

BEING A PARENT

March 2021

We know that being a parent brings additional responsibilities, so we try to support parents to combine work and home life. We have a number of family-friendly policies that outline the support available.

Maternity leave

- It helps if you speak to your manager as soon as possible when you know you're pregnant.
- They can give you advice and support, such as paid time off for ante-natal appointments.
- Your manager will arrange a risk assessment to identify any hazards that could be a health and safety risk to you.
- There are certain timescales that you and Royal Mail need to follow during your pregnancy and maternity leave (see the Maternity policy for details).
- All pregnant employees are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave (see Maternity pay section).
- During your maternity leave, you're entitled to 10 'keep in touch' days so that you can take part in relevant work or training. Before you start your maternity leave, arrange with your manager how you will keep in touch.



Adoption leave

- As long as certain criteria are met, similar time off to maternity leave is normally available if you or your partner adopts a child through an approved agency.
- If you have 52 weeks' service at the date you are matched with a child, you may be entitled to 26 weeks' Royal Mail enhanced adoption pay.
- You need to request adoption leave within seven days of being matched with a child.
- When adopting a child from abroad, adoption leave will start after the child enters the UK.



Maternity pay

- If you have 26 weeks' service in the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth, you may be entitled to 39 weeks' statutory maternity pay.
- If you have less service, you may be entitled to a maternity allowance.
- If you have 52 weeks' service in the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth, you may be entitled to the first 26 weeks' maternity leave paid at your full pay rate. This is a generous enhancement by Royal Mail to statutory maternity pay.



Paternity leave

- You can normally take up to two weeks' paternity leave, if you have at least 26 weeks' service, have responsibility for the child's upbringing, and are one of the below:
 - The biological father
 - The mother's partner/husband
 - Matched with a child by an adoption agency, or are the partner/husband of someone who has been matched
- If you have 52 weeks' service, you may be entitled to receive full pay during paternity leave.



Parental leave

- You can take a maximum of 18 weeks' unpaid leave per child up to your child's 18th birthday.
- A maximum of 4 weeks' may be taken in any year (in whole week blocks).
- You may also be entitled to Shared parental leave. See the Shared parental leave summary.

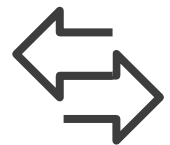
Want to know more?

For full details, ask your manager for a copy of the maternity, paternity, adoption or parental and shared parental leave policies and guides available in the 'Policy and information' section on PSP. Also see Time off: other leave and Flexible working summaries.

Shared parental leave is a type of family leave to give eligible parents more flexibility in how they care for their child in the first year of birth or adoption.

What is Shared parental leave and statutory Shared parental pay?

- Employees on maternity leave/primary adopters can choose to reduce their maternity/adoption leave and statutory pay, so they can share the amount that is left with their partner as Shared parental leave.
- Up to 50 weeks of the maternity/adoption leave and 37 weeks statutory pay can be shared.
- You can take a minimum of one week and a maximum of 50 weeks Shared parental leave. The amount of leave and pay available to eligible parents will depend on how much maternity/adoption leave the mother/adopter takes.
- Shared parental leave must be taken before the child's first birthday/first anniversary of placement for adoption.
- Shared parental leave must be taken in blocks of a week, but can be requested to be taken in more than one block (see Discontinuous leave below).
- You can agree to work up to 20 'keeping in touch' days during Shared parental leave.
- Please note: employees eligible for Royal Mail enhanced maternity/adoption pay who transfer to Shared parental leave before the end of their period of enhanced pay will lose any remaining enhanced pay.



Who is eligible for Shared parental leave?

There are a number of requirements you and your partner must meet to be eligible for Shared parental leave and statutory pay. The Shared parental leave policy and guide have the full details.

- You must have worked for Royal Mail for 26 weeks and still be employed when Shared parental leave is taken.
- Employees must be entitled to maternity/adoption leave and/or statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance.
- You and your partner must share the main responsibility for caring for your child.



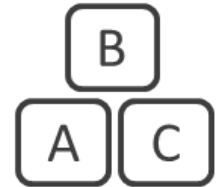
Want to know more?

More information is available in the Shared parental leave policy and guide. This includes examples of how Shared parental leave and pay can be taken. For more details ask your manager for copies, available on the Policy and Information site on PSP.

Different ways Shared parental leave can be taken

Parents can choose to take the leave:

- At the same time while the mother/adopter is still on maternity/adoption leave; or
- At the same time with both parents on Shared parental leave; or
- Separately with one parent going back to work and the other taking Shared parental leave



There are two types of Shared parental leave:

- **Continuous leave:** You can take the leave in one block (e.g. 20 consecutive weeks). Managers must approve all requests.
- **Discontinuous leave:** You can take the leave over 2 or more periods while going back to work in between. This needs your managers' approval.

Before you decide if Shared parental leave is best option for your family, consider the following questions:

- Do both you and your partner qualify for Shared parental leave ?
- How do you want to share the caring arrangements of your child?
- Do you or your partner have enhanced maternity/adoption pay? If so, would this provide more financial support if the mother/adopter remains on maternity/adoption leave until their enhanced maternity/adoption pay comes to and end?
- Which parent earns the higher salary?
- How would your family's financial situation be impacted if either you or your partner was on Shared parental leave ?
- Consider other types of family leave, such as parental leave and flexible working.
- How much annual holiday does each parent have? Would taking a period of paid holiday be more beneficial?

How to request Shared parental leave

- Use the Shared parental leave request form to request the leave.
- You can make up to three requests to take Shared parental leave.
- Give your manager at least eight weeks' notice for each period of leave you request.



Want to know more?

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