

Overview

Eligible employees can take unpaid parental leave to look after their child's welfare, for example to:

- spend more time with their children
- look at new schools
- settle children into new childcare arrangements
- spend more time with family, such as visiting grandparents

Please note employment rights (like the right to pay, holidays and returning to a job) are protected during parental leave.

Entitlement

Parental leave is unpaid. You're entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday.

The limit on how much parental leave each parent can take in a year is 4 weeks for each child (unless the employer agrees otherwise).

You must take parental leave as whole weeks (eg 1 week or 2 weeks) rather than individual days, unless your employer agrees otherwise or if your child is disabled. You don't have to take all the leave at once. Part-time Search Associates are permitted Parental Leave on a pro-rata basis.

If your child has a disability, you can take parental leave more flexibly if you receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for your child. For example, you could take 1 or 2 days' leave rather than blocks of a week at a time.

Qualification

Search Associates qualify if all of these apply:

- they've been in the company for more than a year
- they're named on the child's birth or adoption certificate or they have or expect to have parental responsibility
- they're not self-employed or a 'worker', eg an agency worker or contractor
- they're not a foster parent (unless they've secured parental responsibility through the courts)
- the child is under 18

Making a Request

Search Associates should put any requests in writing and must give the company at least 21 day's notice of the dates on which they wish leave to be taken. Note that the company may require a Search Associate to provide a birth or adoption certificate or other evidence of legal parental responsibilities or a child's entitlement to disability living allowance prior to leave being granted. The company reserves the right to postpone any requests for leave for a period of up to 6 months where there are business reasons for doing so. This right to postpone will not apply where the leave requested occurs at the time of the child's birth or adoption or if it would mean that the employee no longer qualifies for parental leave.

Carrying leave over from a previous job

Parental leave applies to each child not to an individual's job.

Other Matters

Any Search Associate who is identified as misusing this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.