

# HUMAN RESOURCES

## PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE



### Equality and Diversity

This Policy will be applied in a non-discriminatory way, in line with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies.

### 1.0 Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of parental leave is to allow staff time off work to look after a child or to make arrangements for a child's welfare. Parents can use it to spend more time with children and to achieve a better balance between work and family commitments. Parental leave is unpaid.
- 1.2 The policy applies to all staff who have parental responsibility for a child (or children) and who have completed one year's service with the School at the time they want to take the leave. The entitlement applies regardless of type of contract, i.e. it applies to full-time and part-time staff, whether on fixed-term or without duration contracts. It does not apply to agency staff.

### 2.0 Key Elements of the Policy

- 2.1 The following provisions of the policy will apply in every case:
  - each parent is eligible for up to 18 weeks of unpaid parental leave for each child, until the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday;
  - staff will remain employed while on unpaid parental leave;
  - where parental leave is for a period of 4 weeks or less, the member of staff is entitled to return to the same job as before the parental leave period commenced. Where parental leave is longer than 4 weeks the member of staff has the right to return to the same job as before; or, if that is not practicable, to a similar job;
  - superannuation contributions will be suspended during periods of unpaid parental leave.
- 2.2 Under the parental leave scheme staff can take leave in blocks of a week or multiples of a week. A week is based on their working pattern (i.e. for a part-time member of staff working 3 days a week, a week of parental leave equates to 3 working days).
- 2.3 Staff with parental responsibility for disabled children who are in receipt of disability living allowance will have the flexibility to take leave a day at a time.
- 2.4 A maximum of four weeks' parental leave may be taken in one calendar year.
- 2.5 Staff must give at least 21 days' notice before the date on which unpaid parental leave is to start and must specify the dates on which the period of leave is to begin and end.
- 2.6 Where parental leave is to begin when a child is born, staff must give at least 21 days' notice before the expected week of childbirth. Where parental leave is in respect of an adopted child, staff must give 21 days' notice before the beginning of the week in which the child is to be placed or adopted.

- 2.7 In certain circumstances, where there has been a period of compassionate leave to care for a sick child, a member of staff may request parental leave without the 21 day notice period. Such requests will be considered sympathetically and on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.8 Requests for parental leave should be made on the 'Parental Leave' form and passed to the following for approval:
- line manager and Head of Service for staff based within Central Services;
  - line manager, Head of Department/Dean of Faculty and the Faculty Operating Officer for staff based within the Faculty.
- 2.9 Consideration to the requirements of the post will be given and such approval will not be unreasonably withheld. Completed forms should be sent to the Human Resources Department via email: [hrforms@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:hrforms@lshtm.ac.uk).
- 2.10 Staff will be required to produce either a full birth certificate/adoption papers for their child (children) or a MATB1 form, and if required a document certifying that the child has been awarded disability living allowance before they can take parental leave. The School reserves the right to require further documentation in connection with requests for parental leave.
- 2.11 The School may postpone a period of parental leave (other than where parental leave has been requested immediately after childbirth or immediately after placement for adoption) where the business would be unduly disrupted if the member of staff were to take leave during the period requested. In such cases, the School will allow the member of staff to take an equivalent period of unpaid leave beginning no later than six months after the commencement of the period originally requested. Staff will be given notice in writing of the postponement, stating the reason for it and providing suggested alternative dates for the member of staff to take parental leave. Such notice will be given no more than seven days after the parental leave request has been submitted.
- 2.12 The entitlement to parental leave occurs only once for each child, and crosses employment boundaries. A member of staff who has taken parental leave with another employer will therefore be asked to supply details on the Parental Leave form.

## **Accessibility**

If you require any document in an alternative format, for example, in larger print, please contact Human Resources.

## **Related Policies and documents**

Parental Leave form

Carer Leave Policy and Procedure

Flexible Working Arrangements Policy and Procedure

## **Human Resources**

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