
FAMILIES, FLEXIBILITY & EVERYDAY LIFE

Your Journey



Life leave

When should it be taken?

We think it's pretty refreshing that colleagues no longer need to worry about using holiday days to deal a situation they haven't planned for. Our intention is that for those colleagues that truly need a bit of flex through time away from work, they can have our support to do so, without having to worry about how it'll affect their finances or holiday entitlement. That being said, Life Leave is down to your discretion as a manager, in partnership with the Head of People. So, if you think it's something that they should have planned for, we trust you to explain to your team member that this isn't what it's for.

Life Leave is supposed to be for those times that matter – like when you've woken up to a burst pipe and you've got to wait for the emergency plumber or when you may want to accompany a family member to a medical appointment. So, it should only really be for a day at a time at most – although there may be circumstances where you feel a team member needs to take additional time. We just ask that the team member has been with us for 3 months before they use any Life Leave, you speak to the Head of People before granting it, and that it is logged through our HR system.

If you're not sure whether it's appropriate to let your team member use 'Life Leave' for a particular situation, speak to the People Team.

Things to think about:

Ensure you agree with your team member what you're going to communicate about their time away from work to anyone that needs to know within the business – they may not be comfortable sharing what's happening in their personal lives.

Make sure you transition any work that needs to be completed during the time that they'll be away to someone else and signpost the team member to any support we have available such as our EAP or HelloSelf.

How do I deal with any breaches?

We're sure it won't happen but if you think someone is abusing this policy, raise your concerns with them in the first instance. As with everything, if someone is acting in a way that's inconsistent with our policies or values, we can investigate their behaviour under our disciplinary policy.



Maternity/Pregnant parent leave

Getting the terminology right

We're passionate about inclusivity – to support our LGBTQIA+ parents, we're using the terms 'pregnant parent' and trying to avoid talking about maternity leave where possible. So please try to use the appropriate terminology when supporting a pregnant parent within your team.

Who is entitled to take pregnant parent leave?

Every pregnant parent is entitled to up to 52 weeks' pregnant parent leave – irrespective of how long they've worked for us (although that's not necessarily the same for pregnant parent/ maternity pay).

Starting pregnant parent leave

It's up to your team member when they choose start their leave. Usually, the earliest someone can start their pregnant parent leave is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. Leave will also start: the day after the birth of the baby if they arrive early (before the pregnant parent leave has started) or automatically if the team member is off work for a pregnancy-related illness in the 4 weeks before the week (Sunday to Saturday) that their baby is due. If you're unsure, speak to the People Team and they'll be able to support you.

Every pregnancy is different – so, if your team member needs to change the date on which their leave starts they must, if possible, notify you at least 28 days before their proposed new start date.

What do I need to do when I find out a team member is pregnant?

When you're informed that a parent within your team is pregnant – we need to action a number of things to make sure we best support them both whilst at work and also in readiness for them taking their leave entitlement and pay. Please make sure that any paperwork you receive (such as their MATB1 form or medical appointments) are sent to the People Team, so that they can be recorded in the right way and sent to Payroll to be processed correctly.

We'll also need to undertake a risk assessment of their work station and the type of work that they do to make any necessary adjustments to support them in their role. Please speak to our Office Assistant to arrange completion of the risk assessment.

Think about any projects they have coming up, what support they need and also what plans you need to put in place to be ready for a handover at any time. You should also consider what holiday entitlement is outstanding and encourage your team member to use their accrued entitlement before they start pregnant parent leave – they'll carry on accruing holiday whilst they're on pregnant parent leave and they can take that when they return (ideally before they start their usual hours). It's up to you to agree and accept any holiday requests in the usual way though.

Thank you

If you want to chat through in more detail please give our People Team an [email](#).

Their door is always open for a cuppa and a chat.