



PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

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The Society is committed to helping working parents balance work and family life, whilst managing the operational needs of the business.

Parental Leave allows parents and those with legal responsibility for a child (or children) to take time off work to look after them or make arrangements for their welfare. The leave is unpaid.

Who can take Parental Leave?

Employees are entitled to Parental Leave if they have 1 year's continuous service with the Society and have or expect to have parental responsibility for a child (or children) under 18 years of age.

How long does Parental Leave last?

Employees are entitled to 18 weeks in total for each child under 18 years of age. The minimum block of time off is one week. A maximum of four weeks may be taken in a year. Employees can take the leave up until the child's 18th birthday.

The right does not apply to each episode of employment. If an employee has taken Parental Leave with a previous employer for the same child this will be subtracted from their Parental Leave entitlement with their current employer.

What do I have to do if I want to take Parental Leave?

Application forms for parental leave can be obtained from the People & Performance Department. These should be completed and returned to People and Performance, providing a minimum of 21 days' notice (where possible) before the start date of the leave period.

Leave will not be unreasonably refused, but the Society may, if the business is likely to be particularly disrupted, postpone the leave period for up to six months. In these circumstances the employee will be provided with written reasons why the leave has to be postponed, and we will endeavour to reach agreement on suitable alternative dates.

The Society may ask you to provide evidence that you are the parent or person who has legal responsibility for the child, such as a birth or adoption certificate.

If you would like more detailed information or have any queries regarding Parental Leave, please contact the People and Performance Department on 0131 335 4529.

What is Parental leave for?

An employee must be taking the leave to care for the child. This means looking after the welfare of a child and can include making arrangements for the good of a child.

For example, an employee might take parental leave to:

- spend more time with the child
- accompany the child during a stay in hospital
- check out new schools
- help settle the child into new childcare arrangements
- enable a family to spend more time together, e.g. taking the child to stay with grandparents

Caring for a child does not necessarily mean the employee has to be with the child 24 hours a day.

If an employee is using the Parental Leave for some other purpose, e.g. to do other work, this could be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Returning to work

An employee's contract of employment continues during Parental Leave. Employees are entitled to return to the same job, or if they take longer than 4 weeks the same or similar role.

If a redundancy situation arises employees will be kept informed and involved in the consultation process and considered for alternative work that may be available.

Employees will continue to accrue annual leave during Parental Leave.

Employees in the pension schemes are not required to continue contributions to their pension during unpaid Parental Leave. Employees are advised to contact the Pensions Manager on 0131 335 4434 to discuss their pension arrangements.