

Unpaid Parental Leave

Purpose

This policy sets out the entitlements and support available to those with parental responsibilities.

For information on other types of leave available for parents and carers please see the relevant policy in the A to Z section of the [HR Hub](#) or refer to the combined Family Friendly Policy.

Introduction

If you have parental responsibility you are entitled to take 18 weeks' unpaid leave to care for the child.

You can start taking parental leave when the child is born or placed for adoption, although adoptive parents may also take parental leave prior to placement.

In order that plans can be made to cover your absence and to resolve any queries you may have you should discuss your need to take parental leave as early as possible with your manager.

Overview

You may take up to eighteen weeks off work, between the time the child is born and its eighteenth birthday. Where a child is adopted the leave may be taken during the eight years following the date of adoption or up to the age of 18 whichever is the soonest

Parental leave is always unpaid however, service will be treated as continuous during periods of parental leave and the employee's terms and conditions (with the exception of pay) will be unaffected.

The leave may be taken in blocks of one week up to a maximum of 4 weeks per calendar year. The only exception to this is if the child has a disability – in this case, it is possible for you to take single days, if needed, but the maximum of 4 weeks in a year still applies.

Entitlement is on a proportionate basis for part-time employees - for example, where an employee works 2 days a week; one 'week' of parental leave is equivalent to 2 days. Unpaid parental leave will be in addition to any other leave to which employees are entitled to.

Eligibility

To be eligible you must:

- have completed one years' service at RBKC
- be an employee e.g. not an agency or casual worker
- be named on the child's birth or adoption certificate or have or expect to have parental responsibility

Parental responsibility includes:

- natural parents
- adoptive parents
- stepparents - by means of agreement with child's natural parents

- child's guardian

Foster parents are not eligible for unpaid parental leave.

The right to a period of unpaid parental leave is available in respect of each child. If an employee has, for example, two children under the age of 18, he or she may take 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave in respect of each of those children.

Requesting unpaid parental leave via the IBC

You must give your line manager 21 days' notice of your intention to take leave and provide them with a copy of the birth certificate.

You should then book the leave in the same way you book your annual leave via the 'my leave requests' app but ensure you select 'unpaid leave' from the drop-down box at the top of the page.

Your manager approves your request via the IBC in the normal way.

Unpaid Parental Leave FAQs

Can my line manager decline my request?

Yes, if it is not operationally possible to facilitate the time off, or, you have exceeded your limit of parental leave then your line manager will confirm this in writing to you. You should mutually agree another suitable time to take the leave

Is it possible to postpone the parental leave that I previously agreed with my line manager?

Yes, providing, the suggested dates are mutually agreeable and;

- It is not more than 6 months from the date that the employee originally wished to start their leave.
- this would not take any part of the requested period of leave beyond the employee's child's 18th birthday.

Do I need to produce the child's birth certificate or proof of adoption for my line manager?

Before the first spell of parental leave is taken for any child you will need to show the birth certificate or proof of adoption to your line manager

Can I take the time in odd days?

Time off is usually taken in blocks of a week however, shorter periods can be taken if your child is disabled or your line managers agrees to the request.

Can I take unpaid parental leave as well as maternity leave?

Yes, once maternity leave has concluded then parental leave is permitted