



# Our Paternity Policy



WILLMOTT DIXON

SINCE 1852

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## 1.0 Overview – what this policy covers

Our Paternity Policy is designed to help you understand how much leave and pay you are entitled to receive, how to apply for leave and what support is available to you.

Because we recognise how precious this time is, we are pleased to offer our people an enhanced entitlement, in addition to the statutory amount, from your first day with us.

**Please note:** you may also be entitled to Shared Parental Leave and Pay. Please refer to the People section of the intranet for a copy of the [Shared Parental Leave and Pay Policy](#) or contact the People Support Centre (PSC).

As this policy doesn't form part of your contract of employment it may be amended at any time.

## 2.0 Entitlement to Paternity Leave

You will need to meet each of the following eligibility criteria in order for us to be able to process a paternity request and therefore qualify for paternity leave and pay:

- You have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child.
- You are either the biological father of the child, or you are married to, the civil partner or the cohabiting partner of the child's mother, or you are married to, the civil partner or the cohabiting partner of the child's adopter, or you are one of a couple jointly adopting a child. A cohabiting partner is a person, whether of a different sex or the same sex, who lives with the mother or adopter and the child in an enduring family relationship but is not an immediate relative of the mother or adopter.
- You are taking the leave to care for the child or to support the child's mother or adopter.

There is no length of service eligibility and, providing you meet the above criteria, you are entitled to receive eight weeks' Company Paternity Pay from day one.

If your child's mother, or your partner with whom a child is placed or expected to be placed for adoption, dies you are entitled to immediate Company Paternity Pay and Leave.

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## 3.0 Notification

You will need to notify us of your eligibility to take paternity leave at least 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth or, in the case of an adopted child, no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You will need to provide at least 28 days' notice of the specific dates you wish to take for each period of paternity leave.

Our [Paternity Leave/Pay Application](#) Form\* will need to be completed showing when you are planning to take your Paternity Leave, specifically the two weeks' Statutory Paternity Leave element. If you don't know when you wish to take this, please discuss and provide an indication. You should ensure that payroll are aware if the dates specified on the form change, with at least 28 days' notice.

- The form should be discussed and agreed with your manager. You can find the form on the People intranet or request it from the PSC.
- Once you have confirmed when and how you would like to take your two weeks' Statutory Paternity Leave (see the *Taking Paternity* section below on how this can be taken), please send a copy to your manager and the PSC.
- Payroll will add the agreed Statutory Paternity Leave dates to your record automatically, which will be visible in your absence calendar on MyView. You should ensure that payroll are aware if the dates specified on the form change, with at least 28 days' notice
- Once baby has been born/placed for adoption you should notify your manager and the PSC. Your six weeks' Enhanced Paternity Leave entitlement will then shortly appear within the *Manage My Leave* area on MyView so you can request your Enhanced Paternity Leave dates, in the same way as annual leave.

When submitting the Paternity Leave/Pay Application Form, please provide evidence of your partners due date/adoption placement i.e., a photo of your partners MATB1 certificate (medical certificate stating expected week of childbirth from the midwife after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy) or a letter from the adoption agency or adoption matching certificate.

You can bring forward your paternity leave start date, but must have notified us, in writing, at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. You may also postpone your paternity leave start date, provided you advise us in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

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*\*When this form is used, personal data will be collected from you in order to self-certify that you meet the eligibility criteria for Company Paternity Pay, as outlined above.*

*This information is collected on Government advice and stored securely on our HR/Payroll system. Completed forms should be returned to your line manager. Where personal data is obtained, it will be used and stored in accordance with our Employee Privacy Notice, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and current privacy laws. These policies and privacy notices are used for exercising obligations and rights in connection with your employment.*

## 4.0 Taking Paternity Leave

If your baby/adoption placement is on or after 6 April 2024, you are entitled to take your two weeks' Statutory Paternity Leave within twelve months from the date the child is born or placed for adoption (whether this is earlier or later than expected). Statutory Paternity Leave should be taken as a block of either:

- one two-week block or
- two one-week blocks (these don't have to be consecutive)

The enhanced six weeks' paternity leave must be taken as whole days within twelve months of the baby being born/adoption placement. You should discuss and agree how you wish to use the six weeks with your manager to make sure this works for you and the business.

Examples of how you could take your eight weeks' paternity leave include:

- Taking two weeks' statutory paternity leave when the baby is born/placed for adoption followed by two or three days per month of enhanced leave up to the baby's first birthday.
- Taking one week's Statutory Paternity Leave when baby is born, the second week of Statutory Paternity Leave after six months and the six weeks' enhanced paternity leave throughout the year, subject to approvals.

Although we will endeavor to support your requests to use the enhanced six weeks' paternity leave on specific dates, there may be occasions where we need to discuss and agree alternative dates due to business need.

Please provide adequate notice to your manager to ensure cover can be arranged for any requests.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding this, please speak with your manager in the first instance, or the People Support Centre.

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If you are off sick when you are planning to take paternity leave, paternity leave can be postponed. However, all paternity leave must be taken within twelve months of the baby's birth, subject to correct notification/authorisation.

If you have multiple births from the same pregnancy, only one period of paternity leave is available.

During your period of paternity leave (and neonatal care leave, if applicable), your contract of employment continues, and you are entitled to receive all your contractual benefits, except for salary\* and incentive payments, for the duration of the period of leave. In particular, any benefits-in-kind will continue, contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue, and pension contributions will continue to be made.

\*Salary will be replaced by Company Paternity Pay (CPP), if you are eligible to receive it.

## 5.0 Company Paternity Pay (CPP)

We offer Company Paternity Pay (CPP), which consists of up to eight weeks' full basic pay\* (inclusive of two weeks' Statutory Paternity Pay).

\*Based on your pre-salary sacrifice salary.

CPP can start from any day of the week in line with the date you start your paternity leave. We will pay this for up to eight weeks of paternity leave. It is only payable for weeks that you do not work.

CPP is intended to support and encourage employees who wish to continue their careers with Willmott Dixon after paternity, and payment of CPP is therefore conditional upon you returning to work for Willmott Dixon for at least six months following the last day of paternity leave. If you do not return to work for this minimum period, any CPP (but not SPP) must be repaid.

**Please note:** if you have salary sacrifice arrangements, these will continue during paternity leave.

## 6.0 Neonatal Care

If your baby needs some extra support and neonatal care after birth, you may be entitled to dedicated time to care for your newborn without this impacting on your paternity leave entitlement.

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## Neonatal Care Leave (NCL)

If your baby is in neonatal care for at least 7 continuous days (starting the day after being first admitted into neonatal care), within 28 days of being born, you will be entitled to NCL. For every uninterrupted week that your baby receives neonatal care you will be entitled to take one week of NCL, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

NCL is available for all our people, regardless of length of service. The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act confirms the types of medical care which are defined as neonatal care for the purposes of this leave.

## Statutory Neonatal Care Pay (SNCP)

For the period of NCL, you will also be eligible to receive SNCP if:

- you have worked for Willmott Dixon for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks ending with the relevant week (which is the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the week in which the baby is due); and
- your average earnings in the eight weeks up to and including the relevant week have been at least equal to the lower earnings limit for NI contributions.

SNCP is paid at the statutory rate or 90% of earnings, if this is lower. Full details of the rates of SNCP may be obtained from the Payroll department.

## When to take NCL and how to notify your team

In most cases any entitlement to NCL will be tagged onto the end of your paternity leave, in one continuous block, and paid at that time. If your paternity leave has finished and your baby is still receiving care, any entitlement to NCL can be taken and paid in non-continuous blocks of a week at a time.

Any entitlement to NCL or SNCP must be taken and paid within 68 weeks of your baby's birth.

If you are entitled to NCL and/or SNCP you should provide as much notice as is reasonably possible to your line manager or the PSC.

If you have any questions regarding NCL and/or SNCP please get in touch with the PSC.

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Further support is also available to you via your [Private Medical Insurance](#) (if applicable), our [Employee Assistance Programme](#) and the [Lighthouse helpline](#).

## 7.0 Returning to Work

When you come back from paternity leave, you are entitled to return to the same job on the same Terms and Conditions of Employment as if you had not been absent.

### Special Note for EEA and rest of world workers

If you are an EEA or rest of the world worker, then the Company may need to notify the Home Office of your absence.

Where applicable, we ask that you ensure your right to work in the UK status does not lapse during your paternity leave.

If your annual documentation check falls within the paternity leave period, we will ask you to present your right to work documents to us before you commence leave. Upon return, we will re-check that you still have the right to work in the UK.

## 8.0 Fertility Treatment

We recognise the emotional and physical challenges that can arise from fertility treatment, which is why we offer support to anyone, regardless of length of service or whether you are starting or continuing your fertility treatment journey. You are encouraged to discuss what support may be needed, including any time off or additional concerns, with your manager and/or the PSC as early as possible so that they can be agreed with you. Please be assured that all conversations will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

## 9.0 Pregnancy Loss

*We refer to pregnancy loss as the loss of a baby due to miscarriage through to the loss of a baby up to 28 days after birth.*

We recognise pregnancy loss as a bereavement, and not isolated to affecting just women or heterosexual couples. Therefore, we offer support to anyone who suffers the loss of a pregnancy, whether it happens directly to you, your partner or your baby's surrogate mother, regardless of the nature of your loss or your length of service.

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We will always try to be reasonable and flexible with the amount of time off you are able to take which will be based on your individual circumstances and at the discretion of your MD/Functional Head.

If you are affected by pregnancy loss, please get in touch with the PSC who will offer guidance on related entitlements.

**Please note:** *Where there is a statutory requirement for leave and/or pay, we will always ensure that this is given.*

Further support is available to you via your [Private Medical Insurance](#) (if applicable), [Employee Assistance Programme](#) and [Lighthouse](#).

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