

Paternity policy

This policy outlines an employee's entitlement to paternity leave, paternity pay, and attending antenatal appointments, and sets out the arrangements for taking leave.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

Entitlement to paternity leave

Paternity leave is available on the birth of a child if you are:

- The father
- The husband or partner of the mother (or adopter) - this includes same sex partners
- The child's adopter
- The intended parent (if you're having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement)

Where a child is placed with you for adoption by an adoption agency you may be entitled to take adoption leave instead. However, adoption leave may only be taken by one adoptive parent. Paternity leave is available to the other adoptive parent (of either sex).

Notice of entitlement to take paternity leave should be provided to the company by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

Taking enhanced paternity leave

We understand that the first few weeks after the birth of a baby, or the arrival of an adopted child is an important time for a family. After the birth or arrival of an adopted child, you (as the biological father, partner of the child's biological mother, or other adoptive parent) may take enhanced paternity leave of up to four weeks on full pay. You can start your leave on the date of birth or placement, or later. Paternity leave may be taken in a 4-week block, or in blocks of a week, and must be taken within a year of the birth or placement.

To take paternity leave you must give us written notice 28 days prior to each block of paternity leave (or no more than seven days after the adoption agency notified you of being matched with a child), or as soon as you reasonably can, stating:

- the expected week of childbirth;
- how much leave you intend to take; and
- when you would like your leave to start.

You can change the intended start date by giving us 28 days' notice or, if this is not possible, as much notice as you can.

Enhanced paternity pay

During your paternity leave of up to four weeks, you will continue to be paid an amount equal to your normal salary. Taking paternity leave will not affect your eligibility for pay rises or bonuses, which are made at the company's discretion.

During paternity leave

All the usual terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during paternity leave.

Holiday entitlement will continue to accrue during paternity leave. If your paternity leave continues into the next holiday year, any remaining holiday that is not taken before your paternity leave can be carried over to the next holiday year.

If you are a member of our pension scheme, we will continue to make employer pension contributions during paternity leave, based on your normal salary. You may continue to pay employee pension contributions at your chosen level, however if you would like to make changes to the level of contribution you make, please contact the HR & Operations Manager.

Shared parental leave

Apart from the first 2 weeks after childbirth, maternity leave may be converted into shared parental leave which can be shared between both parents to allow either or both to care for their child during the first year. Please speak to the HR & Operations Manager if you are interested in shared parental leave. Further information about Shared Parental Leave and be found at [Shared Parental Leave and Pay - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/shared-parental-leave-and-pay).

Attending antenatal appointments

You may take paid leave to attend 2 antenatal appointments. If you need any further time off to attend antenatal appointments, please discuss with your line manager or the HR & Operations Manager.

Neonatal care leave

Neonatal care leave is to support parents when a baby has received neonatal care in hospital.. This can be a difficult time for parents, and neonatal care leave provides a way for parents to be able to spend more time with their child during this time. Neonatal care leave is available from day one of employment, and it is available to parents of a child born on or after 6 April 2025.

You may be entitled to up to 12 weeks' neonatal care leave and pay if you are taking the leave to care for the baby and:

- you are the child's parent, intended parent (and will be responsible for their care), or

partner of the child's mother at the date of birth; or

- you are the child's adopter, prospective adopter, or partner of either at the date of placement, and you have official notification confirming you are allowed to adopt (if you're adopting a baby from overseas); or
- please note that the 'partner' cannot be the other parent's child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew

Neonatal care leave is available to parents of newborn babies who receive neonatal care in hospital within the first 28 days after birth. Neonatal care leave provides one week of leave for every 7 full and continuous days a baby is in neonatal care, for up to 12 weeks. The minimum period of neonatal care leave is one week, and the maximum period of neonatal care leave is 12 weeks (in addition to paternity leave). Leave must be taken within 68 weeks (just under 16 months) of the baby's birth date.

Neonatal care leave cannot be taken at the same time as other statutory leave such as paternity leave. It can be taken before or after, or in between blocks of Paternity Leave. While the baby is in neonatal care, or up to a week after leaving, neonatal care leave can be taken in separate blocks of at least one week at a time. After this, leave must be taken in a single continuous block.

In the event of multiple births (e.g. twins):

- If babies are in neonatal care at the same time, leave can only be claimed for one of them.
- If babies are in neonatal care at separate times, leave can be claimed for each of them up to a maximum of 12 weeks in total.

Neonatal Care Pay

To qualify for statutory neonatal care pay, you are required to have:

- At least 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the relevant week (the relevant week is the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth);
- Continue to be employed up to the week before the pay starts;
- Earn on average £125 per week (before tax) or more, over an 8 week period [note: figure quoted is for year 2025-2026].

Notice

Notice should be given to the Company as soon as reasonably possible if neonatal care leave or pay are required. Notice may be given verbally, via email or Teams message to the line manager or HR & Operations Manager, and should state the day that the neonatal care leave is to begin, and whether neonatal care pay is being requested. Line managers receiving such notice must inform the HR & Operations Manager immediately on receipt of notice.

For more information, please refer to the government website: [Neonatal Care Pay and Leave: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Aspire Scientific HR workstream

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