Parental Bereavement Leave Policy

PACE is committed to providing support to staff who experience loss in their lives and understands that the death of a child, or a stillbirth, can be one of the most harrowing experiences of someone's life. This policy explains rights to time off, pay during time off and other support offered.

Eligibility

Parental bereavement leave is available from day one of employment. It is available to staff on the death of a child under the age of 18 including stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. You may take parental bereavement leave if you fall into any one of the following categories:

- A 'natural' parent;
- An adoptive parent, and those with whom a child has been placed under the 'foster to adopt' scheme, provided the placement is ongoing;
- A 'natural' parent where the child has been adopted but a Court Order exists to allow the 'natural' parent to have contact with the child;
- An employee who is living with a child who has entered Great Britain from overseas in relation to whom has received official notification that they are eligible to adopt;
- An intended parent under a surrogacy arrangement where it was expected that a parental order would be made;
- A 'parent in fact' which is someone in whose home the child has been living for a period of at least four weeks before the death and has had day to day responsibility for the child, subject to exceptions. This category includes guardians and foster parents but does not include paid carers; or
- The partner of anyone who falls into the above categories, where they live in an enduring family relationship with the child and their parent.

Length of leave and how it can be taken

A total of two weeks may be taken as parental bereavement leave and you may choose to take leave as:

- A single block of one week;
- A single block of two weeks; or
- Two separate blocks of one week.

Leave may start on any day of the week and must be taken in whole weeks. It may be taken at any time in the 56-week period following the death.

Notification requirements

Leave to be taken within the first 56 days of the death

You do not need to give any advance notice of taking parental bereavement leave. We ask that you contact your manager by telephone by the time you were due to start work on the day you wish leave to begin, or if this is not possible, as soon as is reasonably practicable, giving the date of the death, the date on which leave will start and whether one or two weeks is to be taken.

Leave to be taken later than the first 56 days since the death

You need to give one week's advance notice of taking parental bereavement leave to your manager by telephone giving the date of the death, the date on which leave will start and whether one or two weeks is to be taken.

Cancelling or changing leave dates

You can cancel a period of leave that you have already told us about, as long as the period of leave has not already started. If you wish to cancel a period of leave which was to begin within the first 56 days of the death, you can cancel it by letting us know by your normal start time on the day that leave was originally due to start.

To cancel leave which was to begin later than 56 days after the death, you should let us know no later than one week prior to the intended start date.

You can also change the start date of leave by following the notice requirements above.

Payment during leave

You will qualify for statutory parental bereavement pay during leave if you meet the following criteria:

- You have been continuously employed with us for at least 26 weeks by the week prior to the week in which the child dies;
- Your normal average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit relevant for national insurance purposes; and
- You are still employed by us on the date the child dies.

Payment will be made at a rate set and can be found on the Government website Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay and Leave: What you can get - GOV.UK.

To receive statutory parental bereavement pay, you must provide us with notice of this and the following information within 28 days, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the first day of parental bereavement leave:

- The child's name;
- The date of the death or stillbirth; and
- A declaration that you fall into the one of the categories listed under 'Eligibility' above.

You will be provided with a pro-forma so that you are able to supply us with this information.

Any additional payment (above the statutory entitlement) made will be entirely discretionary.

Terms and conditions during leave

During parental bereavement leave, you remain entitled to receive your normal contractual terms and conditions of employment that you would have received had you not taken this leave, with the exception of remuneration. This will include contractual benefits, subject to the terms of these benefits.

Right to return

Upon your return to work, you are entitled to return to the same job, with the same terms and conditions, in which you were employed before your absence unless:

- the period of leave you have taken is more than 26 weeks when added to any other period of statutory leave including maternity, paternity, adoption leave etc in relation to the same child; and
- it is not reasonably practicable for you to return to the same job.

On your first day back to work, your manager will set time aside to hold an informal meeting with you to discuss any arrangements regarding your return to work and any additional support we may be able to offer you.

Flexible working

We appreciate that a temporary period of flexible working may be beneficial to staff after they have suffered a loss. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact your manager.