



FATHERS IN THE WORKPLACE TOOLKIT

Balancing Fatherhood and Work

When expecting a baby, adopting or planning a family, it can be confusing to know what your entitlements are in terms of leave, support and pay. There are many options that are open to you as a statutory right outlined below, but it is also worth discussing your options with your employer as they may be able to provide additional support for you and your family.

Should I take caring leave?

A study by Smith Koslowski (2011) found that working fathers who spend more time with their children have more favourable labour market outcomes, earning more per hour and working fewer hours relative to their peers. Fathers increasingly want to spend more time with their children in the early days, 54% of working fathers with children under 1 feel that they spend too little time with their children, dropping to 34% for father who work flexibly (Equality and Human Rights Commission Survey).

Studies have also suggested that fathers being more involved in the care of their child is associated with greater marital stability and greater marital satisfaction (Lee and Doherty, 2007). Additionally an EHRC (2009) study found that 56% of fathers interviewed who took paternity leave felt this was directly responsible for greater involvement in care of their children in the longer term, whilst 69% said it had improved the quality of their family life. Cross-national analysis using longitudinal data from 4 OECD countries including the UK showed a positive and significant association between fathers who took leave and involvement with their children.

Many benefits exists for children when fathers have greater involvement in childcare within the first year post birth or adoption. For instance, research examining British fathers of children born in 2000-2001 (the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)) showed that "fathers' childcare contributions were positively associated with relationship stability over the preschool years." (Schober, 2012, p.281). Also, early paternal involvement has been shown to have a positive impact on the child's IQ, emotional IQ, educational outcomes, career success, mental and physical health and overall happiness in the future (Allen & Daly, 2007). Lastly, greater father involvement in early childhood is especially important for children's later emotional, cognitive and social well-being (Dex and Ward, 2007).

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Paternity Leave

As a father, you can choose to take either 1 or 2 weeks to care for your child after their birth or adoption if you are eligible to use it. Leave must be taken in one block (i.e., period of time) and the week is equal to your regular working week i.e., if you only work Wednesdays and Thursdays your weeks leave is 2 days.

The statutory rate of Paternity Pay for is £148.68 per week in 2019, or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave>

Shared Parental Leave

If both you and your partner are both working you may be eligible for Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP).

SPL means you can share up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay with your partner. This leave is flexible and allows you to take time off at the same time as your partner or when your partner returns to work, or both. You can also take blocks of leave. A common example would be to take time off at the start of your partners maternity leave to support them and the baby, then go back to work and then take more time off later in the first year to support your partners return to work.

For more information visit for eligibility criteria and how it can be used: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>

Flexible Working

There are several forms of flexible working open to employees which may be appropriate for new parents, these include job sharing, working from home, part-time, compressed hours, flexitime, annualised hours, and staggered hours.

An employee is entitled to request flexible working from their employer if they have worked for the same employer for a minimum of 26 weeks continuously.

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working>

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