

MATERNITY AND ADOPTION LEAVE

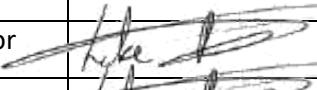
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Maternity And Adoption Leave

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MATERNITY AND ADOPTION LEAVE POLICY:

This policy outlines your rights and responsibilities if you are pregnant, have recently given birth or recently adopted, or are planning to adopt. It also covers how the Company offers non-Contractual enhanced maternity and adoption benefits to support you in your parental role.

The Company wants to support you in your role as a parent or parent to be. Once you know you are pregnant or planning to adopt, please notify your Manager as soon as possible, so we can work with you to help you to plan your leave, and answer any questions you may have.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO TAKE MATERNITY LEAVE:

As soon as reasonably practical, but in any event, not later than five weeks before the commencement of any maternity leave, you should notify the Office Manager in writing:

- that you are pregnant;
- the date on which you would like to start your maternity leave;
- a certificate from your doctor or midwife confirming your expected week of childbirth.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO TAKE ADOPTION LEAVE:

In the case of an adoption other than a foreign adoption, you must give notice in writing to your Manager of your intention to take adoptive leave as soon as reasonably practicable, and, in any case, at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the leave.

At least four weeks before your intended start date (or, if this is not possible, as soon as you can) you must also provide your Manager with the certificate of placement from the adoption agency. If you are adopting a child from outside Ireland you must provide documentation to show that the adoption has been approved by the relevant Irish authority. \ **Antenatal Care and Sickness**

If you are pregnant, you may take paid time off during working hours for antenatal care. You should give your Manager as much notice as possible of the appointment.

Periods of pregnancy-related sickness absence will be paid in accordance with the Company's sickness and absence policy. Periods of pregnancy-related sickness absence from the start of your

pregnancy until the end of your maternity leave will be recorded separately from other sickness records and will be disregarded in any future employment-related decisions.

DURATION OF MATERNITY/ADOPTION LEAVE:

You may take up to 26 weeks' ordinary maternity or 24 weeks' adoption leave (OML/OAL) and a further 16 weeks' additional maternity/adoption leave (AML /AAL) immediately following OML/OAL.

STARTING MATERNITY/ADOPTION LEAVE:

You are entitled to a minimum period of maternity leave of 26 weeks which must start at least two weeks before the end of the expected week of confinement, and which must end not sooner than four weeks after the end of the expected week of confinement.

Ordinary Adoption Leave can start:

- up to 14 days before the date the child starts living with you (Irish adoptions);
- when the child arrives in Ireland or within 28 days of this date (overseas adoptions); or
- the day the child is born unless you are at work in which case it will start the day after (if you've used a surrogate to have a child).

STATUTORY MATERNITY BENEFIT (SMB)/ STATUTORY ADOPTION BENEFIT (SAB):

Statutory Maternity Benefit is payable for up to 26 weeks at the rate set by the government while statutory Adoption Benefit (SAB) is payable for up to 24 weeks at the rate set by the government. SMB/SAB will stop being payable if you return to work sooner (except where you are simply 'Keeping in Touch' in accordance with the provisions set out below), or if the adoption is disrupted.

You are entitled to SMB/SAB if:

- You satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions, and you are either employed by us or had been employed by us within 16 weeks of the week in which your baby is due or arrives;
- You provide us with the relevant notification and information as described above; and
- You give at least 28 days' notice (or if that is not possible, as much notice you can) of your intention to take maternity/adoption leave.

SMB/SAB payments are paid through the Department of Social Protection.

You will still be eligible for SMB if you leave our employment for any reason after the beginning of your maternity leave period (for example, if you resign or are made redundant).

If you leave our employment for any reason, you will still be eligible for SAB if you have already been notified by an agency that you have been matched with a child. In such cases, SAB will start 14 days before the expected placement date or the day after your employment ends, whichever is later.

ANNUAL LEAVE:

During OML/OAL and AML/AAL, annual leave will accrue at the rate provided under your Contract. If the annual leave year is due to end during your leave, you should ensure that you have taken the full year's entitlement before starting your leave or add it to the end of your leave.

Any holiday entitlement for the year that cannot reasonably be taken before starting your maternity leave can be carried over to the next holiday year and must be taken immediately before returning to work unless your Manager agrees otherwise. You should try to limit carry over to one week's holiday or less. Carry-over of more than one week is at your Manager's discretion.

KEEPING IN TOUCH (KIT):

You and your Manager can agree to up to ten Keeping In Touch (KIT) days during your period of maternity/adoption leave without bringing your maternity/adoption leave or SMB/SAB to an end. These are optional days which can be worked in order for you to remain in contact with the Company, for example, to attend a training session or team meeting. Any KIT days worked will be paid at your usual rate of pay (this will be inclusive of any maternity benefit entitlement) and must be agreed in advance in writing with your Manager. In any case, you must not work in the two weeks following birth.

EXPECTED RETURN DATE:

Once you have notified us in writing of your intended start date, we will send you a letter within 28 days to inform you of your expected return date. In addition to this, you must inform us in writing of your expected return date at least four weeks prior to your expected return date. If you wish to return to work earlier than the expected return date, you must give us 8 weeks' prior notice of this in writing.

If you wish to return later than the expected return date, you should either:

- request unpaid parental leave, giving us as much notice as possible but not less than 4 weeks' notice in writing; or
- request paid annual leave in accordance with your Contract, which will be at your Manager's discretion.

If you are unable to return to work due to sickness or injury, this will be treated as sickness absence and our sickness policy will apply.

DISRUPTED ADOPTION:

Adoption leave is disrupted if it has started but you are notified that the placement will not take place, the child is returned to the adoption agency after placement; or the child dies after placement. If the adoption is disrupted after your adoption leave has started, your entitlement to adoption leave will continue for a further eight weeks from the end of the week in which disruption occurred, unless your entitlement to leave and/or pay would have ended earlier should the disruption not have occurred.

YOUR RIGHTS WHEN YOU RETURN:

On your return from any Maternity Leave/ Adoption Leave you are entitled to return to work in the same position as you held before commencing leave or, where not practicable, to suitable alternative employment with us. Your terms of employment will be the same as they would have been if you had not been absent on maternity/adoption leave.

CHANGES TO WORKING PATTERNS:

If you wish to make a request to change your working pattern after maternity/adoption leave your request should be made in accordance with the procedure set out in our Flexible/Remote Working Policy.

All maternity and adoptive leave and related matters are subject to the Maternity Protection Act 1994 (as amended) and the Adoptive Leave Act 1995 (as amended) respectively.



Luke Deasy
Managing Director