



Family Leave Policy & Procedure

Last Update: April 2025

Annington Limited
Hays Lane House
1 Hays Lane
SE1 2HB

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

Contents

2. Policies Statement	4
3. Maternity Leave	5
3.1 Introduction	5
3.2 Procedure	5
3.3 Reasonable Contact	9
3.4 Keeping In Touch Days	9
3.5 Return To Work	9
3.6 Notice Requirements	10
3.7 Sharing Maternity Leave And Pay	11
3.8 Return To Work Due To Sickness	11
3.9 Industrial Action	11
3.10 General Issues	11
3.11 Maternity Leave And Annual Leave	11
3.12 Contractual Entitlements	12
4. Neo Natal Leave	13
5. Adoption Leave	14
5.1 Eligibility	14
5.2 Length Of Adoption Leave	14
5.3 Statutory Adoption Pay	15
5.4 Employee Obligations	16
5.5 Protection From Detriment And Dismissal	18
5.6 Sharing Adoption Leave And Pay	18
6. Paternity Leave	19
6.1 The Right To Attend Antenatal Appointments	19
6.2 Eligibility For Paternity Leave	19
6.3 Notification Of Paternity Leave	20

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

6.4 Statutory Paternity Pay	20
6.5 Discretionary Enhanced Paternity Pay	20
6.6 Rights Following Return To Work	20
7. SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE	21
7.1 The Amount Of Shared Parental Leave	21
7.2 Who Is Eligible To Take Shared Parental Leave	22
7.3 Eligibility If Annington Employee Is The Primary Carer	22
7.4 Eligibility If Annington Employee Is The Partner	23
7.5 Maternity Leave Curtailment Notice	24
7.6 Notice Of Entitlement And Intention	24
7.7 Period Of Leave Notice	25
7.8 Shared Parental Leave Pay	25
7.9 Eligibility To Statutory Shared Parental Pay	26
7.10 Contact During Shared Parental Leave	27
DOCUMENT DETAILS	28

2. Policies Statement

Annington Limited, together with its subsidiaries and affiliates (“Annington”, the “Company”, “we”), is committed to acting with collaboratively and integrity in all our business dealings.

Annington’s Policy is to comply with both the letter and spirit of the law with regards to family leave.

The aim of this Policy and Procedure is to inform all employees of their entitlement to leave in regard to maternity, paternity, neo-natal, adoption and shared parental leave, and employee’s statutory rights.

The employee’s service will be counted as continuous during any type of family leave for both statutory and contractual rights.

This Policy and Procedure is subject to change in accordance with legislation and conforms to the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

3. Maternity Leave

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following minimum rights for pregnant workers apply regardless of length of service or number of hours worked:

- paid time off for antenatal examinations.
- no dismissal during the period of pregnancy and maternity leave except in exceptional circumstances wholly unconnected with pregnancy.
- no requirement is necessary for a comparator to be provided for discrimination on the grounds of maternity leave or pregnancy.
- contractual rights, with the exception of remuneration, are preserved during the entire 52-week maternity leave period.
- up to 26 weeks' Ordinary Maternity Leave and up to 26 weeks' Additional Maternity Leave, making a total of up to 52 weeks' of maternity leave.

3.2 PROCEDURE

3.2.1 Antenatal Care

A pregnant employee has a right to paid time off to attend antenatal appointments with a registered medical practitioner, midwife or health visitor. The employee's manager may ask the employee to try to re-arrange appointments to suit the needs of the Company.

After the first appointment, the employee must provide her manager with evidence of all future appointments, such as the appointment card. A photocopy of this evidence should be forwarded to NGA Human Resources to be placed on the employee's personal file.

3.2.2 Maternity Leave

A pregnant employee is entitled to the following provisions dependent upon her length of continuous service at the beginning of the 15th week (the qualifying week) before the expected week of childbirth (EWC). The pay entitlements are only valid whilst the employee is on maternity leave:

Continuous Service	Maternity leave entitlement	Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)
Less than 26 weeks' service at the 15 th week before the EWC	<p>Up to 52 weeks' absence, which can commence at any time after the beginning of the 11th week before EWC as follows:</p> <p>The first 26 weeks is referred to as Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)</p> <p>The leave period following the first 26 weeks' leave is referred to as Additional Maternity Leave (AML)</p>	<p>No SMP entitlement but may be entitled to Maternity Allowance from the Government.</p> <p>(See 3.5.2 and 3.5.3 below for further details)</p>

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

More than 26 weeks' service at the end of the 15 th week before the EWC	<p>Up to 52 weeks' absence, which can commence at any time after the beginning of the 11th week before EWC as follows:</p> <p>The first 26 weeks is referred to as Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)</p> <p>The leave period following the first 26 weeks' leave is referred to as Additional Maternity Leave (AML)</p>	<p>6 weeks at the higher rate and 33 weeks at the lower rate</p> <p>(See 3.5.3 below for further details)</p>
--	---	---

Figure 1. Maternity Entitlement

NOTE: The 'beginning of the week' commences at midnight on Saturday night/Sunday morning.

3.2.3 Obligations On The Employee

The employee must complete Form A (included with the Employee Guide to Maternity Leave) and return it to HR by no later than the start of the 15th week before the EWC (or as soon as reasonably practicable).

This form supplies the Company with the following details relating to the employee:

- that she is pregnant
- the date of the EWC
- the date of the beginning of her absence; and
- that she intends to return to work with the Company, should she wish to confirm this, at this time

The employee should provide the Company with the MAT B1 Certificate that will be provided by her doctor or midwife 20 weeks before the EWC. The certificate should be kept on the employee's personal file.

Maternity leave may not start before the 11th week before the EWC. Employees may continue to work beyond this 11th week if they wish and still qualify for maternity pay, but they must not be permitted to remain at work if medically unfit to do so.

Where an employee is absent from work after the beginning of the 4th week before the EWC, wholly or partly because of pregnancy or childbirth, maternity leave will commence from the first day of absence. Prior to the 4th week, if an employee is absent from work due to sickness, whether it be unrelated or wholly or partly because of childbirth, then the normal company sickness scheme shall apply to such an absence.

If the baby is born before maternity leave commences, the date of childbirth will be the first day of maternity leave.

Childbirth means the birth of a child, whether living or dead after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

An employee is not permitted to work during the two-week period immediately following the actual day of childbirth. This two-week period is included in the maternity leave entitlement detailed in paragraph 3.2.1.

The employee should provide the Company with a copy of the birth certificate as soon as reasonably practicable. A copy of the birth certificate should then be placed on the personal file.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

3.2.4 Health And Safety Considerations

When a manager has been informed that an employee is pregnant, a risk assessment (or re-assessment) of their workplace and job must be undertaken by the Company's Health and Safety Advisor and the employee's Line Manager. This assessment must consider any risks that may harm an expectant mother or her unborn child. These would include physical risks (manual handling of loads), any dangerous substances, or working conditions.

Managers must take all reasonable steps to avoid the risks that may harm the expectant mother, by ensuring that an assessment takes place as soon as they become aware of her condition.

Managers should be aware that the volume and pacing of work should not be excessive. In particular, the manager may identify other risks that could be avoided by longer or more frequent rest breaks and by adjusting work stations or work procedures.

Where the risk cannot be avoided, if it is reasonable to do so, the manager will:

- temporarily adjust the employee's working conditions/ hours of work;
- offer the employee alternative work if any is available; or
- as a last resort give paid leave as long as is necessary to protect the employee's health and safety and/or that of her unborn child.

NOTE: Special consideration should be given to night workers who produce a medical certificate stating that their hours of work affect their health and safety.

If an employee is suspended during her pregnancy on health and safety grounds, she will be entitled to receive whatever remuneration she would have received had she not been suspended.

Employees are prohibited from working, or being permitted by the Company to work, during the two weeks immediately after the date of childbirth.

3.2.5 Pay During Maternity Absence

An employee may be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA) payments during maternity leave depending on length of service and subject to the conditions detailed below.

i. Maternity Allowance

Maternity Allowance (from the government) may be payable to women who do not qualify for SMP (see 3.5.3 below). Where an employee is not eligible for SMP, she should be issued with an SMP1 form which details the reason why SMP is not payable. The MAT B1 Certificate held on the employee's personal file should also be returned to the employee. The employee should take both documents to their local JobcentrePlus in order to make a claim for MA. If the employee is eligible for MA, payment is made direct from the JobcentrePlus and not through the Company's payroll system.

ii. Statutory Maternity Pay

SMP payments are made irrespective of whether the employee intends to return to work. SMP is payable for a maximum of 39 weeks and is subject to deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance. The first 6 weeks are paid at nine-tenths of the average of the 8 weeks' pay (known as the reference period) prior to the qualifying week (this is the higher rate SMP). The following 33 weeks are paid at the lower rate SMP (SMP only) OR 90% of the employee's weekly earnings if this is less than the rate at which SMP is payable.

An employee will be entitled to SMP during maternity leave provided that:

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

- she has at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with the company (irrespective of hours worked) at the end of the 15th week before the EWC – the Qualifying Week (QW).
- her average earnings in the 8 weeks ending with the QW are not below the lower earnings level for National Insurance Contributions (NIC).
- she is still pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC or has had the baby at that time.
- she has provided the Company with written notice by no later than the start of the 15th week before the EWC of her intention to take maternity leave (confirmation of her pregnancy with the production of a MATB1 form must be provided no later than the end of the third week of maternity leave).
- Women will be entitled to any discretionary bonuses which are ordinarily paid to employees for work that they would have undertaken during the compulsory two weeks (four weeks for factory workers) maternity leave period.
- Women will be entitled to continue receiving their ordinary (non pay) benefits irrespective of which type of maternity leave they are taking, i.e. company car, mobile phone.

If a pay rise takes effect at any time between the start of the 8 week reference period and the end of the maternity leave (be this ordinary or additional) a re-calculation will need to be applied including the following scenarios and the difference that is owed should be paid to the employee:

- any pay-rise awarded from the 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth through to the end of maternity leave will result in a re-calculation of SMP and a payment made to the employee.
- if a pay-rise is awarded during unpaid maternity leave e.g. the last thirteen weeks of additional maternity leave, SMP will be re-calculated as though the pay-rise took effect from the beginning of the maternity pay period.

iii. Obligations on the Employee whilst Receiving SMP

The employee must inform the Company if:

- she starts work for another employer during the maternity pay period; or
- she is taken into legal custody during the maternity pay period.

NOTE: SMP is no longer withheld if a woman goes outside the EU.

iv. Effect of Sickness on Maternity Pay

If an employee is sick up to the 4th week before the EWC then the normal Company Sickness Scheme shall apply to such an absence.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

If an employee is absent from work due to a pregnancy related illness at any time during the last 4 weeks before the EWC, she will be deemed to have begun her period of maternity leave.

If an employee chooses to return to work before all 26 weeks' paid leave are taken, maternity pay will cease and normal pay will resume from the effective date of her return to work.

3.3 REASONABLE CONTACT

Shortly before an employee's maternity leave starts, the Company will discuss the arrangements for her to keep in touch during her leave, should she wish to do so. The Company reserves the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with the employee from time to time during her maternity leave. This may be to discuss the employee's plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease her return to work or simply to update her on developments at work during her absence.

3.4 KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS

Except during the first two weeks after childbirth (four weeks in the case of factory workers), an employee can agree to work for the Company (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during either ordinary maternity leave or additional maternity leave without that work bringing the period of her maternity leave to an end and without loss of a week's SMP. These are known as 'keeping-in-touch' days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The Company has no right to require the employee to carry out any work, and the employee has no right to undertake any work, during her maternity leave. Any work undertaken, including the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between the Company and the employee. Any keeping-in-touch days worked do not extend the period of maternity leave. Once the keeping-in-touch days have been used up, the employee will lose a week's SMP for any week in which she agrees to work for the Company.

3.5 RETURN TO WORK

3.5.1 Rights on and after Return to Work

On resuming work after Ordinary Maternity Leave, the employee is entitled to return to the same job as she occupied before commencing maternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment, as if she had not been absent.

On resuming work after Additional Maternity Leave, again she is entitled to return to the same job as she occupied before commencing maternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if she had not been absent. However, if it is not reasonably practicable for the Company to allow the employee to return to the same job, the Company may offer the employee suitable alternative work, on terms and conditions that are no less favourable than would have applied if she had not been absent.

An employee who worked full-time prior to her maternity leave has no automatic right to return to work on a part-time basis or to make other changes to her working patterns. However, all requests for part-time work or other flexible working arrangements will be considered in line with the operational requirements of the Company's business. If an employee would like this option to be considered, she should write to her line manager, in accordance with the Flexible Working Policy, setting out her proposals as soon as possible in advance of her return date, so that there is adequate time for full consideration of the request. The procedure for dealing with such requests is set out in the Company Flexible Working Policy.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

An employee's right to return to the job in which she worked under her original contract of employment will not apply where:

- exceptional circumstances (other than redundancy) have arisen, e.g. a general re-organisation, which has necessitated a change in the job in which she was previously employed.
- She is unable to return to her own post because it had been deleted during her absence (i.e. she may therefore be redundant).

3.5.2 Failure to Return to Work

Should the employee fail to return to work after the 52 weeks of maternity leave and has failed to provide a medical certificate to cover her absence and has not advised the Company of her intention to resign, she will be regarded as taking unauthorised leave of absence. The Disciplinary Procedure may therefore be invoked in these circumstances.

3.5.3 Terminating the Contract of Employment

If the employee does not wish to return to work after the birth of her baby, she may resign as normal, giving as much written notice as is required by her contract of employment.

3.6 NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

The employee must notify the Company in writing by no later than the end of the 15th week before the EWC of:

- The fact that she is pregnant.
- The date on which they intend their maternity leave to begin.
- The Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).

The employee must notify the Company if the birth is earlier than the EWC, and this notice must be given as soon as practicable after the birth.

The employee may change her mind about her leave start date, providing she tells the Company at least 28 days in advance of the change, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

The Company will respond to the employee's notification of her leave plans within 28 days, setting out the date on which she is expected to return to work if she takes her full entitlement to maternity leave.

The employee will be formally advised in writing by the Company of the date on which she is expected to return to work if she takes her full 52-week entitlement to maternity leave. The employee is expected to return on this date, unless she notifies the Company otherwise. At least 8 weeks' notice must be given if the employee intends to return before the end of the AML period.

If the employee attempts to return to work without having given the 8 weeks' notice, Annington can postpone her return by up to 8 weeks' provided that this is not later than the expected return date.

If an employee is unable to return to work at the end of the Maternity Leave Period (MLP) due to

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

illness, the normal Company Sickness Scheme and reporting rules will apply.

3.7 SHARING MATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

Shared parental leave is available to parents with babies due to be born on or after the 5th April 2015. It allows for a greater opportunity for parents to share in the initial care of their child. A mother can agree to bring her period of maternity leave and pay to an end, and share the remaining untaken balance with their partner, or return to work early and agree to take the remaining balance of leave and pay at a later date.

Please refer to our separate policy on shared parental leave for further details.

3.8 RETURN TO WORK DUE TO SICKNESS

If an employee unable to return to work through illness at the end of her Maternity Leave period, she does not lose her right to return but will be treated as if she has returned and is currently on sick leave. The Company Sickness Scheme shall apply to such an absence.

3.9 INDUSTRIAL ACTION

If work is interrupted on the notified day of return (due to industrial action or some other cause) and it is unreasonable to expect the employee to attend, she may instead return when work resumes, or as soon as practically possible.

3.10 GENERAL ISSUES

3.10.1 *Protection against Dismissal*

Regardless of length of service, employees are protected against dismissal or selection for redundancy on maternity related grounds. In addition, there is an automatic right to receive written reasons for dismissal during the maternity leave period.

3.10.2 *Casual, Temporary and Fixed Term Contracts*

All female employees, regardless of their length of service or hours worked are eligible for the maternity provisions detailed above. This includes those on Casual, Temporary, or Fixed Term contracts. The only difference for these employees is that if the fixed term expires while they are on maternity leave their maternity leave period ends automatically when the contract expires and they do not have the right to return to work at the end of their maternity leave period. However, because the right to SMP is independent of the right to take maternity leave, the usual rules relating to SMP will apply. This means that as long as the employee on the contract qualifies for SMP she will be entitled to claim it for a full 39 weeks regardless of whether her contract has expired in the meantime.

3.11 MATERNITY LEAVE AND ANNUAL LEAVE

Employees should take any outstanding annual leave before they go on maternity leave. This is particularly appropriate if there is any doubt in the employee's mind about whether or not she intends

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

to return to work after maternity leave, or if the maternity leave begins in the last few months of the leave year. Employees should also take a proportion of all the annual leave accrued during the maternity leave period, immediately before returning to work. To avoid any confusion about the requirement to notify the Company of the intended date of return to work, any arrangement made with an employee to take annual leave prior to her date of return should be confirmed in writing and a copy placed on the personnel file.

Where the period of maternity leave starts in one leave year and ends in the next, any annual leave outstanding from the first leave year should be taken within three months of returning to work.

The employee will continue to accrue their normal annual leave entitlement during both Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave.

Where an employee returns to work at any point during either the OML or AML period and subsequently resigns, payment in lieu of any outstanding annual leave that has accrued during both the OML and AML periods will be calculated and paid in accordance with contractual entitlements.

Where an employee does not return to work following maternity leave, payment in lieu of any outstanding annual leave will be made in line with their contractual entitlement.

3.12 CONTRACTUAL ENTITLEMENTS

All contractual entitlements, except for remuneration, (e.g. holiday accrual, company cars, insurance schemes such as PMI and PHI) will apply during both Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave.

4. Neo Natal Leave

5. Adoption Leave

This chapter covers the leave and pay rights where a child is matched and placed for adoption within the UK. The new measures will also be available where a child is adopted from overseas, although the detailed operation of the scheme will differ slightly for practical reasons.

All eligible employees are entitled to statutory time off and pay for adoption leave providing they have been continuously employed for a minimum of 26 weeks into the week in which he/she has been notified of being matched with a child (the 'matching week').

A child is "matched" for adoption when a UK adoption agency decides that a person is suitable to adopt that child. A child is "placed" for adoption when he or she starts living with the person permanently with a view to being formally adopted in the future.

Employees should note that if a foster or step-child is being adopted, they may *not* be eligible for adoption leave as there has been no "matching" by an adoption agency

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

The rights to adoption leave and pay will entitle eligible employees to take paid leave when a child is newly placed for adoption. Adoption leave and pay will be available to:

- Employees who have worked continuously for the Company for 26 weeks (the Qualifying Week) leading into the week in which they are notified of being matched with a child for adoption.
- Individuals who adopt
- One member of a couple where a couple adopt jointly (including civil partners (as defined by the Civil Partnership Act 2004)). In this situation only one of them can elect to take adoption leave, the other may be entitled to paternity leave. It does not matter that the couple have different employers (the couple may choose which partner takes adoption leave)
- The partner of an individual who adopts, or the other member of a couple who are adopting jointly, may be entitled to paternity leave and pay.
- Employees who have been "newly matched" with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency
- Employees who have notified the agency that they agree that the child should be placed with them, and agreed the date of placement.

Adoption leave and pay is not available in circumstances where a child is not newly matched for adoption, for example, when a step-parent is adopting a partner's children.

The leave and pay periods will automatically cease if the employee dies or is taken into legal custody.

5.2 LENGTH OF ADOPTION LEAVE

Eligible employees will be entitled to up to 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave followed immediately by up to 26 weeks' additional adoption leave – a total of up to 52 weeks' leave.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

Employees can choose to start their leave:

- From the date of the child's placement (whether this is earlier or later than expected), or
- From a fixed date which can be up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.
- Leave can start on any day of the week.
- Only one period of leave will be available irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement.
- If the child's placement ends during the adoption leave period, the adopter will be able to continue adoption leave for up to eight weeks after the end of the placement.

5.3 STATUTORY ADOPTION PAY

An employee will qualify for SAP when they are adopting a child from within the UK provided they have:

- At least 26 weeks' continuous employment with the Company extending into the week in which they are notified of having been matched with the child.
- Notified the Company that they want to receive SAP at least 28 days, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, before they want the payment to begin. The employee may want to inform the Company of their intention to claim SAP at the same time of notifying their intention to take SAL.
- Average weekly earnings (AWE) at or above the lower earnings limit (LEL) for National Insurance contributions which applies at the end of the matching week.

Employees will have to provide documentary evidence – a “matching certificate” – from their adoption agency as evidence of their entitlement to Statutory Adoption pay (SAP). The Company can also ask for this certificate as proof of entitlement to adoption leave. Employees should, therefore, ask their adoption agency for a matching certificate that will include basic information on matching and expected placement dates.

SAP will be paid for up to 39 weeks at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, if this figure is lower than the Government's set weekly rate. SAP will cease in respect of any child placed for adoption who reaches 18 years of age.

If the employee has been employed by the company for less than 26 weeks ending with the week in which they are notified of having been matched with their child, they will not be entitled to SAP, but will need to claim an adoption allowance direct from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

Employees who have average weekly earnings below the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance purposes will not qualify for SAP. Employees who do not qualify for SAP, or who are normally low-paid, may be able to seek financial support from the DWP. Additional financial support may be available through Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Tax Credits. Further information is available from the local Jobcentre Plus office or DWP.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

5.4 EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS

5.4.1 Notice Of Intention To Take Adoption Leave

Employees will be required to inform the Company of their intention to take adoption leave within seven days of being notified by their adoption agency that they have been matched with a child for adoption, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

They will need to advise the Company of the following:

- Their intention to take adoption leave
- When the child is expected to be placed with them and
- When they want their adoption leave to start

Employees will be able to change their mind about the date on which they want their leave to start providing they advise the Company at least 28 days in advance (unless this is not reasonably practicable). Employees must also advise the Company of the date they expect any payments of SAP to start at least 28 days in advance, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

The Company will have 28 days in which to respond to the employee's notification of their leave plans and will write to the employee, setting out the date on which they expect the employee to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken.

5.4.2 Disrupted Placement During Adoption Leave

There is an eight-week period which allows adoptive parents to come to terms with the ending of a placement. This applies in the following sets of circumstances:

- If the employee begins their ordinary adoption leave before the placement but the adoption agency subsequently notifies the employee that the child will not be placed with them. The ordinary adoption leave period will therefore end eight weeks after the end of the week in which the employee is notified that the placement will not take place.
- If the child dies during the adoption leave, the leave will end eight weeks after the end of the week in which the child dies.
- If the child is returned to the adoption agency, the leave will end eight weeks after the end of the week in which the placement ends.

Where an employee's ordinary adoption leave ends during the eight-week period, they are entitled to additional adoption leave until the end of the eight-week period. However, if the employee's additional adoption leave ends during the eight-week period, this period of leave cannot be extended and the employee will be due to return to work at the end of the 26 week additional adoption leave period. An employee may take annual leave, by agreement with the employer, if they wish to have more time off.

If a placement comes to an end, the employee should give the employer eight weeks' notice that they are to return to work earlier than expected, as the adoption leave will end eight weeks after the disrupted placement. This means that the employee should notify the employer on the day that the placement ends that they will be returning to work in eight weeks' time.

In many cases, the employee will have advance warning that the placement is likely to come to an end. However, where there is no warning the employee should give notice that they are likely to return to work early on the day the placement ends or as soon as possible afterwards. If the employee does not, they may face a delayed return to work.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

If the employee returns to work without giving eight weeks' notice, the employer is entitled to postpone the employee's return until eight weeks' notice has elapsed, although this cannot extend beyond the end of the additional adoption leave period. If the employee returns to work anyway, they are not entitled to be paid. This does not apply if the employer did not notify the employee of the end date of the additional adoption leave period. In that case, the employee does not have to give notice of early return and the employer has no right to delay the employee's return or to refuse pay.

5.4.3 Contractual Benefits

Employees are entitled to the benefit of their normal terms and conditions of employment, except for terms relating to wages or salary throughout the entire adoption leave period. However, most employees will be entitled to SAP for the first 39 weeks of this period.

5.4.4 Annual Leave

Employees should take any outstanding annual leave before they go on Adoption leave. This is particularly appropriate if there is any doubt in the employee's mind about whether or not he/she intends to return to work after adoption leave, or if the Adoption leave begins in the last few months of the leave year.

Employees should also take a proportion of all the annual leave accrued during the adoption leave period, immediately before returning to work. To avoid any confusion about the requirement to notify the Company of the intended date of return to work, any arrangement made with an employee to take annual leave prior to his/her date of return should be confirmed in writing and a copy placed on the personal file.

Where the period of adoption leave starts in one leave year and ends in the next, any annual leave outstanding from the first leave year should be taken within three months of returning to work.

The employee will continue to accrue their normal annual leave entitlement during both ordinary and additional adoption leave.

Where an employee returns to work at any point during either the OAL or AAL period and subsequently resigns, payment in lieu of any outstanding annual leave that has accrued during both the OAL and AAL periods will be calculated and paid in accordance with contractual entitlements.

Where an employee does not return to work following adoption leave, payment in lieu of any outstanding annual leave is to be made in line with their contractual entitlement.

5.4.5 Contact During Adoption Leave

The Company reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with employees during adoption leave. This may be to discuss employees' plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work or to update them on developments at work during their absence.

5.4.6 Keeping In Touch Days

Employees can agree to work for the Company (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during their adoption leave without that work bringing their adoption leave to an end and without loss of a week's statutory adoption pay. These are known as 'keeping-in-touch' days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

The Company has no right to require employees to carry out any work and employees have no right to undertake any work during their adoption leave. Any work undertaken, and the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between employees and the Company.

5.4.7 Return To Work After Adoption Leave

Employees may return to work at any time during ordinary adoption leave or additional adoption leave, provided that they give the appropriate notification. Alternatively, employees may take their full period of adoption leave entitlement and return to work at the end of this period. If the employee wishes to return before the full period of adoption leave has elapsed, they must give the Company, in writing, at least eight weeks' notice of the date on which they intend to return.

Failure to return to work by the end of adoption leave will be treated as an unauthorised absence unless the employee is sick and produces a current medical certificate before the end of the adoption leave period.

Where an employee decides during adoption leave that they do not wish to return to work, they must give written notice of resignation to the Company as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of their contract of employment.

5.5 PROTECTION FROM DETRIMENT AND DISMISSAL

Employees will not suffer unfair treatment or dismissal for taking adoption leave.

5.6 SHARING ADOPTION LEAVE AND PAY

Shared parental leave is available to parents with babies due to be born on or after the 5 April 2015. It allows for a greater opportunity for parents to share in the initial care of their child. A mother can agree to bring her period of maternity leave and pay to an end, and share the remaining untaken balance with their partner, or return to work early and agree to take the remaining balance of leave and pay at a later date. Please see our separate Policy on shared parental leave for further details.

6. Paternity Leave

6.1 THE RIGHT TO ATTEND ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 a prospective father, or the spouse, civil partner or partner of a pregnant woman, can take unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments.

You are entitled to take up to six and a half hours off for each appointment, if your appointment is likely to take longer than this you should make your line manager aware at the time of your request.

You should submit your request to your immediate Line Manager giving the Company reasonable notice of the appointment.

6.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR PATERNITY LEAVE

An employee whose wife, civil partner or partner gives birth to a child, or an employee who is the biological father of the child, is entitled to two weeks paid paternity leave provided that they have 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is expected.

Paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents when a child is matched or newly placed for adoption via an agency. Either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother may take paternity leave when the other adoptive parent has elected to take adoption leave. In respect of an adopted child, the employee must have 26 weeks continuous service by the week in which the child's adopter is notified of having been matched with the child for adoption. A separate policy is available in respect of adoption leave.

To qualify for paternity leave, the employee must also have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child and be making the request to help care for the child or to support the child's mother.

The entitlement to paternity leave is to take up to two weeks' paternity leave during the period beginning with the date of the child's birth or adoption and ending 52 weeks after that date.

Paternity leave can be taken from the child's birth or placement date and ending 52 weeks after that date or, in the case where the child is born before the first day of the expected week of birth, 52 weeks after that day.

Subject to the above, you can choose to begin your leave:

- on the date on which the child is born/placed with the adopter
- from a specified chosen number of days after the date of the child's birth/placement (whether this is earlier or later than expected)
- from a specified predetermined date which is later than the first day of the expected week of the child's birth/expected date of placement.

Leave can start on any day of the week, and you can choose to take:

- one week of leave
- two consecutive weeks of leave
- two non-consecutive single weeks of leave.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

6.3 NOTIFICATION OF PATERNITY LEAVE

When an employee wishes to request paternity leave in respect of a birth child, they must provide the Company with the following:

- 15 weeks written notice of the date on which the partner's baby is due
- the length of paternity leave they wish to take and
- the date on which they wish the leave to commence.

In the case of an adopted child, the employee must give written notice of their intention to take paternity leave no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency. The notice must specify:

- the date the child is expected to be placed for adoption
- the date the employee intends to start paternity leave
- the length of the intended paternity leave period, and
- the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child.

If an employee subsequently wishes to change the timing of their paternity leave, they must give 28 days' written notice of the new dates. The employee must also, when requested, complete and sign a self- certificate declaring that they are entitled to paternity leave and statutory paternity pay.

6.4 STATUTORY PATERNITY PAY

Paternity leave will be paid at a standard statutory rate per week or at a rate equivalent to 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, if this figure is less than the standard statutory rate.

Statutory paternity pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Statutory paternity pay can start from any day of the week, in accordance with the date the employee starts their paternity leave.

6.5 DISCRETIONARY ENHANCED PATERNITY PAY

The company may offer discretionary enhanced paternity pay. Any enhanced payment will be inclusive of statutory paternity pay.

Currently, where the employee is eligible, the company pays enhanced paternity pay for two weeks at the employee's basic rate of pay.

6.6 RIGHTS FOLLOWING RETURN TO WORK

On resuming work after paternity leave, the employee is entitled to return to the same job as was occupied before commencing paternity leave, on the same terms and conditions of employment as if they had not been absent.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

7. Shared Parental Leave

Shared parental leave enables primary carers to commit ending their maternity/adoption leave and to share the untaken balance of leave and pay as shared parental leave, with their partner. They could also return to work early from maternity/adoption leave and opt in to shared parental leave and pay at a later date.

Shared parental leave is designed to give parents more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following the birth. This flexibility includes;

- The primary carer and their partner can share the full 52 week entitlement to leave if they have adopted a child, or 50 weeks in the case of birth (mothers are obliged to take 2 weeks' leave following birth). The leave can be shared from the birth or placement of your child up to its' first birthday or during the first year of placement;
- The primary carer and their partner can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take in turns to have periods of leave to look after their child;
- Leave can be booked in either in single continuous blocks or in discontinuous blocks, where you return to work in between periods of leave;
- To be eligible for statutory shared parental pay, both the primary carer and their partner must meet certain eligibility requirements (see 3.2).

The following definitions are used in this policy:

“Primary carer” means the mother or expectant mother of the child, the adoptive parent who intends to take adoption leave, or the parent in a surrogacy arrangement who intends to take surrogacy leave.

“Partner” means the father of the child or the secondary adopter, or the person who, at the date of the child’s birth or adoption, is married to, is the civil partner of, or the parent of the primary carer. This includes someone, of either sex, who lives with the primary carer and the child in an enduring family relationship but who is not the primary carer’s child, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew.

“Expected week of childbirth” means the week, starting on a Sunday, during which the primary carer’s doctor or midwife expects her to give birth.

This policy applies in relation to employees of Annington whether they are the primary carer or the partner. If it is the primary carer who is employed by Annington whether they are the primary carer or the partner. If it is the primary carer who is employed by Annington their partner must (where relevant) submit any notifications to take shared parental leave set out in this policy to their own employer, which may have its own shared parental leave policy in place, if they want to take a period of shared parental leave.

Similarly, if it is the partner who is employed by Annington, the primary carer must (where relevant) submit any notifications to take shared parental leave to their own employer.

The primary carer and the partner should ensure that they are liaising with their own employer to ensure that requests for shared parental leave are handled as smoothly as possible.

7.1 THE AMOUNT OF SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

The amount of shared parental leave that each employee is entitled to will depend on when the primary carer brings their maternity/adoption leave period to an end. Shared parental leave must be taken in blocks of at least one week. The employee can request to take shared parental leave in one continuous block or as a number of discontinuous blocks of leave. A maximum of three requests for leave per pregnancy can normally be made by each parent.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

The first two weeks following the birth remain as compulsory maternity leave period and are reserved for the mother. This means that the maximum period that the parents could take as shared parental leave is 50 weeks between them.

However, the mother's partner can begin a period of shared parental leave at any time from the date of the child's birth (but the partner should bear in mind that they are entitled to take up to two weeks' ordinary paternity leave following the birth of their child, which they will lose if shared parental leave is taken first). The mother and partner must take any shared parental leave within 52 weeks of birth.

Parents can request to take blocks of Shared parental leave separately or at the same time. If both parents were to take 3 weeks at the same time, then a total of 6 weeks would be deducted from the balance of leave available.

7.2 WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

This policy applies to all employees who fulfil the requirements set down by the legislation. Both parties must submit all relevant notifications and declarations of the proposal to take shared parental leave to their retrospective employers.

Notifications should be completed to each employer at the same time to assist in the application of the process. What may be suitable for one company may be very different to another.

7.3 ELIGIBILITY IF ANNINGTON EMPLOYEE IS THE PRIMARY CARER

The primary carer is eligible for shared parental leave if they:

- Have at least 26 weeks continuous employment with Annington (ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth by the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched for adoption with the child) and remains in continuous employment with the company until the week before any period of shared parental leave that they take.
- have at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the partner for the care of the child.
- be entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave in respect of the child.
- must have declared their intention to return to work before the end of their maternity leave period along with their shared parental leave notice and supporting evidence.

In addition, for the primary carer to be eligible for shared parental leave, for the mother to be completely eligible the partner must:

- have been employed or been a self-employed earner in at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

- have average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks; and
- have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the primary carer, for the care of the child.

7.4 ELIGIBILITY IF ANNINGTON EMPLOYEE IS THE PARTNER

The partner must satisfy the following criteria:

- Have at least 26 weeks continuous service ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth/by the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched for adoption with the child;
- Have at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the primary carer for the care of the child.
- Comply with the relevant shared parental leave notice and evidence requirements.

In addition, for the partner to be completely eligible for shared parental leave, the primary carer must:

- Have been employed or been a self-employed earner in at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth.
- Have average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks; and
- have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the partner, for the care of the child
- be entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave, statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance in respect of the child.
- comply with the relevant maternity/adoption leave or pay curtailment requirements (or have returned to work before the end of the statutory maternity/adoption leave.

The notices that the parents must give to the relevant employer to be able to take shared parental leave are made up of three elements:

- A "maternity leave curtailment notice" from the primary carer setting out when they propose to end their maternity, adoption or surrogacy leave (unless the primary carer has already returned to work from maternity/adoption or surrogacy leave)
- A "notice of entitlement and intention" from the employee giving an initial, non-binding indication of each period of shared parental leave that he/she is requesting;

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

- A “period of leave notice” from the employee setting out the start and end dates of each period of shared parental leave that they are requesting.

7.5 MATERNITY LEAVE CURTAILMENT NOTICE

7.5.1 Giving Notice

In order for either party to be able to take shared parental leave the mother must have either returned to work before the end of the period of maternity leave or have provided her employer with the maternity leave curtailment notice. This notice must be in writing and must state the proposed date on which the maternity leave will end, this proposed date cannot be within the first two weeks of childbirth, it must be 8 weeks from the date the notice is given and must be at least one week before the end of additional maternity leave.

The maternity leave curtailment notice must be submitted alongside one of the following:

- notice of entitlement and intention – or
- a declaration of consent and entitlement signed by the mother confirming that her partner has given his/her employer a notice of entitlement and intention.

7.5.2 Withdrawing Notice

Once the primary carer has submitted their curtailment notice, they are able to withdraw it under certain circumstances, if it is in writing and that they have not yet returned to work. Those circumstances are:

- Neither party are entitled to take shared parental leave and the withdrawal is made within 8 weeks of the initial notice being given.
- The original notice was given before the birth of the child and the withdrawal is made within 6 weeks of the birth.
- The partner has died.

7.6 NOTICE OF ENTITLEMENT AND INTENTION

7.6.1 Giving Notice

The employee must provide the company with a non-binding notice of entitlement and intention, this needs to be provided regardless of whether they are the primary carer or the partner. The notice needs to be in writing and must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the first period of shared parental leave is due to start.

The notice of intention must also include signed declarations from both parties confirming their intentions and eligibility.

Within 14 days of receiving the notice of entitlement and intention from either party, the company can:

- Request a copy of the birth certificate of the child or a signed declaration of where the child was born and on what date.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

- Request the name and address of the other parent's employer (or a signed declaration from the partner stating that they have no employer).

If any of the above information is requested, the employee has 14 days to submit it.

7.6.2 Varying Or Withdrawing Notice

It is possible for an employee to vary or even cancel the dates that they intend to take periods of shared parental leave. They must submit written notice of their intention to vary or cancel. An indication to take leave is non-binding until the employee has submitted a period of leave notice.

7.7 PERIOD OF LEAVE NOTICE

7.7.1 Giving Notice

In order to be able to take a period of shared parental leave the employee must submit a signed period of leave notice that details the start and end dates of each period of shared parental leave within that notice. The employee must give at least 8 weeks' notice of the start of the first period of leave. An employee can submit a maximum of 3 period of leave notices per pregnancy.

There are two types of leave that can be requested, a continuous period of leave and a discontinuous period of leave. If the employee submits a request for one continuous period of leave, they will be entitled to take that leave, if they submit a request for a discontinuous period of leave the organisation can authorise it, request a variation on the pattern requested or they can refuse it altogether. If a variation is requested or a refusal is given, the employer and employee have 2 weeks in which to agree to alternative dates. If agreement cannot be reached within this timeframe, then the employee can take the leave in one continuous block, in which case a start and end date must be provided, the start date being at least 8 weeks from the date that the notice was originally given. The start date must be given within 5 days of completing the 2-week negotiation. If the employee fails to submit their start date within the 5 days, the start date will default to the date of the first period of leave requested in the original notice.

7.7.2 Varying or Withdrawing Notice

An employee can request to vary or cancel their period of leave notice as long as they give at least 8 weeks' notice of their request before the period of leave is due to commence. Employees should keep in mind the fact that a variation to a period of leave notice will be classed as one of the three permitted submissions per pregnancy.

7.8 SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE PAY

Statutory shared parental leave pay is available for eligible parents to share whilst they are on shared parental leave. The number of weeks that will be available to them will depend on the balance that is left at the point the mother returns to work or declares her period of maternity leave over. The maximum balance available for both parents to share will be 37 weeks, it remains compulsory for the mother to take two weeks of maternity leave immediately following the birth of the baby.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

7.9 ELIGIBILITY TO STATUTORY SHARED PARENTAL PAY

7.9.1 Primary Carer's Eligibility

A primary carer will be eligible if:

- they have at least 26 weeks continuous service ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth/by the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched for adoption with the child and they must remain in continuous employment with the company until the week before any period of shared parental pay that they get.
- they have normal weekly earnings for a period of eight weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth/by the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched for adoption with the child of at least the lower earnings limit for national insurance contribution purposes.
- they have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the partner, for the care of the child
- they are absent from work and intend to care for the child during each week in which she receives statutory shared parental pay
- they are entitled to statutory maternity/adoption pay in respect of the child, but the maternity pay period has been reduced.

In addition to this, in order to be fully eligible, the partner must:

- have been employed or been a self-employed earner in at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth.
- have average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks; and
- have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the mother, for the care of the child.

7.9.2 Partners Eligibility

The Partner will be eligible if:

- they have at least 26 weeks continuous service ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth and she must remain in continuous employment with the company until the week before any period of shared parental pay that they get.
- they have normal weekly earnings for a period of eight weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth of at least the lower earnings limit for national insurance contribution purposes.
- they have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the primary carer, for the care of the child.
- they are absent from work and intend to care for the child during each week in which they receive statutory shared parental pay.

In addition to this, in order to be fully eligible, the primary carer must:

- have been employed or been a self-employed earner in at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth.

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.

- have average weekly earnings of at least the maternity allowance threshold for any 13 of those 66 weeks; and
- have, at the date of the child's birth, the main responsibility, apart from the partner, for the care of the child.
- be entitled to statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance in respect of the child, but the maternity pay period or maternity allowance period has been reduced.

7.10 CONTACT DURING SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

Employers are permitted to keep in reasonable contact with employees whilst they are absent from work, this may be to keep employees updated on developments within the organisation, or to discuss arrangements for their return to work.

There is also the possibility for an employee to attend work for up to 20 days during their period of shared parental leave without there being an effect of their level of shared parental leave or pay. These days are known as shared parental leave in touch (SPLIT) days. Each parent is entitled to attend work for up to 20 days leave during their leave period.

There is no obligation for an employee to attend work if they are asked to by the organisation, nor is there an obligation for the organisation to accept a request from an employee to carry out their SPLIT days. Any work completed and the amount of money paid to the employee whilst undertaking SPLIT days, is entirely subject to agreement between the employee and the company.

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Policy Number	ANN-POL-023	Version No	V.2.1
Effective Date	June 2010	Review Date	November 2025
Policy Owner	HR & Payroll Manager	Policy Approved By	Annington Limited Board

Internal Compliance Version Only			
VERSION HISTORY			
VERSION	AUTHOR	REVISION DATE	CHANGES
V.1.0	HR Manager	June 2010	Shared Parental Leave Policy creation
V.1.0	HR Manager	February 2014	Adoption Leave Policy creation
V.1.0	HR Manager	September 2014	Paternity Leave Policy creation
V.1.0	HR Manager	November 2014	Maternity Leave Policy creation
V.1.2	HR Manager	July 2021	Minor amendments to Paternity Leave Policy to align with legislation updates
V.1.2	HR and Payroll Manager	February 2022	Minor amendments to Adoption Leave Policy
V.1.1	HR and Payroll Manager	April 2024	Minor amendments to Shared Parental Leave Policy
V.1.3	HR and Payroll Manager	April 2024	Minor amendments to Paternity Leave Policy to align with legislation updates
V.1.1	Compliance Manager	July 2024	Removal of references to NGA Human Resources
V.2.0	HR and Payroll Manager	March 2025	Amalgamation of Adoption, Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policies into Family Leave Policy
V.2.1	HR and Payroll Manager	April 2025	Creation and addition of Neo-Natal Policy into Family Leave Policy in accordance to legislative changes

The latest version of this document is maintained here on the Policy Documents Drive. Please check you are using the correct version.