



## People & ICT



# Maternity, Adoption & Parental Leave Policy

### Document Control

Version	Date	Authority	Change
1.0	27.05.15	Partnership Working Forum / Resources Committee	Standard policy format



## Introduction

The Highland Council recognises the value of its employees and the importance of managing appropriate maternity, adoption and parental leave provision, with reference to statutory regulations and national conditions of service. The effective management of maternity, adoption and parental leave supports the employee in their role as parent, carer or partner and the Council in the consistent provision of services during the employee's absence.

The Council recognises that, from time to time, employees may have questions or concerns relating to their maternity rights. The Council encourages open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. As details of the various provisions can be complex, employees should clarify the relevant procedures and provision with HR Services.

## Aims

The aims of this policy are to establish the Council's support for employees on maternity, adoption and parental leave and to underpin guidance to support the effective management of these.

## Types of provision

### Maternity & Adoption Leave

Maternity and Adoption leave and pay provide an opportunity for employees to take time off work when their child is born or starts to live with them.

### Maternity & Adoption Support Leave

Maternity/Adoption Support leave provides an opportunity for employees, intending to be fully involved in the child's upbringing, to take time off to support the mother, adopter or carer for the child.

### Parental Leave

Eligible parents with children under the age of 18 years will be entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave up until the child's 18th birthday. Parental leave should be taken in blocks of a week or multiples of a week, and should not be taken as "odd" days off, unless the child is disabled. Employees cannot take off more than four weeks during a year per child. A week is based on an employees working pattern.

### Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave enables eligible parents to choose how to share time off work to care for their child during the first year of birth or adoption.

## Guidance

Guidance, information and tools will be developed and maintained in partnership through the Highland Council Partnership Framework. In



relation to maternity, adoption and parental leave this guidance will:

- inform employees and managers about the provision of leave and pay
- inform employees and managers about notification procedures
- guide managers on the health, safety and wellbeing issues
- guide managers and the requirement to keep in contact with employees during periods of leave
- provide information on the impact of leave on various employment elements including annual leave, pensions and salary sacrifice benefits
- provide guidance on an employee's right to return to work

### **Legislation**

The development and application of this policy and appended procedures is guided by:

- Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3312)
- Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/3050)

### **Monitoring**

The application of this policy will be monitored through the Highland Council Partnership Framework and the Highland Council Resources Committee.