

UK – ORDINARY PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

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Responsibility for this document:

The functional responsibility for the development, review and maintenance of this document rests with the P&O Vice President – Professional Services – EAST Region.

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1 Purpose and Scope

This Policy sets out the circumstances where employees who have parental responsibilities may take unpaid time off work to look after their children who are aged under 18 years. It also sets out the arrangements for taking leave.

This Policy applies to all UK employees. This Policy will be superseded by the content of any collective bargaining agreements, site agreements or individual contracts of employment, in the event of there being any difference(s) in arrangements. This Policy does not form part of an employee's terms and conditions of employment and is not contractual. The Company reserves the right to amend this Policy from time to time.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities apply within the context of this Policy.

2.1 Employees

Employees are responsible for ensuring they act in compliance with this Policy.

2.2 Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring the application and adherence to this Policy.

2.3 People & Organisation (P&O)

P&O will provide support and guidance for the application of this Policy.

3 Ordinary Parental Leave Policy

The Company is committed to supporting a positive work-life balance for all our employees and recognises that time with children is important. Eligible employees can take ordinary parental leave to care for their child; this may be to look after them during school holidays, be with them when they are unwell, or enjoy more quality time with them.

This type of parental leave may be particularly useful if an employee requires time off to care for their child but has used up, or is not entitled to, other types of family-friendly leave.

Ordinary parental leave should not be confused with:

- maternity, paternity and adoption leave; or
- shared parental leave, which enables employees to end their maternity or adoption leave early and share the untaken balance with their partner.

The Company has separate policies on maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave and shared parental leave. Please refer to Section 5 of this Policy for further information. Time off to care for dependants is also covered in the UK Leave of Absence policy.

3.1 Eligibility for Ordinary Parental Leave

To be eligible to take ordinary parental leave, employees must meet the following criteria:

- have a minimum of one year's continuous employment with the Company by the time they wish to take the leave; and
- have, or expect to have, parental responsibility for the child under the age of 18, as defined in Section 4 of this Policy.

Employees must also take the leave for the purpose of caring for or spending time with the child, but it is not necessary for them to be living with the child to qualify.

To confirm eligibility for ordinary parental leave, employees may be requested to provide documentation such as the child's birth certificate or certificate of adoption.

3.2 Length and Timing of Ordinary Parental Leave

Eligible employees can take up to eighteen weeks' unpaid leave for each child, subject to a maximum of four weeks' leave for each child in any calendar year.

Ordinary parental leave is usually taken in blocks of one week, but employees may be able to take the leave as single days. For part-time employees, a 'week' equals the number of days the employee works in a normal week. Where the employee's child has a disability (as defined in Section 4 of this Policy), the employee can take the leave one day at a time.

Entitlement to ordinary parental leave carries over from previous employment. This means that if an employee has taken ordinary parental leave with a previous employer:

- they can take the balance with the Company but must wait until they have worked for the Company for at least one year; and
- the Company will ask the employee to confirm the amount of ordinary parental leave already taken for their child with any previous employers.

Employees can take ordinary parental leave once their baby is born or adoption placement starts before taking paternity leave.

3.3 Requesting Ordinary Parental Leave

To request ordinary parental leave, employees are to complete the UK Ordinary Parental Leave Request Form, and submit it to their manager, copying their local P&O representative.

To take ordinary parental leave, employees normally need to give the Company at least 21 days' notice, counting back from the date on which the requested leave is to start.

Employees can ask for their leave to begin when their child is born/placed with them for adoption, whether this is earlier or later than expected. In these circumstances, employees should give the Company at least 21 days' notice, counting back from the beginning of the expected week of childbirth/the beginning of the week in which the placement is expected to occur. If 21 days' notice is not possible, employees should give notice as soon as they can.

Employees who are considering taking ordinary parental leave on the birth/placement of their child should bear in mind that they may also be entitled to paternity leave. Please refer to the UK Paternity policy for further information.

3.3.1 Postponement of Ordinary Parental Leave

While the Company's aim is to agree to an employee's request for ordinary parental leave, there are circumstances in which the Company may need to postpone the start date. The Company will do this only if the employee's absence would cause undue disruption to the business and will give the employee written notice of the postponement no more than seven days after receiving their request. Examples of this may be where the employee wishes to take ordinary parental leave during a business-critical time or where suitable cover for the employee's work cannot be found before the date on which their ordinary parental leave is due to start.

However, the Company will not postpone an employee's period of ordinary parental leave if the leave starts on the birth of their child or child's placement for adoption.

Where there may be a need to postpone an employee's requested period of ordinary parental leave, the employee will be invited to a meeting with their manager and P&O to discuss alternative dates for them to take that period of leave within six months of the first day the postponed leave was due to start, ensuring that the alternative dates are before the child's 18th birthday.

3.4 Terms and Conditions during Ordinary Parental Leave

While an employee is on ordinary parental leave, all the terms and conditions of their contract of employment, except normal pay, will continue and their continuity of employment is not affected.

During leave, the employee continues to be bound by the terms and conditions of their employment.

3.4.1 Pay and Benefits

Ordinary parental leave under this Policy is unpaid. This means that, while sums payable by way of wages/salary will cease, all other benefits will remain in place. Any deductions for flex benefits continue during ordinary parental leave provided there are funds to deduct from. Where there are no funds to deduct from, deductions will recommence at the next possible pay run and continue until the balance due is fully paid.

3.4.2 Annual Leave

During ordinary parental leave, annual leave will continue to accrue at the rate provided in the employee's contract of employment. Employees are to discuss their intentions regarding taking annual leave with their manager before going on ordinary parental leave. Annual leave may be added to the beginning or the end of any period of ordinary parental leave.

3.4.3 Pension

As ordinary parental leave is unpaid, employee and employer pension contributions will cease during any period of ordinary parental leave.

3.5 Salary Review

If a salary review occurs during ordinary parental leave, any change to the employee’s salary will be applied to applicable benefits and will be effective from the salary review date. Employees on leave will be notified of any changes to their salary.

3.6 Timewriting

Employees are to record instances of ordinary parental leave in the Company’s timewriting system as appropriate.

3.7 Redundancies during Ordinary Parental Leave

An employee on ordinary parental leave retains all statutory rights in respect of redundancy. The UK Redundancy policy will be followed in these circumstances and any employee on ordinary parental leave will be treated no less favourably.

3.8 Returning to Work after Ordinary Parental Leave

3.8.1 Rights on Returning to Work after Ordinary Parental Leave

If an employee takes an isolated period of ordinary parental leave of four weeks or less, they are entitled to return to the same job they were doing before their absence.

An employee is also entitled to return to the same job if they take a period of ordinary parental leave of four weeks or less following on immediately from a period (or consecutive periods) of maternity, adoption, paternity and/or shared parental leave (taken in relation to the same child) that did not last more than 26 weeks.

However, if an employee has taken a period of ordinary parental leave of more than four weeks, or has taken a period of ordinary parental leave of four weeks or less following on immediately from a period (or consecutive periods) of maternity, paternity, adoption and/or shared parental leave (taken in relation to the same child) that lasted more than 26 weeks, and it is not reasonably practicable for the employee to return to the same job as before, the Company will offer the employee another job that is both suitable and appropriate in the circumstances on terms and conditions no less favourable than those that applied previously.

3.8.2 Requests for Flexible Working

Requests for flexible working are to be made as soon as possible prior to returning to work and in accordance with the UK Flexible Working (Hours) policy.

4 Definitions

The following terms are used within this document.

Term	Definition
Disability	For the purposes of this Policy, a disabled child means Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment is received for their child.

Term	Definition
Expected Week of Childbirth	The week, beginning on a Sunday, in which the doctor or midwife expects the employee's child to be born.
Parental responsibility	<p>Parental responsibility in this context means the employee must be named on one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the birth certificate; • the adoption certificate; • a parental order, for surrogacy; or • a legal guardianship. <p>Step-parents can also have parental responsibility if it is agreed by both biological parents.</p> <p>If the employee is separated from the other parent or does not live with their child, they still have the right to ordinary parental leave if they keep parental responsibility for their child.</p>
The Company	References to the "Company" in this Policy are references to the employee's current employer.
The Policy	References to the "Policy" are references to the UK Ordinary Parental Leave Policy.

5 References

Document title	Document no.
UK Adoption Leave Policy	HRM-PLD-100008
UK Flexible Working (Hours) Policy	HRM-PLD-100024
UK Leave of Absence Policy	HRM-PLD-100026
UK Maternity Leave Policy	HRM-PLD-100009
UK Ordinary Parental Leave Request Form	HRM-FOR-100410
UK Paternity Leave Policy	HRM-PLD-100012
UK Redundancy Policy	HRM-PLD-100023
UK Shared Parental Leave Policy	HRM-PLD-100011

6 Revision History

Rev no.	Rev date	Summary of changes
0	1-Jan-2019	Issued for UK Harmonisation and will supersede UK Parental leave policy HRM-PLS-1044 (Heritage WG) and UK Ordinary Parental Leave Procedure HRM-PRO-100014 (Heritage AmecFW).

Rev no.	Rev date	Summary of changes
1	08 August 2022	Terminology and style updated to be consistent with other policy documents. Section 3.2 updated to allow employees who are parents of children without a disability to potentially take the leave as single days.