

PAID LEAVE FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

DURATION OF PAID LEAVE (WEEKS)

	Well-paid	Paid	Unpaid
Maternity Leave	6	33	13
Shared Parental Leave (transferable Maternity Leave)	0	31	13
Paternity Leave	0	2	0
Parental Leave	0	0	18



Changes in leave policy since 2017

Shared Parental Leave replaced Additional Paternity Leave for parents of children born after 5 April 2015 under the terms of the Children and Families Act 2014. It enables the maternal transfer to occur from 2 weeks rather than the previous 20 weeks after birth (4 weeks for manual workers) and offers more flexibility in use. It allows parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of statutory pay after their baby arrives.

In March 2018, the House of Commons all-party Women and Equalities Committee published a report *Fathers and the Workplace* following the national consultation in 2017. Its recommendations included consideration of a new 'use-it-or-lose-it' three months benefit, available to fathers and second parents in their baby's first year.

Flexible working: the right to request and the duty to consider

All employees have a legal right to apply to their employers to work flexibly (e.g. to reduce working hours or work flexitime). Employees need to have worked for their employer continuously for 26 weeks before applying. Employers have a legal duty to consider these requests and may refuse them only on one or more business-related grounds that are set out in the legislation.

Relationship between leave policy and early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy

Leave provision is the same across the UK but early childhood education and care policy is more heterogeneous as a result of devolution. Due to the different legislations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there is a gap of 4-16 months between the end of leave and a universal ECEC entitlement, and a gap of nearly 3 years between the end of well-paid leave and the same entitlement.

ELIGIBILITY

Many rights to leave and payment contingent on:

- *Length of service
- *Employment status
- *Earnings thresholds
- *Fathers/partners must be employees (not self-employed)

Non-birth parents can be the biological father, the child's adopter or mother's husband, partner or civil partner.

TAKE-UP RATES

THE UK GOVERNMENT DOES NOT ROUTINELY COLLECT DATA ON LEAVE

Leave type	%
Maternity Pay (% of mothers)	?
Paternity Leave (% of fathers)	?
Parental Leave (% of mothers)	?
Parental Leave (% of fathers)	?

RESPONSIBILITIES

Maternity Leave

Payments are administered by employers who can claim back some or more of the payments from HM Revenue & Customs.

Paternity Leave

Funded as for Maternity leave. Employers are able to claim back some or all of the payments from the HM Revenue & Customs.

Parental Leave

Parental Leave is unpaid in the UK.

KEY:

Paid = £148.68 [€164.80] or 90% of one's average weekly earnings (whichever is lower)
Well-paid = 90% of one's average weekly earnings

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