Paternity and Partner's Leave

We recognise that having a baby or adopting a child is an exciting and important event and we want to support you to take time off to spend with your new child and partner. This policy gives important information and explains how and when you can take this time off.

The provisions in this policy are available to all staff regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected characteristic.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment. The University reserves the right to amend the terms of this policy when required.

This policy applies to employees living and working in the UK, if you have an approved arrangement to work abroad, paternity and partner's leave provisions will usually be detailed in your contract of employment.

Managers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy.

Essential Information

King's Paternity and Partners Pay

King's offer up to 6 weeks paid Paternity and Partners leave to all eligible employees.

To be eligible you need to:

- be an employee at King's before the child is born or placed for adoption,
- not have previously claimed paternity and partners leave and pay in relation to this pregnancy or placement, and
- be responsible for the child's upbringing.

The amount of leave available does not increase if you have a multiple birth, such as twins, or adopt more than one child. If you are using a surrogate to have a baby, you must be a couple to be eligible.

King's paternity and partners pay is made up of different elements and is paid at full pay for up to 6 weeks.

Statutory Paternity and Partners Pay

If you are eligible for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) this will be paid automatically through King's payroll. During the first 2 weeks of leave, King's paternity and partners pay will be a combination of enhanced and statutory payment.

To qualify for Statutory Paternity Pay you must have been employed at King's, for more than 26 weeks' continuously at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth or placement date and earn at least the lower earnings limit, set by the UK Government each year.

Taking Paternity and Partner's Leave

You should tell your manager as soon as you feel comfortable.

You must apply for Paternity and Partners leave at least 28 days before you would like the leave to start.

To apply for the leave, you will need to complete the Paternity and Partners Leave Request Form and submit this, with line manager approval, to hr@kcl.ac.uk and we will confirm your dates in writing.

The earliest Paternity and Partners leave can start is:

- the birth of your child or day after if working on the day of the birth
- the date of placement
- the date that your child arrives in the UK, if adopting from overseas.

The leave can be taken together or in blocks of one week (7 calendar days) and all leave must be completed within one year of the date of birth or placement date.

Requesting Paternity and Partners Leave

You do not have to request all of your leave at the same time. If you would like to request additional weeks at a later date, we will normally require 28 days' notice to be given.

Changing Paternity and Partners Leave

If you want to change the start date of your paternity and partner's leave, we will normally require 28 days' notice to be given.

There are circumstances where we understand that the required notice cannot be given, for example, overdue births. If your child is not born by the date specified to start your leave, you will need to change the date or opt to take leave from the date of birth. Whatever you choose to do, you must inform your manager as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Neonatal Leave

If your child is admitted into neonatal care, you will be granted additional leave to support you in this critical time. How you take Neonatal Leave will depend on your circumstances and further details can be found in the Neonatal Leave Policy.

Shared Parental Leave

Shared parental leave gives parents the opportunity to share the care of their child in the first year.

Further details can be found in the Shared Parental Leave Policy.

Bereavement

King's recognises that the loss of a child, pregnancy loss, or the death of a partner following childbirth or placement is profoundly distressing.

If your baby is born prematurely and does not survive or is stillborn (after 24 weeks) before the expected week of childbirth you are still able to take paternity and partner's leave. Information to support you during this difficult time can be found in our Pregnancy loss guidance.

If your partner sadly dies following the birth or placement of a child, you may take unpaid Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave. You may also be able to access the unused balance of Shared Parental Leave, further details can be found in our Compassionate Leave Policy.

We understand that this will be an extremely difficult time, and we encourage you to contact hr@kcl.ac.uk for further information about bereaved partner's paternity leave and any additional support that we may be able to offer.

Things to Think About

Antenatal Appointments

You can get unpaid time off to accompany your partner (or the surrogate mother) at two antenatal appointments. We do ask that you try and arrange these appointments outside of working hours or times that minimise disruption to university activities. Where this is not possible, your manager may be able to agree with you a temporary change in your working hours to enable attendance of the appointment. We ask that you give your manager as much notice as you can of the appointments you wish to attend. You may be asked for a letter or appointment card confirming the appointment.

To attend any additional antenatal appointments, you will need to request annual leave.

Adoption Appointments

If you are adopting a child with your partner, unpaid time off can be taken to attend two adoption appointments after you have been matched with a child. These are arranged by the adoption agency or local authority and relate to a child being placed. We do ask that you try and arrange these appointments outside of working hours or times that minimise disruption to university activities. Where this is not possible, your manager may be able to agree with you a temporary change in your working hours to enable attendance of the appointment. Please give your manager as much notice as you can of the appointments you wish to attend. You may be asked for a letter or appointment card confirming the appointment.

If you wish to attend any additional adoption appointments annual leave will need to be requested.

Returning to Work

You may have been out of the workplace for some time, and it can take a little while to settle down. When you return, your manager should provide a general update and give you time to complete any mandatory training.

Changing Work Patterns

We appreciate that it is challenging to balance having a new child and work. Flexible working may help.

Look at our Flexible Working Policy for further information.

Returning to Work Outside the UK

If you are intending to work remotely outside the UK on your return to work following a period of paternity and partners leave, you should talk to your manager before making any arrangements. You should also read our Global Staff Mobility Policy, as this may have tax and social security implications.

If you require any further guidance, contact hr@kcl.ac.uk.

Expiry of Fixed Term Contract

If you are employed on a fixed term contract or your employment ends during your leave, your employment and payment of King's Paternity and Partners Pay will end on the expiry date of the fixed term contract or end date of the contract, although Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) will continue to be paid, if eligible.

Pension

Your pension rights and contributions will be maintained while on paid leave.

Pay Increments

You will continue to receive the normal increment on your pay scale in accordance with your contract of employment.

Holidays

You will accrue full contractual annual leave, including bank and public holidays while on paternity and partner's leave. Holiday built up during this time and not taken within the leave year may be carried across to the following year. The carried over holiday will need to be taken by the end of March.

Concessionary days that happen while you are on paternity and partners leave will not accrue.

Further Support

If you have any questions about paternity and partner's leave, please speak to your manager in the first instance. Managers should contact hr@kcl.ac.uk for further support if required.

A new child can mean there are big changes in your personal life, and you may need extra advice and support in adapting to this. At King's we offer parental coaching through Vita Health, who provide the Employee Assistance Programme.

In addition, the Parents and Carers hub includes information that you may find useful, including details of the Parents and Carers network (NEST) who can offer peer support for new parents.

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