



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

People & Development

Paternity Policy

Owner	Executive Director of People and Development
Responsible Person	Head of Human Resources
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What we must
do well



How we support our
communities



We value and support
the people we employ



We efficiently manage
the Service

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1. INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, partners are playing a more active role in sharing the responsibility for looking after children. Humberside Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) recognises that time off for employees is of prime importance to help care for a baby and support the wife, civil partner or partner at or after the time of the birth or, where a child is adopted (from within the UK or overseas), to help with acclimatisation and bonding. This policy sets out the statutory rights and responsibilities for those who wish to take paternity leave and pay.

Core Code of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services or in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to inform employees of the ability to apply for and take paternity leave.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- [Adoption Policy](#)
- [Shared Parental Leave Policy](#)
- [Per 26: Application for Paternity Leave and Pay](#)
- Legal References
 - Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- National Guidance

There is no specific National Guidance relevant to this policy.

5. ELIGIBILITY

The employee must be:

- The father of the child or married to the civil partner
- The partner of the child's mother
- Married to the civil partner or the partner of the child's adopter
- One of a couple jointly adopting a child and expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child and be making the request to help care for the child or support the child's mother.

Paternity leave is not available to biological fathers who are not likely to have parental responsibility for their child.

Where the Expected Week of Childbirth falls on or after 6 April 2024 and to children who expect to be placed for adoption on or after 6 April 2024, an employee has the qualified right to take two separate blocks of one week. Prior to the Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024 an employee had the qualified right to take either one or two consecutive weeks.

(Please also refer to the [Adoption Policy](#) for further information on adoption eligibility).

If an employee's child is stillborn at 24 weeks or more of pregnancy, they are still entitled to the same paternity leave and pay that they would have received had the baby been born alive.

6. PERIODS OF LEAVE AND PAY

Employees who are eligible can choose to take four consecutive weeks' paternity leave or split said leave into two separate blocks. Paternity pay for this period is a total of two weeks full pay and two weeks half pay) which is inclusive of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP).

Employees can choose to take only the portion of full paid leave and still split this into two blocks, for example, one week paid in full and a further one week paid in full. Or employees may choose to take the full entitlement and split this into two blocks of leave, for example, two weeks paid in full and a further two weeks paid as half pay.

Employees should be aware that leave can be taken consecutively or in two separate blocks only and paternity leave cannot be taken in four separate blocks.

Paternity Leave cannot be taken prior to the birth/adoption but must be taken within 52 weeks after birth/adoption. Paternity leave can start on any day of the week following the birth or the end of the week in which the child's adopter is notified of being matched with the child.

Only one qualifying period of paternity leave will be available to an employee irrespective of whether more than one child is born as a result of a pregnancy.

Employees may also be eligible to choose to take [Shared Parental Leave](#), in conjunction with their partner, but if they wish to take paternity leave, they should do so before they take shared parental leave as it cannot be taken afterwards.

7. RIGHTS DURING PATERNITY LEAVE

All terms and conditions of employment remain in force during an employee's period of paternity leave.

Employees are entitled to continue to receive all benefits applicable to them during their leave, such as accrual of leave and pension benefits.

8. RIGHTS TO RETURN TO WORK

An employee who returns to work after paternity leave will have the right to return to the substantive post they held immediately before taking the leave.

9. NOTICE OF INTENTION TO TAKE PATERNITY LEAVE

Employees must inform their line manager and Human Resources (HR) of their intention to take paternity leave four weeks before the baby is expected, or in respect of an adopted child, the week in which the child's adopter was notified of having been matched with a child (unless this is not reasonably practicable). Followed by at least 28 days' notice for the second, separate, week period, if choosing to take paternity leave in two separate blocks of one week.

Employees will need to complete form [Per 26 – Application for Paternity Leave and Pay](#) and send it to HR four weeks before the baby is expected or in respect of an adopted child, the week in which the child's adopter was notified of having been matched with a child (unless this is not reasonably practicable).

An employee can change their mind about the date on which they want their leave to start providing they inform HR at least 28 days in advance (unless this is not reasonably practicable).

10. ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS

If an employee is eligible, they will be entitled to take unpaid leave to accompany their partner to a maximum of two antenatal appointments per pregnancy.

The antenatal appointment must be made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, midwife or nurse.

In order to be eligible, employees must:

- Have at least 12 weeks' consecutive service at the time of the appointment if they are an Agency worker.
- Be the baby's father
- Be the expectant mother's spouse or civil partner
- Be in a long-term relationship with the expectant mother

If the employee is expecting a child through surrogacy they will also be entitled to leave as above for antenatal appointments, as long as they intend to become the child's legal parent.

Requests for time off to accompany someone to an antenatal appointment should be made in writing to line managers.

If an employee's child is stillborn at 24 weeks or more of pregnancy, they are still entitled to the same paternity leave and pay that they would have received had the baby been born alive.

**If you require any further information or guidance in relation to this policy,
please contact Human Resources**