

Step by Step



Paternity Leave (Maternity – Adoption Support)

URN: J-Pr-082

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Host Force:	Dorset Police
Host Policy Unit:	Dorset Police Legitimacy Team
Step by Step	
Owner:	Alliance Head of Employee Relations
Step by Step	
Author:	Strategy and Policy Lead (ER)

Associated Documents: [J-P-034 Family Leave Policy](#)

Applicable to:

Devon & Cornwall Police	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dorset Police	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OPCC Devon & Cornwall	<input type="checkbox"/>
OPCC Dorset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Officers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Before reviewing the following procedural guidance, individuals and line managers must ensure they have familiarised themselves with J-P-076 Paternity (Maternity Support - Adoption Support) Leave Policy setting out the Force's provisions and eligibility criteria in full.

J-P-076 - Paternity Leave (Maternity-Adoption Support) Policy

A summary of the paternity (maternity – support) leave principles are available within Appendix One of this procedure.

1.0 Introduction

Paternity leave (also known as maternity support and adoption support leave) is provided to eligible individuals to help care for the child or support the child's mother / primary carer. The line manager should respect the individual's right to privacy and confidentiality, ensuring that they do not share information unnecessarily or without agreement. Risk assessments should be undertaken by the line manager where appropriate.

2.0 Eligibility

Paternity (Maternity - Adoption Support) leave can apply where an individual and their partner are having a baby, adopting a child, approved for a 'Fostering for Adoption' arrangement, or having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement. The eligible individual may be the father, husband, or partner of the mother (or adopter), child's adopter, or intended parent (where having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement). The eligible individual must also have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

Birth Parents and Surrogacy

To be eligible for paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave, individuals must have 26 weeks' continuous service with their current Force by the 'qualifying week', which is the end of the 15th week before the week in which the baby is due. The qualifying week starts on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday, e.g., where the baby is due on 1 December 2025, the end of the 15th week before this is Saturday 23 August 2025. To be eligible for paternity (maternity – adoption support) leave, the individual must have 26 weeks' continuous service prior to 23 August 2025. **Please note:** In the case of a surrogacy arrangement, eligibility for paternity (maternity support) pay may apply where the individual has applied for, or intends to apply for, a parental order in the first six months following the baby's birth.

Adoptions (Great Britain and overseas)

To be eligible for maternity - adoption support leave, individuals must have 26 weeks' continuous service with their current Force by the end of the 'matching week', which is the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched with a child. For example, where the child is matched for adoption within Great Britain on 1 April 2025, the individual must have 26 weeks continuous service prior to the end of that week., e.g., prior to Saturday 5 April 2025.

In the case of overseas adoption, the 26 weeks' continuous service is applicable from the date the child enters Great Britain.

Please note: The individual may be eligible to take shared parental leave with the mother / primary adopter, following the period of paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave, subject to the eligibility criteria. Please see J-Pr-054 Shared Parental Leave procedure, available within Section 6.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.

3.0 Entitlement

Individuals are entitled to up to two weeks' paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave, which should be taken within 52 weeks of the date of birth (or the first day of the expected week of birth where the baby is born early), adoption placement or in the case of overseas adoption, the child's entry into Great Britain. The individual can choose to take either one or two weeks' leave, which can be taken as a single period of leave of either one week or two weeks, or two non-consecutive periods of leave of a week each.

The leave will include all duty and rest days planned during the requested period.

Individuals qualifying for paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave may also be entitled to paternity pay, made up to full pay for the first week. The second week (where taken) will be paid at the statutory paternity pay rate.

In the case of multiple births, e.g., twins, there will be no provision for additional paternity (maternity-adoption support) leave. The entitlement will remain the same.

Individuals entitled to paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave are able to attend two ante-natal appointments which will be on an unpaid basis.

This procedure applies to agency workers in respect of leave and statutory entitlements.

4.0 Cancelling or varying Paternity or Maternity / Adoption Support leave

Where it is necessary to cancel or vary the start and end dates of their paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave, the individual must submit a further request to the line manager, providing 28 days' notice in advance of the original intended date, or the new intended date of leave, whichever is soonest.

Paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave cannot start before the date of birth, adoption placement, or in the case of overseas adoption, the child's entry into Great Britain. Where the child is not born, e.g., is overdue, is not placed, has not entered Great Britain on or before the intended date of paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave, the individual must substitute the original leave date for a later date by submitting a further request to the line manager. The actual date of birth or adoption placement must be provided to the line manager as soon as reasonably practicable (or, in the case of overseas adoption, within 28 days of the child entering Great Britain, or as soon as reasonably practicable).

5.0 For Further Assistance

Please contact [HR Operations \(D&C\) - Admin](#) or [.HR Ops Dorset – Admin](#) if further support is required.

6.0 Supporting Links and Guidance

[J-Pr-046 Adoption Leave Procedure](#)

[Appendix One – Summary of Paternity \(Maternity – Adoption Support\) Leave provisions](#)

[Contact details for RMU \(D&C\) / For Duties \(Dorset\)](#), please refer to local email address

[J-Pr-334 Family Leave Glossary](#)

[Family Leave Support Portal](#)

[Family Support Group](#)

[J-Pr-318 Flexible Working procedure](#)

[Gov.uk Tax-free Childcare](#)

[J-Pr-330 Neonatal Care Leave](#)

[J-Pr-080 Pregnancy and Maternity Leave Procedure](#)

[J-Pr-054 Shared Parental Leave Procedure](#)

[Support Networks \(Dorset\)](#)

Paternity (maternity – adoption) Leave Request Forms

[Statutory Paternity Pay / Paternity Leave request form](#)

[Form SC4](#) – Statutory Paternity Pay / Paternity Leave Adoption or parental order

[Form SC5](#) – Statutory Paternity Pay / Paternity Leave: Adoption from Overseas

[HR Privacy Notice](#)

7.0 Flowchart

1. Individual informs their line manager of their entitlement to take paternity (maternity – adoption support) leave

The individual must review their eligibility and inform their line manager of their entitlement to take paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave by completing one of the following HM Revenue & Customs forms, using the links within Section 6.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance':

- Paternity leave request online form; or
- SC4 – paternity (maternity – adoption support) leave relating to an adoption or surrogacy arrangement; or
- SC5 – paternity leave (maternity – adoption support) relating to an adoption from overseas.

Completed forms must be submitted to the line manager within the relevant notice period as below:-

Birth Parents and Surrogacy

- On or before the 15th week before the week the baby is due, e.g., the due date is on 1 December 2025. The 'qualifying week' starts on Sunday 17 August 2025 and ends on Saturday 23 August 2025. Notice must be provided by Saturday 23 August 2025

Adoption

- Within 7 days' of notification of being matched with a child.

Overseas Adoption

- No later than 28 days' after being notified of being matched with a child, or within 28 days' of completion of 26 weeks' continuous service with their current Force, whichever is later.

Where it is not possible to adhere to the required timeframes, notice must be given as soon as reasonably practicable.

2. Line manager reviews eligibility, authorises the request and submits to HR Operations – Admin

The line manager will review the form and confirm that the individual meets the eligibility criteria before authorising the request and forwarding a copy to HR Operations – Admin, who will provide acknowledgement of receipt to the line manager and individual and provide a copy to the Payroll team.

Where applicable, the line manager will signpost the individual to the appropriate support, available through Occupational Health (OH), the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Trade Unions / Staff Associations and

2. Cont'd

the Family Support Group (D&C) / Support Networks (Dorset), as applicable.

3. The individual provides notice of the intended start date and duration of leave

Paternity (maternity-adoption support) leave must not start before the birth / date of adoption placement / child's entry into Great Britain and must end within 52 weeks of that date.

The start date must be one of the following:

- the actual date of birth (or the day after where the individual is working that day) / date of adoption placement / date of child's entry into Great Britain, or
- a specified number of days, e.g., one week later, after the birth / adoption placement / child's entry into Great Britain, or
- a pre-determined date after the expected week of childbirth / adoption placement / child's entry into Great Britain.

The individual must email their line manager the start date and duration of their paternity (maternity-adoption support) leave, including confirmation that the leave will be used to help care for the child and / or to support the child's mother / primary carer, within the relevant notice period as below:

Birth Parents and Surrogacy

- 28 days before the first day of the expected week of childbirth (which starts on a Sunday); or
- 28 days before a specified or pre-determined date.

Adoption

- Within seven days of notification of being matched with a child.

Overseas Adoption

- 28 days before the child is expected to enter Great Britain; or
- 28 days before a pre-determined leave date.

The individual must also provide proof of adoption, e.g., as letter from the adoption agency or a matching certificate.

Where an individual chooses to take the second week of paternity leave at another time, a further 28 days' notice must be provided to the line manager.

3. Cont'd	Where it is not possible to adhere to the required timeframes, notice must be given as soon as reasonably practicable.
4. Line manager checks eligibility, authorises paternity leave and submits the request form to HR Operations - Admin	The line manager should review the dates requested to ensure that the individual meets the criteria as specified in Step 3. Where there are no issues, the line manager must authorise the leave and email the request to HR Operations - Admin.
5. HR Operations - Admin acknowledge receipt and submit to Payroll for processing	HR Operations - Admin will confirm receipt of the request to the line manager and individual and email the dates of paternity (maternity - adoption support) leave requested to the Payroll team, who are responsible for the calculation and processing of the appropriate payment(s), including updating the HR system.
6. Line manager updates RMU / Duties	It is the line manager's responsibility to either update GRS or inform the relevant Resource Management Unit (RMU) (D&C) / Duties (Dorset) Team of the commencement of the leave period, using the link within Section 6.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.
7. Individual returns to work	The individual should make early contact with their line manager to discuss and agree their return to work. Should they wish to alter their working hours / patterns the individual must submit a flexible working request accordingly. A link to J-Pr-318 Flexible Working procedure is available within Section 6.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.
8. Line manager requests reinstatement of computer access (where applicable)	IT equipment which has been idle for 60 days or over will be decommissioned, unless the line manager has requested retention of IT access via an alternative family leave procedure. Where the individual has taken paternity (maternity – support) leave in addition to other forms of family leave entitlements, e.g., Neonatal Care Leave, there may be a requirement to reinstate IT access. Where applicable, the line manager will raise an incident via MyIT, providing the individual's details and the date of return to work, at least three working days in advance, to ensure systems access is granted.
9. Line manager updates RMU / Duties	It is the line manager's responsibility to either update GRS or inform the relevant RMU (D&C) / Duties (Dorset) Team of the end of the leave period, using the link within Section 6.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.

Managers should contact [HR Operations \(D&C\) - Admin](#) or [.HR Ops Dorset – Admin](#) if the situation they are managing does not appear to be straightforward.

Appendix One - Summary of Paternity (Maternity – Adoption Support) Leave provisions

	Paternity - Standard	Paternity – Maternity - Adoption Support	Paternity – Adoption from Overseas	Paternity – Parental Order
Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One consecutive week, Two consecutive weeks, or Two non-consecutive periods of a week each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One consecutive week, Two consecutive weeks, or Two non-consecutive periods of a week each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One consecutive week, Two consecutive weeks, or Two non-consecutive periods of a week each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One consecutive week, Two consecutive weeks, or Two non-consecutive periods of a week each.
Timescale to take the leave	<p>The leave must begin and end:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between the child's birth date and 52 weeks after the date of birth. Please note: In the case of an early birth, the 52 week period applies from the first day of the expected week of birth. 	<p>The leave must begin and end:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between the date of the child's placement with the adopter and 52 weeks after the date of placement. 	<p>The leave must begin and end:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between the date that the child enters Great Britain and 52 weeks after the date the child enters Great Britain. 	<p>The leave must begin and end:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between the child's birth date and 52 weeks after the date of birth. Please note: In the case of an early birth, the 52 week period applies from the first day of the expected week of birth.
Leave start date	<p>The leave must start:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the date the child is born, A specified number of days after the child is born, or A predetermined date after the expected due date of the child. 	<p>The leave must start:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the date the child is placed with the adopter, A specified number of days after the child is placed with the adopter, or 	<p>The leave must start:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the date the child enters Great Britain, A specified number of days after the child enters Great Britain, or A predetermined date after the expected date 	<p>The leave must start:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the date the child is born, A specified number of days after the child is born, or A predetermined date after the expected due date of the child.

Leave start date (cont'd)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A predetermined date after the expected placement date of the child. 	of the child's entry into Great Britain.	
Notice of entitlement to take leave	<p>The individual must provide notice of entitlement, plus a declaration that they meet the criteria:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On or before the 15th week before the expected week of birth, or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. 	<p>The individual must provide notice of entitlement, plus a declaration that they meet the criteria:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than seven days after the adopter has been notified of being matched with the child, or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. <p>The notice must include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date on which the adopter has been notified of being matched with the child, The date on which the child is expected to be 	<p>The individual must provide notice of entitlement, plus a declaration that they meet the criteria:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 28 days after the adopter has been notified of being matched with the child, or within 28 days of completion of 26 weeks' continuous service with the Force, whichever is later (or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable). <p>The notice must include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date on which the adopter has been notified of 	<p>The individual must provide notice of entitlement, plus a declaration that they meet the criteria:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On or before the 15th week before the expected week of birth, or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Notice of entitlement to take leave (cont'd)		placed with the adopter.	being matched with the child, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date on which the child is expected to enter Great Britain. 	
Notice of the start date of leave	<p>The individual must provide notice of the start date and duration of the leave, which is either:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days before the first day of the expected week of the child's birth, or 28 days before a date falling the specified number of days after the first day of the expected week of childbirth, or 28 days before a predetermined date. 	<p>The individual must provide notice of the start date and duration of the leave:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No later than seven days after the date on which the adopter is notified of having been matched with the child (or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable). 	<p>The individual must provide notice of the start date and duration of the leave:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days in advance of the date on which the child is expected to enter Great Britain, or the predetermined leave date (or where this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable). 	<p>The individual must provide notice of start date and duration of the leave, which is either:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days before the first day of the expected week of the child's birth, or 28 days before a date falling the specified number of days after the first day of the expected week of childbirth, or 28 days before a predetermined date.

9.0 Monitoring and Review

Review and amendments will be coordinated by the Policy Unit.

The Alliance Head of Employee Relations is responsible for overseeing this document to ensure a consistent Force approach is maintained. Monitoring will be primarily carried out subject to force processes of continuing review and in line with force governance requirements.

This document will be reviewed every two years subject to legislation / process changes.

Please note: Where legislation / guidance changes have occurred / scheduled to occur or operational needs demand it, ahead of the revised review date, Alliance People policies and associated procedures / step by steps will be applied in line with prevailing legislation / guidance.

We welcome any comments or suggestions you wish to share about the content or implementation of this procedure. If you would like to make contact to discuss further, please email: .Policies@dorset.PNN.police.uk

10.0 Version History

Version:	1.0
Date:	21/06/2021
Reason for	
Amendments:	Initial document
Amended by:	Employee Relations
Approved by:	Board
Date Approved:	13/05/2021
Quality Assured:	Legitimacy Team

Version:	1.1
Date:	08/03/2022
Reason for	
Amendments:	Family Leave Glossary link inserted; Privacy Notice links updated. Logo updated. Other links repaired.
Amended by:	Employee Relations
Approved by:	ER
Date Approved:	n/a
Quality Assured:	Legitimacy Team

Version:	1.2
Date:	03/05/2022
Reason for	
Amendments:	New paragraph (Section 3) – Expectant Parents – Established COVID principles

Amended by: Legitimacy Team
Approved by: Legitimacy Manager
Date Approved: 14/10/2021
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.3
Date: 18/07/2022
Reason for Amendments: Change to contact method for ICT. (4&7)
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: ER
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.4
Date: 05/12/2022
Reason for Amendments: Minor enhancements, e.g., the inclusion of a reminder for line managers to respect privacy/confidentiality following NPCC Family Leave Guidance. Review date amendment.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: ER
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.5
Date: 14/04/2022
Reason for Amendments: Minor wording amendments to the second paragraph of the 'Eligibility' section.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: ER
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.6
Date: 20/12/2023
Reason for Amendments: Fit for purpose review completed, clarity provided, key change - 26 weeks qualifying service applies to the current Force. Updated to latest template.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: HoD
Date Approved: 18/12/2023
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.7
Date: 08/03/2024
Reason for Amendments: Updated to reflect new paternity regulations which are due to come into effect on 8 March 2024 and will apply to births and adoptions falling on or after 6 April 2024.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: not required - Legislative
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.8
Date: 08/03/2024
Reason for Amendments: Minor amends have been made now that further online guidance and the updated forms are available.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: not required - Legislative
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.9
Date: 09/07/2024
Reason for Amendments: A small amend has been made in order to provide clarity in relation to the responsibilities of the HR Operations – Admin and Payroll teams.
Amended by: Employee Relations
Approved by: n/a
Date Approved: n/a
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

Version: 1.10
Date: 07/04/2025
Reason for Amendments: Fit for purpose review completed.
Amended by: Strategy & Policy Lead – Employee Relations
Approved by: HoD
Date Approved: 26/03/2025
Quality Assured: Legitimacy Team

11.0 Governance

Present Portfolio Holder: Alliance Head of People (HR Operations)
Present Document Owner: Alliance Head of Employee Relations
Present Owning Department: Alliance People Portfolio

Name of Board: Strategic People Board
Chief Officer Approving: Assistant Chief Officer (D&C) and Assistant Chief Officer (Dorset)
Date Approved: 13/05/2021

*****End of Document*****