should complete a Parental Leave Information Form on their first application for Parental Leave and this form should state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are the parent of the child • They have parental responsibility for the child • The child is below the age at which the right to Parental Leave ceases • In the case of a disabled child, the child is entitled to a disability living allowance • Details of Paternity Leave taken when employee worked for previous employer <p>Attached to this form should also be the evidence of their entitlement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the child's birth certificate • Papers confirming a child's adoption, or the date of placement for adoption • In the case of a disabled child, a record of disability living allowance eligibility for the child
Q:	If an employee took Parental Leave when they worked with a previous employer, does this affect how much Parental Leave an employee can take with CFRS?
A:	Yes. The 18 week entitlement applies to an individual child, not to an individual employment. Therefore, if an employee has taken eight weeks Parental Leave with a

	previous employer, they are only entitled to take another 10 weeks in their employment with CFRS – and they must also have completed a year's service with CFRS to qualify for this.
Q:	How would CFRS know an employee's entitlement to Parental Leave, if they took leave with a previous employer?
A:	The Parental Leave Information Form asks an employee to declare the amount of Parental Leave which they have already taken with any previous employers. However, CFRS does reserve the right to contact former employers to seek clarity on this issue.
Q:	What are the employee's rights during Parental Leave?
A:	The employment contract continues during any period of Parental Leave, unless it is terminated by the employer or employee for another reason. This therefore means that the employee will continue to benefit from their statutory employment rights during leave and from the employer's continued trust and confidence – and an employee will also need to act in good faith.
Q:	Is Annual Leave affected by Parental Leave?
A:	No – an employee continues to accrue their annual leave, as per their contract.
Q:	How might an employee's pension be affected by Parental Leave?
A:	<p>For the Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme, for unpaid Parental Leave of 30 days or less, the employee will pay normal contributions on the pay they would have received had they not been absent. If the employee is absent for more than 30 days, they have the option of paying for any absence over and above the 30 day period on the pay they would have received had they not been absent. The employee will have 30 days to ask Payroll for the deductions to commence from their salary.</p> <p>For the Old and New Firefighter Pension Schemes, for unpaid Parental Leave, the employee may elect (within 6 months of return) to re-pay all or none of the contributions based on what they would have received had they not been absent. If the employee wishes to re-pay, they should ask Payroll for the deductions to commence. Once the employee has elected to re-pay contributions, they then have a 6 month period from this date to make the re-payments.</p> <p>For the LGPS, Old and New Firefighter pensions, if the employee elects to repay contributions, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service will also pay the Employer's contributions.</p>
Q:	If a parent requires time off to deal with an emergency situation in relation to their child, could they take Parental Leave?
A:	As a period of notice is required before taking Parental Leave, this type of leave would not be suitable where an employee's child suddenly falls ill, or there is another emergency situation. However, the employee will be able to take a short period of emergency leave to care for their child, known as 'time off for dependants'. Please refer to the Special Leave Policy if further information is required.

Q:	What entitlements does a surrogate mother and their husband or civil partner have to maternity scheme, paternity policy, and parental leave policy provisions?
A:	The surrogate mother and their husband or civil partner are the legal parents of the child, until such time as legal rights are given to someone else through a parental order or adoption. As such, the provisions of the maternity scheme, paternity policy and parental leave policy apply to them in the usual way while they remain the legal parents of the child.

Appendix 2

Parental Leave Employee Information Form

If this is the first time you are applying for Parental Leave, please could you complete the form below, in order to confirm your eligibility and entitlement to Parental Leave.

CFRS employees who have children (including those adopting) under eighteen years of age are entitled to a total of 18 weeks' Parental Leave in respect of each child once they have gained one year's continuous service with CFRS.

Name:		
Job Title:		
Work Location:		
Do you have any children (including adopted children) under the age of 18?	Yes	No
If so, how many?		
Please state the date of birth of each of your children under eighteen years of age:		
Do you have any children (under the age of 18) who are disabled and entitled to a Disability Living Allowance?	Yes	No
If so, how many?		
How many weeks' Parental Leave have you already taken? [Please include all periods of parental leave taken in all other/ previous employments.]		
As evidence for Parental Leave Requests, you need to attach:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copy of child's birth certificate• And for a disabled child, a record of Disability Living Allowance eligibility		
Or		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Papers confirming a child's adoption, or the date of placement for adoption		
Please tick the box to confirm that these copies are attached: <input type="checkbox"/>		
I hereby authorise you to carry out checks on the above information from my previous employers, if required.		
Employee's signature:	Date:	

Appendix 3

Parental Leave Request Form

Parental Leave is available to all employees (regardless of gender). To qualify for Parental Leave, an employee must have been continuously employed for a period of not less than one year and have, or expect to have, responsibility for a child under the age of eighteen.

An employee is entitled to 18 weeks' leave in respect of each child, subject to a maximum of four weeks' leave per year. The leave entitlement cannot be used after the child's eighteenth birthday.

Section 1 to be completed by Employee	
Name of employee:	
Date of commencement of employment:	
Amount of Parental Leave taken previously in respect of relevant child	
I would like to apply for [] [week(s)/day(s)] unpaid Parental Leave from [date] to [date].	
<i>(Parental Leave must be in full weeks up to a maximum of four weeks a year, unless the child is disabled, in which case, Parental Leave can be taken in periods of a day or multiples thereof).</i>	
The leave requested relates to my child [name where applicable] [due on [] / who was born on [] / who was adopted on [] [and who is entitled to a disability living allowance]. (delete as appropriate)	
I have already completed and submitted a Parental Leave Information Form, with attached copy of (child's name)'s (birth certificate/ adoption papers)[] (please tick)	
<i>(If the 'Parental Information Form' with attached evidence has not been completed, please ensure that this is completed and submitted at the same time as this Parental Leave Request Form.)</i>	
I recognise that the Service is entitled to make enquiries of all or any of my previous employers in relation to any previous periods of Parental Leave taken.	
I also recognise that the Service may postpone the period of leave requested by up to six months where the leave requested does not coincide with the expected week of my child's birth or adoption and the business would otherwise be unduly disrupted by my absence.	
Signed:	Date:

**Section 2 to be completed by Line Manager
(Please complete A or B, as appropriate):**

(A) After discussion with Employee's Grandparent Manager (including Head of Department), the Parental Leave, as requested, is agreed [] (please tick)

(Please sign and date form and send form to HR Advisor in HR Department, who will write to employee to confirm in writing to employee, record the Leave and adjust pay accordingly)

(B) After discussion with Employee's Grandparent Manager (including Head of Department), the requested Parental Leave will need to be postponed [] (please tick)

This postponement has been discussed with the employee and an alternative date for the Parental Leave has been agreed, as follows:

[]

(Please state when it has been agreed for the Parental Leave to be taken. This Leave should be taken within 6 months of the original requested dates)

The reason for the postponement is due to:

[]

(please provide reasons)

Signed:.....

Date:.....

If the requested Parental Leave will need to be postponed, this completed form should be forwarded to the HR Advisor within four days of the request being received. Once received, the HR Advisor will write to employee to confirm the date of the re-scheduled Parental Leave, to record the agreed leave and adjust pay accordingly. The confirmation in writing should be sent to employee within seven days of the date of the initial request to take Parental Leave.

RELATED ENTITLEMENTS

Maternity Leave/ Adoption Leave

An employee who has given birth to, or adopted a child, or who is one of a couple who have jointly adopted a child, has the qualified right to apply to take either Maternity or Adoption Leave. Guidance is provided within the [Maternity Scheme](#) or the [Adoption Leave Policy](#).

Paternity Leave

Paternity Leave entitles eligible employees who have or expect to have responsibility for a child's upbringing to take Paternity Leave to help care for the child, or support the child's mother or primary adopter following the birth or adoption of a child.

Paternity Leave can be taken as either one week or two consecutive weeks in a single block, which must be completed within 8 weeks of the child's birth/ or within eight weeks of the child being placed for adoption.

Please refer to the [Paternity Leave Policy](#) for further information.

Flexible Working

Employees who have parental responsibility for a child can apply to work flexibly. Guidance is provided within the [Flexible Working Policy](#).

Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave enables a mother to end their maternity/adoption leave early and share any remaining balance of leave with their partner. Leave can be taken continuously or discontinuously allowing parents to take time off together or separately, returning to work in between.

Please refer to the [Shared Parental Leave Policy](#) for further information.