

EWS/EWSI

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

See Infonet's HR Section for most up to date versions of Policies

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The Family Friendly Policies document will be subject to a formal review in 12 months.

A - Maternity Leave

Guidance for Mothers – Maternity Leave

This guide aims to give you information about your employment rights with EWS both during your pregnancy and after the birth of the baby. As every pregnancy is unique you may have questions about a subject that is not covered in the guide. If you have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your local HR Manager.

Glossary of Terms

This glossary covers the main terms and abbreviations that are used within this Maternity Leave guide. It is not an exhaustive list. Remember if you have any queries please contact your local HR Manager.

- **Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)** - All pregnant employees regardless of their length of service are entitled to 26 weeks' maternity leave.
- **Additional Maternity Leave (AML)** – For all pregnant employees whose baby is due on or after 1st April 2007, no matter how long they have been employed, they are entitled up to an additional period of absence of 26 weeks beginning on the last day of OML
- **Expected Date of Childbirth (EDC)** - This is the date on which a GP/midwife expects the baby to be born.
- **Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)** - This is the week commencing the Sunday on or before the EDC.
- **MAT B1** - This is a certificate confirming pregnancy, which is signed by a GP or midwife and on which is written the EDC. This is not usually issued until approximately 26 weeks into the pregnancy.
- **Actual Date of Childbirth (ADC)** - This is the day on which the child is born.
- **Qualifying Week (QW)** - This is the 15th week before the EWC.

Antenatal Care

Regardless of length of service, pregnant staff are entitled to time off during contractual working hours to enable them to receive antenatal care. In order to minimise inconvenience at work, wherever practicable, you should arrange these classes at the start or at the end of your working day.

After your first appointment, you should provide your line manager with copies of any paperwork that confirms that you are pregnant and of the dates and times of any appointments as far in advance as possible so that arrangements can be made to cover your work as appropriate. This includes appointments with your GP, hospital clinics and relaxation classes. You will not be unreasonably refused paid time off work to keep appointments for antenatal care.

Maternity Certificate MAT B1

There are some rights and benefits that apply to all pregnant employees but there are also others that may vary according to your length of service at the beginning of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth. This can be difficult to calculate accurately as it is dependent on the content of Form MAT B1. This is a form from your doctor, midwife or registered health visitor confirming the expected week of childbirth.

As this will not be given to you until around the 20th week of your pregnancy there are some guidelines based on the assumption that you will have some idea of when the baby is due. Please remember that they are only guidelines and details of your benefits and leave entitlement cannot be confirmed until the MAT B1 is received.

Once you have received your MAT B1 Certificate you must fill in your name and address on the back of this form and forward this to the Employee Support Group at Doncaster.

This will enable them to calculate your entitlements and advise you on your key dates in order to assist when making the decision of when to start your maternity leave.

Health and Safety

It is important that at all times you take care of your health and safety whilst at work but it is more so during pregnancy. Your line manager must assess any risk, paying particular attention to risks that could affect the health and safety of you or your baby. The line manager should contact the Occupational Health Advisor to assist in the risk assessment. If at any time you are concerned about any aspect of your or your baby's health and safety please contact your manager or HR manager immediately. Under current legislation if the risks to new or expectant mothers cannot be controlled, then EWS must, where reasonable to do so, alter the working conditions or hours to avoid the risks. If this is not reasonable or would not avoid the risks, then suitable alternative work must be offered if possible. Where it is not available, then the new or expectant mother must be suspended from work, with pay.

Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)

All pregnant employees, regardless of length of service or hours worked have the right to a period of 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave (OML). Before the 15th week before your EWC, you must write to EWS to tell us that you are pregnant, of the expected week of childbirth, and tell us the date you intend to commence your OML. If you wish to change this date subsequently, notification must be received no later than 28 days before the date on which you intend to start your OML period (or, if not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable).

If you give birth before you have notified us of the start of your maternity leave period, your maternity leave starts automatically on the date of birth. In these circumstances you must notify us as soon, as is reasonably practicable in writing that you have given birth.

During your OML period you will continue to receive contractual benefits. You will receive (where provided) travel facilities, accrual of holiday entitlement, private health insurance, company car etc. If any bank holidays fall during your maternity absence these will accrue as lieu leave to be taken after resumption of work.

You may wish to take some annual leave prior to your maternity leave. This should be booked with your manager in accordance with your normal arrangements.

Your OML can not start earlier than the start of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth nor later than the actual date of the baby's birth. If you are absent due to reasons directly associated with your pregnancy at any time after the 4th week before the expected week of childbirth your maternity leave will commence automatically on the first day of absence within that four week period. In these circumstances, you must notify us as soon as is reasonably practicable in writing that you are absent from work because of pregnancy.

If your baby is due on or after 1st April 2007 you must give 8 weeks written notice of your return to work. If you fail to comply with this notice requirement we may postpone your return so that we do have 8 weeks advance notice.

You must take two weeks' leave from the date of childbirth. This means that any date of return will have to take into account these two weeks.

Additional Maternity Leave (AML)

If your baby is due on or after 1st April 2007 no matter how long you have worked you are entitled to take AML. This will commence on the day after the last day of your OML and continues for up to 26 weeks. If your baby is due on or after 1st April 2007 and you qualify to receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) you may receive SMP during part of your AML.

If your baby is due on or after 1st April 2007 and you intend to return to work earlier than the end of your AML, you are required to give not less than 8 weeks written notice of the date on which you intend to return to work. If you fail to comply with this notice requirement we may postpone your return so that we do have 8 weeks advance notice.

We may write to you no earlier than 28 days before the end of your AML requesting that you confirm your intentions with regard to your return to work at the end of your AML. This letter will usually be sent to your home address by recorded delivery.

Maternity Pay

If your baby is due on or after 1st April 2007, all employees no matter how long they have been employed are entitled to the following EWS maternity pay:

- 9 weeks @ 100% of basic pay
- 9 weeks @ 50% of basic pay
- 21 weeks @ the relevant rate of statutory maternity pay (SMP)

These sums are inclusive of any entitlement you may have to receive statutory maternity pay (SMP) during that 39 week period.

Your maternity pay will be calculated based on your salary at the 15th week before the EWC (the qualifying week).

Salary is for full contractual entitlement i.e. 35-44 hours plus allowances.

Maternity pay is only payable whilst on maternity leave.

Please note that EWS maternity pay is higher than SMP.

An employee with less than 26 weeks' service at the 15th week before the EWC will not be entitled to SMP but may be entitled to Maternity Allowance payable by the DSS.

Terms and Conditions during Maternity Leave

Employees remain employed by EWS during maternity leave, but they have no entitlement to remuneration during this period.

During OML, you are entitled to the benefit of other terms and conditions that would have been in force had you been at work. You are also bound by your obligations to the Company.

During AML, the terms and conditions remain in force are:

- The implied obligation of trust and confidence;
- The requirement to give notice;
- The entitlement to receive a statutory redundancy payment in appropriate circumstances; and
- The application of the disciplinary and grievance procedures.

In addition, all employees remain bound by their obligations to EWS.

All employees (unless they resign, are dismissed or are declared redundant) are entitled to return to work after maternity leave, provided that you have complied with the notification requirements set out in these Guidelines.

After OML you are entitled to return to the job in which you were employed before your absence.

After AML, you are entitled to return to the job in which you were employed before your absence. In exceptional circumstances where this is not reasonably practicable, you have the right to another job that is both suitable for the particular employee and appropriate in all the circumstances. This position should be on terms and conditions as to remuneration, seniority and pension rights that are no less favourable than those which would have been applicable if the employee had not been on maternity leave.

Pension Contributions

During these periods pension deductions will continue at the appropriate rate for the payment you are in receipt of. Pension contributions will be deducted from your maternity pay during ordinary maternity leave, the percentage deduction being based on the total amount of your maternity pay. You will not be required to make pension contributions during any remaining, unpaid maternity leave. However, once you are on nil pay, pension contributions will cease and fall into arrears. Arrears will be recovered following a return to work, by deducting an additional 50% of the current deduction.

IVF Treatment

If you are participating in an IVF treatment programme then appointments and tests prior to treatments should be taken in your own time.

EWS recognises that in these circumstances you may not be able to plan your holidays within the normal holiday guidelines. However, you should keep in close communication with your Line Manager and local HR Manager so that your holiday requests and shift preferences can be dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner.

Any absences related to IVF treatment and subsequent rest periods are treated as sickness absence and must be covered by a certificate of absence.

Once you become pregnant, the relevant maternity arrangements outlined above will apply.

Difficult Pregnancy

If you have any issues arising as a result of a difficult pregnancy, please contact your local HR Manager for support and advice.

Sample Letters

- **Suggested Letter To Request OML**

(NB: Must be sent before the end of the 15th week before your EWC)

<p>Dear</p> <p>This is to inform you that I am pregnant and I have enclosed my MAT B1 signed by my Doctor/Midwife which states that my expected week of childbirth is</p> <p>I will be commencing my maternity leave on and confirm that it is my current intention to return to work at the end of my maternity leave period. For reference this will be</p> <p>I understand that if I wish to return any earlier I must give not less than 8 weeks' written notice of the date on which I intend to return.</p> <p>I understand that my date of return may be postponed by the Company if it does not have 8 weeks' advance notice.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p>
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- **B) Suggested Letter To Request AML**

(NB: Must be sent at least 28 days before you wish to start your AML but should ordinarily be sent before the end of the 15th week before your EWC instead of Suggested Letter A) above)

<p>Dear</p> <p>This is to inform you that I am pregnant and I have enclosed my MAT B1 signed by my Doctor/Midwife which states that my expected week of childbirth is</p> <p>I will be commencing my maternity leave on I confirm that as I am entitled to take additional maternity leave, I am exercising my right to return 26 weeks after my OML has ended.</p> <p>I understand that EWS may write to me no earlier than 28 days before the end of my OML, requesting my intentions with regard to my return to work at the end of my additional maternity leave period. I will provide a written reply within 28 days of receipt.</p> <p>Also, if I wish to return to work early I understand that I will have to give not less than 8 weeks written notice of the date on which I intend to return. I understand that the date of my return may be postponed by the Company, if it does not have 8 weeks' advance notice.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p>
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Maternity Checklist

This checklist has been designed to act as a reminder of issues you need to consider, and deadlines you have to meet, during your pregnancy and after the birth of your baby:

(Tick Task When Completed)

- Inform line manager that you are pregnant (by 15th week before your EWC).
- Read Information Guide and contact your line manager or HR manager with any queries on maternity rights.
- Discuss any health and safety concerns with line manager.
- Provide details of antenatal appointments in work-time, if any, giving as much notice as possible so cover can be arranged.
- Following issue at approx 26 weeks, send MAT B1 to the Policy & Standards Team Doncaster (at least 28 days prior to date on which you intend to start maternity leave).
- Confirm in writing your maternity leave period (OML or AML) with Policy & Standards Team at least 28 days before due to commence maternity leave.

- Inform manager of the actual date of birth as soon as you are able.
- If you wish to return earlier than expected from OML or AML, write giving at least 8 weeks notice of your intention to return.
- Confirm the date of your return to work.

Checklist for Managers

(Tick Task When Completed)

- Inform the HR manager and Policy & Standards Team of the employee's pregnancy.
- Conduct a Health and Safety Risk Assessment.
- Confirm arrangements for time off to attend antenatal classes.
- When received, send the MAT B1 to the Policy & Standards Team.
- Confirm the details of the maternity leave arrangements with the Policy & Standards Team and the employee.
- Make arrangements for covering the absence.
- Make the necessary preparations for the employee's return.

Maternity checklist for Policy & Standards Team

(Tick Task When Completed)

- Copy of guide issued to employee and line manager.
- Acknowledge receipt of form MAT B1.
- Confirm entitlements to employee if required.
- Acknowledge arrangements - copy HRM - line manager - Payroll.
- Form MAT B1 to Payroll (payroll will advise pensions).
- Date baby born is known.
- Ordered small gift box
- If on AML confirm latest return date. Copy to HRM line manager - Payroll.
- AML only: Check that notice of return has been received at least 8 weeks before the end of AML.
- AML only: If no response is received from the employee by 14 days before the end of the AML, the assistance of the local HR Manager should be sought to establish contact with the employee.
- Check the employee has returned to work.

Maternity Entitlements Key Dates

NB: Key dates can only be established once a Form MAT B1 has been issued and received by the Policy & Standards Team.

- **Expected Week of childbirth (EWC)** – the week in which the baby is due.
- **Qualifying Week** – This is the week used for calculating Maternity Pay. 15th week before EWC.
- **Earliest start date for leave** – 11th week before EWC.
- **Compulsory start of leave due to a pregnancy related absence** – first day of absence within 4 weeks before EWC.
- **Return to work from OML** – 26 weeks after start of maternity leave.

- **Return to work following AML** – 26 weeks from end of OML.
- **Notice required if returning before the end of OML** – 8 weeks.
- **Notice required when returning during or at end of AML** - 8 weeks.
- **Qualification for AML** – 26 weeks' continuous employment at the beginning of the 15th week before EWC.

B - Paternity Leave

Guidance for Parents – Paternity Leave

This guide aims to give you information about your entitlement to time off soon after the birth of a child. If you have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your local HR Manager.

Paternity Leave

Contractual paternity leave is provided by EWS. In addition, employees who have 26 weeks' continuous service with EWS at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth are entitled to take up to a maximum of two weeks' paternity leave (inclusive of any paid contractual paternity leave that they may be entitled to) on the birth of a child or on the placement of a child for adoption. Part time employees are entitled to paternity leave and pay on a pro rata basis.

Statutory paternity leave must be taken in a block of one or two weeks within 56 days of the birth/adoption or the first day of the expected week of childbirth.

You must give notice of your intention to take paternity leave in or before the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (or in cases where this is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable).

Paternity pay is only payable whilst on paternity leave.

Paternity Pay

Employees with less than 26 weeks' service are entitled to the following contractual paternity pay.

3 days' paid paternity leave

Drivers with 26 weeks' service by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth are entitled to the following paternity pay:

3 days' paid paternity leave + 7 days @ the relevant rate of statutory paternity pay (SPP)

Any contractual paternity pay that you receive is inclusive of your statutory paternity pay (SPP).

Additional Leave Requests

An employee may request to take additional leave, either Annual or Lieu Leave, to supplement their paternity Leave entitlements. Where such requests are made, sympathetic consideration will be given to granting such leave requests, taking into account local arrangements for leave.

Sample letter

A) Suggested letter to request Paternity Leave when expecting a child

Dear

This is to inform you that my wife /partner is pregnant and her expected week of childbirth is

I wish to commence my paternity leave on and confirm that it is my intention to take [one] [two] weeks' paternity leave and to return to work on

I declare that I fulfil the conditions of entitlement to paternity leave and pay, and recognise that falsely claiming paternity leave when not entitled may lead to disciplinary action being taken against me.

Yours sincerely

C - Parental Leave

Guidance for Parents - Parental Leave

This guide explains your entitlement to unpaid time off work to look after your child or to make arrangements for your child.

1. ***How do I qualify for parental leave?***

As an EWS employee you will have the right to unpaid parental leave if you:

- have one year's continuous service
and
- have parental responsibility for the care of a child under 5 years of age

2. ***Entitlements to parental leave***

Each parent is entitled to a maximum of 13 weeks' parental leave in respect of each qualifying child. Part time employees are entitled to parental leave on a pro rata basis.

Employees must take a minimum of one week's leave on each occasion. Any leave less than one week will count as one full week.

(NB: Please see para 7 - Post Natal Care)

Employees are not allowed to take more than four weeks' leave in respect of any individual child in any year.

A year is the period of twelve months beginning on:

- the date on which you first became entitled to take parental leave in respect of the child in question;
- or
- (where your entitlement has been interrupted at the end of a period of continuous employment) the date on which you most recently became entitled to take parental leave in respect of that child (i.e. following one year's continuous employment) and, in either case, each successive period of twelve months beginning on the anniversary of that date. An employee's entitlement to parental leave will be reduced by the number of weeks of parental leave, if any, taken in any previous employment in respect of any child.

Parental leave applies to both parents individually.

If twins, triplets etc are born or adopted (i.e. in the case of multiple births), each parent will be entitled to up to 13 weeks' unpaid leave for each child.

3. ***Exceptions for parents with disabled children.***

The following exceptions apply to parents of disabled children.

- are not required to take leave in blocks of 1 week
- are given an extended period in which to take parental leave, up to the date of the child's 18th birthday
- the maximum annual leave entitlement of 4 weeks is not imposed
- the overall amount of leave available to parents of disabled children is increased from 13 to 18 weeks.

Disability is defined as being entitled to disability living allowance.

4. Exceptions for parents who have adopted children.

The following exceptions apply to parents who have adopted children.

- The entitlement to parental leave for adopted children lasts for five years from the date on which the child is placed for adoption or until the child's 18th birthday – whichever is first.

5. Notice to be given to EWS

Subject to the relevant provisions in respect of expectant fathers and adopted children, written notice should be provided to EWS at least 21 days before the start of your proposed period of parental leave. You must:

- Notify EWS in writing that you intend to take parental leave;
- If requested, produce documentary evidence to the reasonable satisfaction of EWS of your right to take parental leave; and
- Specify the dates on which your proposed period of parental leave is to begin and end.

If you are an expectant father and the period of leave is to begin on the date on which the child is born, you must confirm in writing to EWS the expected week of childbirth, and the amount of leave required at least 21 days before the beginning of the expected week of childbirth.

When an employee applies to take parental leave immediately after the birth or adoption of a child, then EWS cannot postpone leave. In all other cases EWS may postpone the leave requested for up to six months after the date on which it was originally due to commence where EWS would be particularly disrupted if the leave were taken at the time requested. Leave cannot be postponed a second time.

When requesting parental leave for the first time for each child, copies of the birth certificate or adoption placement date must be supplied.

EWS reserves the right to make a reasonable request for evidence to support the need for parental leave and to make a record of the amount and dates of parental leaves taken. Parental leave will be recorded. All parental leave is unpaid.

6. Pension contributions

During periods of parental leave pension deductions will continue at the appropriate rate for the payment you are in receipt of. Once you are on nil pay, pension contributions will cease and fall into arrears. Arrears will be recovered following a return to work, by deducting an additional 50% of the current deduction.

Employees are encouraged to use this entitlement to help them care for their children. However, if EWS discovers misuse of the entitlement then the employee may be subject to the EWS disciplinary procedure.

7. Post Natal Care

Post Natal appointments will be treated as Parental leave. You have an entitlement to four weeks Parental leave, which in normal circumstances must be taken in whole week blocks. However, one week, 5 days, may be taken as individual days for the purposes of Post Natal Care, during the first year following the birth.

Sample letters.

A) Suggested letter to request Parental Leave when expecting a child

Dear

This is to inform you that I am expecting a child and I am requesting unpaid parental leave to be taken from ToThe expected week of childbirth is

I enclose [documentary evidence] for your information.

I understand that if I wish to return any earlier, any leave less than one complete week will count as one full week.

Yours sincerely

B) Suggested letter to request Parental Leave for care of your adopted child

Dear

This is to inform you that I am requesting unpaid parental leave to be taken from..... To [The expected week of placement is] I enclose [documentary evidence] for your information

I understand that if I wish to return any earlier, any leave less than one week will count as one full week (Except disabled child).

Yours sincerely

D - Adoption Leave

Guidance for prospective Parents – Adoption Leave

This guide aims to give you information about your entitlement to paid time off at the placement of a child. Please do not hesitate to contact your local HR Manager if you have any concerns.

Adoption Leave

Any prospective adoptive parent who has-

- * 26 weeks' continuous service at the date that a child is matched with them for the purposes of adoption; and
- * been notified by an adoption agency of a matching with a child for the purposes of adoption;

will be entitled to 26 weeks' Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) followed by 26 weeks' Additional Adoption Leave (AAL).

OAL may commence either:

- * on the date upon which the child is placed for adoption; or
- * at a pre-determined date not more than 14 days before the placement is expected to commence.

A parent who takes Adoption Leave will generally be entitled to the same protections in respect of their terms and conditions of employment and right to return as provided under EWS Maternity policy.

Should a child's placement for adoption be withdrawn or terminated due to the child's death or disruption of the adoption plans, the entitlement providing that Adoption Leave (whether OAL or AAL, whichever is appropriate) may only continue for a period of 8 weeks following the withdrawal of the placement, death of the child or termination of the placement.

Adoption Pay

All employees with 26 weeks' service at the date of placement of child for adoption are entitled to the following Statutory Adoption Pay:

26 weeks @ the relevant rate of Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)

Adoption pay is only payable whilst on adoption leave.

Employees are encouraged to use this entitlement to help them care for their adopted children. However, if EWS discovers misuse of this entitlement, then the employee may be subject to the EWS disciplinary procedure.

Pension Contributions

During periods of adoption pay pension deductions will continue at the appropriate rate for the payment you are in receipt of. Once you are on nil pay, pension contributions will cease and fall into arrears. Arrears will be recovered following a return to work, by deducting an additional 50% of the current deduction.

Notification Periods

Every employee wishing to take adoption leave must give notice of his or her intention to take adoption leave within 7 days of having been notified that he or she has been matched with a child for the purposes of adoption.

Every employee will be required to give the employer at least 28 days' notice of when he or she wishes the adoption leave to start, unless this is not reasonably practicable. In such circumstances notice should be given as soon as is reasonably practicable and leave will start on the date the child is placed for adoption.

If an employee, having given notice, then wants to vary the date on which the leave will commence, he or she will have to give notice of the variation at least 28 days before the new intended date or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

An employee will only be entitled to take adoption leave if they comply with the requirements regarding notice and with any request from the employer to provide evidence of his or her right to take adoption leave. For these purposes 'evidence' is a document to be issued by the adoption agency that matches the employee with the child and which states the employee's details, the details of the adoption agency, the date the employee was notified of having been matched with the child and the expected date of adoption.

Pre adoption Leave

Staff attending Pre Adoption interviews / selection events, as part of the formal process towards adoption; will be granted leave at the basic rate of pay for time absent on the understanding that time off for this purpose will be kept to the absolute minimum. In order to minimise inconvenience at work, wherever practicable, you should arrange these classes at the start or at the end of your working day.

After your first appointment, you should provide your line manager with copies of any paperwork that confirms that you are in the adoption process and of the dates and times of any appointments as far in advance as possible so that arrangements can be made to cover your work as appropriate.

You will not be unreasonably refused paid time off work to keep appointments in relation to the formal adoption process.

Sample Letters

A) Suggested Letter To Request Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL)

(NB: Must be sent at least 28 days before your wishes to take adoption leave)

Dear

This is to inform you that I am requesting to take Ordinary Adoption Leave. I have enclosed my documentation which states the details of my expected adoption date being

I will be commencing my Adoption Leave and confirm that it is my current intention to return to work at the end of my Adoption Leave period. For reference this will be

I understand that if I wish to return any earlier I must give not less than 28 days' written notice of the date on which I intend to return. I understand that the date of return may be postponed by the Company if it does not have 28 days' advance notice.

Yours sincerely

B) Suggested Letter To Request Additional Adoption Leave (AAL)

(NB: Must be sent at least 28 days before you wish to start your AAL).

Dear

This is to inform you that I am requesting to take Additional Adoption Leave. I have enclosed my documentation which states the details of my expected adoption date being

I will be commencing my Adoption leave on

I confirm that as I am entitled to take additional adoption leave I am exercising my right to return 26 weeks after my OAL has ended.

I understand that EWS may write to me no earlier than 28 days before the end of my OAL requesting my intentions with regard to my return to work at the end of my AAL. I will provide a written reply within 28 days' of receipt.

Also, if I wish to return to work early I understand that I will have to give not less than 28 days' written notice of the date on which I intend to return. I understand that the date of my return may be postponed by the Company, if it does not have 28 days' advance notice.

Yours sincerely

E - Time off for Dependants

Guidance for Employees – Time off for Dependants

This guide aims to give you information about time off for dealing with dependants in an emergency.

As an employee you have the right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to enable you to deal with unplanned family emergencies and to make alternative care or longer-term arrangements for your dependants.

1. *Defining dependant leave*

Employees may have unpaid leave, booked as time off for dependants, where dependants are defined as:

- Employee's parent
- Wife
- Husband
- Partner
- Child
- OR someone for whom the employee is the main carer.

2. *Under what circumstances can I take dependant leave?*

- To help when a dependant falls ill or is injured or assaulted.
- To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- When a dependant has a baby or gives birth.
- To deal with a death of a dependant.
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving an employee's child during school hours or on a school trip.
- Unexpected disruption or termination of care arrangements for dependant.

3. *What does longer-term care arrangements mean?*

Where a dependant needs to be cared for because of an illness or injury, the employee can take unpaid time off work to arrange alternative longer-term care arrangements.

This might mean making arrangements to employ a temporary carer or taking their sick child to stay with relatives.

4. *Entitlements for dependant leave*

EWS appreciates that it is difficult to specify the amount of time off which it is reasonable for an employer to allow, since this will vary with the differing circumstances of an emergency. For most cases a day or part of a day should be sufficient to deal with the problem. An employee is not entitled to take two weeks' leave, for example, to look after a sick child. The leave is to enable care to be arranged and to overcome the immediate emergency.

If you know in advance that there will be a need for time off, you should ask for annual leave in the usual way. Or, if the reason you need the leave relates to your child, then you may be entitled to take parental leave.

An employee, who finds themselves needing to take dependant leave, must advise their Supervisor, Team Leader or Local Manager at the earliest possible time. Ideally this must be before taking any booked duty. You should also give a clear indication of the likely length of time off required to deal with the situation.

Employees are encouraged to use this entitlement to help them care for their Dependants in an emergency. However, if EWS discovers misuse of the entitlement then the employee may be subject to the EWS disciplinary procedure.

To resume duty, you must seek the advice of your Supervisor, Team Leader or Manager. You will be required to take duty at the next appropriate time, taking into account suitable rest periods.

5. *Becoming a single Parent*

Employees who are, or who become for whatever reason single parents and who have or expect to have primary responsibility for the upbringing of any children under the age of 18 will be able to make application to apply to work shift patterns which will enable them to fulfil their parental obligations and responsibilities.

Such applications should be made in writing to the individual's line manager. Within 28 days of receiving the application, the relevant line manager must arrange to meet with the employee concerned, who may be accompanied by a local rep, in order to discuss how best that the request may be accommodated.

Should it not be possible to agree to the application due to business reasons on the part of the company, the relevant manager must confirm this in writing to both the applicant within 14 days of the meeting.

The applicant may appeal against this decision within 14 days of receipt of the written notification, upon which a further meeting shall be arranged within 28 days between the applicants relevant Company Councillor and the relevant Human Resources manager to ascertain as to whether there are clear economic reasons as to why the application cannot be accepted.

6. *Pension Contributions*

During unpaid Dependant Leave, pension contributions will cease and fall into arrears. Once you are on nil pay, pension contributions will cease and fall into arrears. Arrears will be recovered following a return to work, by deducting an additional 50% of the current deduction.

F - Fostering

Guidance for Employees – Fostering

This guide aims to give you information about Fostering.

Respite Care / Fostering

An employee who is registered to provide respite care to children may be granted leave at the basic rate of pay for the time absent on the understanding that time off for this purpose will be kept to the absolute minimum. In order to minimise inconvenience at work, wherever practicable, leave should be arranged at the start or at the end of your working day.

You will not be unreasonably refused paid time off.

G - Flexible Working

Guidance for Employees – Flexible Working

This guide aims to give you information about Flexible Working.

What is the purpose of a flexible working policy?

The right to request flexible working will be introduced on 6 April 2003. It is not an automatic right to flexible working, but once a request is made by an employee, a formal process must be followed by EWS/EWSI. This policy sets out the formal process that EWS will employ to deal with any such requests. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Flexible working may include, but is not limited to:

- Changing overall working hours;
- Changing working times; and
- Working from home.

Who is eligible?

Those who qualify for the right must:

- Be an employee of EWS/EWSI;
- Have been continuously employed for 6 months or more at the time of making their request;
- Have a child under six years of age (or under 18 if the child is disabled);
- Make the application by two weeks before the child's sixth or eighteenth (if applicable) birthday;
- Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing;
- Make the application to enable them to care for the child; and
- Not have made another application during the preceding twelve months.

What does "the right to flexible working" mean in practice?

Eligible employees would be able to request different working patterns which would include flexi-time, part-time working, job sharing, term-time working, school-hours working, compressed or staggered hours, self-rostering and shift working. It would include, for example, a request by an employee to come in to work half an hour later in order to take a child to school.

The procedure for dealing with a request

1. The first step is for the employee to make a written request for a change which clearly specifies the desired working pattern that the employee is seeking.
2. Within 28 days of receiving the request, the employer must arrange a meeting to discuss the request. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a fellow EWS/EWSI employee to that meeting.
3. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss in detail the employee's request. This is EWS/EWSI's opportunity to probe whether or not there are clear business reasons why the application can or cannot be accepted.
4. Within 14 days of the meeting, the employer must either
 - a) write to the employee in order to agree to the suggested changes and inform the employee of a start date; or
 - b) write to the employee confirming that their request has been rejected and stating the business ground(s) for the decision detailing why the particular reason applies to the employee's request (see reasons below).

Right to appeal

1. The employee has a right of appeal which must be exercised within 14 days of receiving EWS/EWSI's answer.
2. Any appeal must be heard within 14 days of the request having been made, with the decision being given within a further 14 days. Again, the employee has the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing. The decision at the appeal hearing is final (although an employee can seek redress in the Employment Tribunal or via ACAS where any part of the procedure has not been adhered to by the Company.)

Please note: EWS/EWSI and the employee may agree in writing to extend any of the relevant time limits set out in this policy.

An employee may only make one request per year and should be aware that any agreed changes to their terms and conditions of employment will be known as a “contract variation” and will be permanent.

Right to refuse a request

EWS/EWSI has the right to refuse a request to work flexibly if one of the reasons set out in the Employment Act 2002 is satisfied. EWS/EWSI may refuse a request where:

- The burden of additional costs is prohibitive;
- The proposed change has a detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand;
- There is an inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- There is an inability to recruit additional staff;
- The proposed change has a detrimental impact on quality;
- The proposed change has a detrimental impact on performance;
- There is insufficiency of work during the periods that the employee proposes to work;
- There are planned structural changes; or
- Any other grounds that the Secretary of State may specify in future regulations are satisfied.

Upon receipt of a request from an Employee, Line Managers should notify their Human Resources Manager of the details of the request so that it can be documented [in the Employee's Personal File].