



## **Adoption Leave Policy**

**Date of Policy: May 2025**

**Review: May 2026**

1.1 This policy applies to all employees. This includes staff on full-time, part-time, temporary and fixed-term contracts. It doesn't apply to agency workers or to self-employed contractors.

1.2 Adoption leave is paid time off to support you when you adopt a child or have a child through surrogacy.

This policy describes:

- who's entitled to adoption leave and adoption pay by law
- how much adoption leave you can take and when it can start
- what we both need to do before, during and after you take adoption leave
- how we collect and store personal data when managing adoption leave

## **2 Who Can Take Adoption Leave**

You're eligible for adoption leave from your first day of employment. To qualify, you must be newly matched with a child for adoption or be using a surrogate to have a child.

If you and your partner are jointly adopting a child, only one of you can take adoption leave. The other adoptive parent might be able to take paternity leave and you might be entitled to shared parental leave and pay.

To find out more, please read our:

- family leave policy

- paternity leave policy
- shared parental leave policy

Adoption leave and pay isn't available for people who:

- arrange a private adoption
- become a special guardian or kinship carer
- adopt a stepchild or family member

### 3 **How much leave you can take.**

You must take at least two weeks' leave but can take up to 52 weeks.

You're entitled to this by law.

Statutory adoption leave is made up of:

- 26 weeks of ordinary adoption leave
- 26 weeks of additional adoption leave

### 4 **When you can start your leave**

Your adoption leave can start:

- up to 14 days before your child starts living with you or is placed with you (if you adopt a child in the UK)
- when the child arrives in the UK or within 28 days of this date (if you adopt a child from overseas)
- the day or the day after the child is born (if you've used a surrogate to have a child).

### 5 **Before taking adoption leave**

#### 5.1 **Giving us notice**

You must inform your manager in writing of your intention to take adoption leave. Where possible, you should do this within seven days of the adoption agency telling you you've been matched with a child. You need to tell your manager when the child is due to be placed with you and when you want your adoption leave to start.

You can change your mind about when you want your leave to start. But where possible, please give your manager at least 28 days' notice.

Within 28 days, we'll write to you confirming the latest date on which you must return to work after your adoption leave. You must give at least eight weeks' notice if you want to change your return date.

## 5.2 **Supplying a matching certificate**

You must give your manager a document from your adoption agency that shows you've been matched for adoption. This is so we know you're eligible for adoption leave and pay.

This document will usually be a 'matching certificate' that has information on your adoption match and expected placement dates.

## 5.3 **Attending adoption appointments**

If you and your partner are jointly adopting a child, you'll have different leave entitlements. The primary adopter can take paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments. The co-adopter can take unpaid time off to attend up to two adoption appointments.

You can take up to six and a half hours off work on each occasion. You must take the time off before the child is placed with you.

Please give your manager as much notice as possible of your appointments. After your first appointment, please show your manager your appointment letter/card.

## 6 **Adoption pay**

If you're eligible, you'll receive statutory adoption pay for up to 39 weeks.

It's paid in the same way as your wages (for example monthly or weekly). Tax and National Insurance will be deducted.

Read the latest [gov.uk guidance on adoption leave and pay](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adoption-leave-and-pay).

## 7 **During adoption leave**

### 7.1 **Keeping in touch**

Before your adoption leave, your manager will ask you how much contact you'd like to have with work while you're on leave.

For example, you may ask to be sent:

- notes of important meetings
- details of internal vacancies
- details of important announcements
- details of significant changes to the way we work
- details of changes to the team structure
- details of useful training courses.

There may be occasions when we need to contact you – even if you’ve told us you don’t want to be contacted. In these circumstances, we’ll only be in touch if there’s significant information which might affect you. For example, if we’re proposing changes to your job.

## **7.2 Keeping in touch (KIT) days**

You may work for up to 10 keeping in touch (KIT) days during your adoption leave. If you work more than this, your adoption leave will come to an end.

Keeping in touch days are optional – we both need to agree:

- if you’ll work KIT days
- how many KIT days you’ll work
- what type of work you’ll do on these days
- how much you’ll be paid for the work (we won’t pay you anything less than the [National Minimum Wage](#)).

## **7.3 Impact on contractual benefits**

While you’re on adoption leave, you have the right to:

- any improvements we make to your terms and conditions of employment (for example, pay rises)
- build up annual leave
- suitable alternative roles if your role becomes redundant.

## **8 Shared Parental Leave**

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you can choose to end your adoption leave and pay early and take shared parental leave and pay instead.

Shared parental leave lets parents choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of placement. Its purpose is to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child.

To find out more, please read our shared parental leave policy.

## **9 Returning to work**

### **9.1 Your return date**

Unless you tell us otherwise, you’re expected to return to work the next working day after your adoption leave. If you can’t work because you’re sick or injured, you’ll need to take sick leave.

If you don't return to work when agreed and aren't taking sick leave, we'll record any additional days off as an unauthorised absence. If you decide not to return to work, you'll need to resign by giving notice, as set out in your employment contract.

## **9.2 Changing your return date**

You must give us at least eight weeks' notice if you want to return to work before the end of your adoption leave. If you don't give at least eight weeks' notice, your manager may delay your return to work by up to a further eight weeks, where there's good reason.

## **9.3 Returning to your job**

You have the right to return to the same job if you return following ordinary adoption leave.

If you return to work after additional adoption leave and we can't offer you the same role, we'll offer another suitable alternative job instead. The alternative job must have similar or better terms and conditions than your current role.

## **9.4 Requesting a change to your pattern of work**

You have the right to request a change to your pattern of work (subject to eligibility criteria). To find out more, please read our flexible working policy

## **10 Data protection**

When managing your adoption leave and pay, we process personal data collected under our data protection policy. We store data securely, and only staff who manage your leave and pay will have access to this information.

To find out more, please read our data protection policy.