

Parental Leave

Leave Entitlement

Overview

This section describes parental leave entitlement for British Council staff.

Audience

This section applies to all UK-appointed staff only.

Responsibilities

This guidance should be read and followed by:

- all members of staff who are parents
- line managers.

Policy

Parents of all children who were under the age of five when the regulations came into force on 15 December 1999 have the right to parental leave.

Entitlement

- Members of staff have a statutory right to unpaid parental leave if they have, or expect to have, responsibility for a child and intend to use the leave for the purpose of caring for the child. To qualify for the right to take parental leave, the member of staff must have one year's continuous service.
- The right to take parental leave applies up until the child's fifth birthday, except when the child is adopted or disabled (defined as a child for whom disability living allowance is awarded). For an adopted child the right applies for five years from the adoption or until the child reaches 18, whichever is sooner. For a disabled child, the right applies until the child reaches the age of 18.
- The right to parental leave is for each parent and for each child, that is, a parent with triplets would be entitled to three lots of parental leave. It is not a right for each employer. An employee moving to a new employer is only entitled to the balance of the leave not taken with their previous employer.
- The regulations set out a maximum of 13 weeks leave entitlement in respect of each child. Parental leave is limited to four weeks a year, and parts of a week taken count as a full week, except where the child is disabled, in which case leave can be taken in blocks of one or more days at a time. Parental leave for parents of disabled children is 18 weeks.

Procedure

A member of staff wishing to take parental leave must inform their line manager and Human Resources (HR) Services at least 21 days before the date they intend to commence parental leave.