



Ordinary Parental Leave procedure

Procedure Summary

This procedure sets out the entitlement to ordinary parental leave. Ordinary parental leave is designed to enable staff to take pre-arranged periods of unpaid absence and is a separate entitlement to shared parental leave, maternity leave, adoption leave and paternity leave.

Policy Overview

Extract from HR Policy framework

5.3.5 Ordinary parental leave

Employees are entitled to a total of 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child. This entitlement covers the period from birth or adoption up to the child's 18th birthday. Part time employees will be entitled to the leave on a pro rata basis. All contractual benefits except pay will be maintained during ordinary parental leave. Pension contributions will not be paid during the leave and will recommence upon return to work.

Owner	Executive Director of People and Learning
Procedure Lead	Workforce Policy Advisor
Formally endorsed by	Executive Leadership Team
Endorsed	February 2009
Next Review	February 2020
Audience	All staff
Related to policy	HR Policy framework section 5.3.5

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The British Red Cross recognises the need to balance the demands of working life with the responsibilities of raising a family and so the statutory right to ordinary parental leave has been enhanced to enable all employees, who are parents to take the leave, regardless of service length.
- 1.2 Employees are entitled to a total of 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child. This entitlement covers the period from birth or adoption up to the child's 18th birthday.
- 1.3 Part time staff will be entitled to the leave on a pro rata basis.
- 1.4 All contractual benefits except pay will be maintained during ordinary parental leave. Pension contributions will be frozen during the leave and recommence upon return to work.
- 1.5 This policy has been produced in line with, and should be interpreted in the light of our organisational values: compassionate, courageous, inclusive and dynamic.

2 Setting out the process

- 2.1 All requests for ordinary parental leave must be made in writing (includes email) with proof of parenthood/parental responsibility (i.e birth certificate/adoption/fostering papers), to the employee's line manager and should give 21 days' notice, or as much as possible if this is not practicable.
- 2.2 In emergency situations, it may be appropriate to take carer's leave initially and any subsequent request for ordinary parental leave will then be considered if required.
- 2.3 Ordinary parental leave should be taken in blocks of one week or more to a maximum of four weeks in any one rolling year per child. NB where an employee takes only part of a week as leave, this will be counted as one full week, except in cases where a child is disabled, in which case leave can be taken one day at a time.
- 2.4 In situations where more than four weeks leave is required in one block, the employee may lose the right to return to their original post, if the total amount of ordinary parental leave, or ordinary parental leave plus any other statutory leave (i.e Maternity/Paternity leave) exceeds 26 weeks, but will retain the right to return to a similar position with equivalent terms and conditions of service.
- 2.5 The Red Cross reserves the right to postpone any leave requested for up to a maximum of six months in instances where the requested leave would cause serious disruption to services. In such cases the line manager will confirm within seven days of the original request why the leave must be postponed and suggest a new start date for the leave. NB the Red Cross will not postpone leave requested at the time of the birth or adoption of a child.

3 Key people

- > **Employees:** to ensure they inform the British Red Cross using correct procedure
- > **Line Manager:** maintaining contact with employee during the leave period and facilitating return to work.
- > **SSC:** recording of leave period on SAVi
- > **P&L advice and casework team:** advice on support available to employees and managers regarding eligibility and process.
- > **Workforce Policy Adviser:** responsible for maintain and updating this procedure where necessary.

4 Laws and regulations

- > Parental Leave (EU Directive) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/283)
- > Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3312)
- > The Employment Relations Act (1999) provides the right to ordinary parental leave for all employees who have been continuously employed for one year or more. The Red Cross enhances this right to include all employees who are parents regardless of service length.

5 Review and maintenance

This procedure will be reviewed every three years or as and when required to reflect any legislative change or good practice developments

6 Appendices

Appendix 1: related documents

Appendix 2: document provenance

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Document title	Relationship to this policy
Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	Supporting document
HR Policy Framework	Overarching policy
Equality and Diversity policy	Policy

Appendix 2: document provenance

Date endorsed	Category	Summarise changes made	Reason for changes	Consulted	Changes endorsed by
October 2013	Interim update	-All parents are now entitled to 18 weeks' parental leave. -21 days' notice should be given when requesting leave. -If leave must be postponed, line manager should write to confirm reason and new agreed dates within seven days. Amount of leave requested should not change.	Legislative change	Unknown	Unknown
May 2014	Interim update	Leave entitlement is per rolling year. Included 'procedure' in document title.	Clarification	Unknown	Unknown
January 2015	Interim update	'Ordinary' added to title to distinguish from shared parental leave policy and procedure.	Clarification	Unknown	Unknown
April 2015	Interim update	-Entitlement is extended up to the child's 18 th birthday for all children. -Format update.	Legislative change	Unknown	Unknown

November 2016	Interim update	Updated HR job title to P&L Advice and Support	Update	Unknown	Unknown
January 2017	Interim update	Updated requirement for proof of parenthood/parental responsibility. Lose right to return to same role if leave exceeds 26 weeks. Exception for parents of disabled children – they do not have to take one week blocks and can take the leave one day at a time.	Legislative and clarification	Unknown	Unknown
June 2017	Interim update	Review date aligned with related leave procedures.	Interim update	Unknown	Unknown
December 2017	Interim update	Updated to align with new HR Policy Framework and corporate procedure template	Introduction of new HR Policy framework	Corporate Policy Manager	Head of P&L Expert Services
August 2019	Minor update	Pushed back review date to February 2020.	To carry out review in line with other family friendly policy reviews in the policy work schedule	Expert Services Corporate Governance	Head of P&L Expert Services