



SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

APRIL 2024

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Company recognises that the balance between work and family life is important and that there are a lot of things to think about when you share responsibility for a child. Shared parental leave is designed to give you, as a parent, more choice in how you care for your child, by allowing you to take leave flexibly in the first year of your child's life.
- 1.2 We appreciate that individual circumstances mean that the parenting experience is different for everyone and can be more difficult for some; we will do everything we can to support employees.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Company recognises that the shared parental leave provisions are complex. The Shared Parental Leave Policy is designed to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that any questions and/or issues can be resolved as quickly as possible and to ensure that the Company:
- complies with relevant employment legislation and Health and Safety at Work Regulations;
 - follows best practice; and
 - signposts employees to sources of support.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This is a group level policy that applies to all employees of Anglian Water Group Limited, with the exception of Anglian Water (Ireland) Limited and Wave Limited (and their respective subsidiaries, which include Celtic Anglian Water and Anglian Water Business (National)).
- 3.2 Company Shared Parental Leave Pay provisions detailed in this policy are effective from 1st April 2024 and will only apply to shared parental leave started on or after 1st April 2024.

4. STATUS

- 4.1 This policy/procedure is in line with statutory minimum requirements and is subject to regular review by the Company and is updated as appropriate.

5. POLICY OWNER

- 5.1 Head of Employee Relations.

6. RECORDS

- 6.1 It is the Company's standard practice that all written correspondence will be sent by email. Where this is not possible (i.e. the employee has not provided a personal email account), it will be sent by standard mail.

6.2 All information will be held on the employee's record in accordance with the Company's Data Retention [Policy](#).

7. FURTHER ASSISTANCE

7.1 Other types of leave may be available also to parents – please see [Lighthouse](#) for our Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, Paternity Leave, Parental Leave and Time off for Dependants Policy and Procedures.

7.2 If you have other questions about this policy contact your [Employee Relations Manager/Advisor](#).

7.3 If you have questions about the Workday process contact PeopleSupport@anglianwater.co.uk.

LAST REVIEWED

April 2024

SECTION 2 – POLICY

1. SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE AND PAY

1.1 Eligibility

You may be eligible for shared parental leave (SPL) for up to 50 weeks and pay (ShPP) for up to 37 weeks if you:

- have main responsibility for the care of your child with the other parent/partner;
- have at least 26 weeks' employment at the 15th week before the baby's expected week of childbirth (EWC) OR your adoption match date;
- have average earnings at or above the lower earnings limit in the 8 weeks before the 15th week before the EWC OR your adoption match date;
- are still employed until the week before any period of shared parental leave is taken;

AND

- have a partner who has at least 26 weeks' employment (with us or another company) or self-employment during the 66 weeks before the EWC OR your adoption match date (the weeks don't have to be in a row) with average weekly earnings of at least £30 during 13 of those weeks.

If you are having your child by way of a surrogacy arrangement, you must have obtained a parental order in order to ask for SPL or ShPP.

Remember: For either parent to get SPL, the birth parent or primary adopter **must** either end their maternity or adoption leave and return to work OR give their employer notice to end ('curtail') their maternity or adoption leave early.

1.2 Shared parental leave (SPL)

If eligible, there are many ways that you could use SPL, e.g.

- the birth parent or primary adopter returns to work early from maternity or adoption leave and takes SPL at a later date;
- the birth parent or primary adopter returns to work and their partner takes SPL;
- both parents are off at the same time; or
- the parents share SPL evenly and are off at different times.

The available shared parental leave is calculated by deducting the number of weeks' maternity leave¹ the mother has taken OR deducting the number of weeks' adoption leave the primary adopter has taken on their return to work (or leave end date) from the full 50-week entitlement.

The leave must be taken in blocks of at least 1 week but doesn't have to be taken as a single period and must be taken before your child's 1st birthday.

Each eligible parent has up to three times to either:

- book a block of SPL ('notice to take leave'); or
- change the dates of booked SPL ('notice to vary leave').

¹ The first 2 weeks' maternity leave immediately following the baby's birth are compulsory leave that the mother must take by law.

You must give 8 weeks' notice each time you want to book a block of SPL, but it can start on any day, for example if the first day of a week's leave is Tuesday, the last day of leave would be the next Monday. In addition, you must give 8 weeks' notice if you want to change or cancel SPL. The exception to this is if your child is born more than 8 weeks' prematurely. In these circumstances you need to let your manager know as soon as possible and if you change your SPL dates this will not count as one of your 3 permitted times to book SPL.

There are two ways to take SPL:

Continuous leave – where you can book up to three blocks of SPL. If you request continuous leave, this cannot be refused.

Discontinuous leave – where you book a pattern of leave periods, e.g. to allow you to alternate childcare responsibilities with your partner. If you request discontinuous leave this can be refused if the business cannot accommodate the request. Your **Line Manager has 14 days to consider your request and if unable to approve** will talk to you about it and suggest alternative arrangements. If you cannot agree your original request/an alternative, you will be able to withdraw your request or take continuous leave instead (it cannot start sooner than 8 weeks from the date of the original leave request). If you withdraw your request it will not count in these circumstances it will not count as one of your 3 permitted times to book SPL.

Shared parental leave is in addition to the right to paternity leave and 'ordinary' parental leave. However, statutory paternity leave must be used by the father/partner before taking any shared parental leave, or they will lose the entitlement.

There is no increase in shared parental leave entitlement in the case of multiple births (in the same way that maternity, paternity and adoption entitlements do not increase).

1.3 Shared parental pay (ShPP)

To be eligible for this you and your partner **must** meet the criteria in 1.1 above.

There are two elements to Shared Parental Pay:

Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SShPP) is paid for a maximum of 37 weeks at 90% of normal weekly earnings or the lower statutory rate² (whichever is the lower). SPL taken over and above 37 weeks will be unpaid.

Company Shared Parental Pay (CShPP) is made up of 26 weeks on full basic pay excluding overtime or bonus, (SShPP payments are included in this pay) plus a further 11 weeks at the SShPP basic rate.

ShPP is payable for up to 37 weeks once you start your shared parental leave. It is paid into your bank account on the normal monthly pay date and is subject to tax, national insurance and agreed pension contributions. Any other regular payments will be deducted also, unless they are suspended or cancelled.

² The current rate can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/childcare-parenting>

1.4 If the unexpected happens

We recognise that things do not always go to plan. Sadly, in some cases, adoption placements end, and children/parents die.

In some circumstances your shared parental leave may continue; in some circumstances the Company's [Bereavement Policy](#) may also apply.

Please make sure your manager is made aware as soon as possible so that appropriate support and advice can be given. Further information and support can be found at [Section 3](#).

If, for whatever reason, you stop sharing responsibility for a child, you must tell your manager straight away. Your right to SPL and ShPP will cease and you may be required to return to work immediately.

2. YOUR RIGHTS DURING SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

2.1 Impact on Maternity/Adoption/Paternity Leave and Pay

You need to consider carefully whether shared parental leave is the right option for you and, if it is the right option, when you should take it. Some of the potential impacts include:

- If you are the birth mother or primary adopter and on Company Maternity Pay (CMP) or Company Adoption Pay (CAP), i.e. first 26 weeks on full pay, and you choose to end your maternity/adoption leave before the end of the 26 weeks, you will lose any remaining CMP/CAP.
- If you are entitled to paid paternity leave and you choose to start shared parental leave before taking it, you will lose your entitlement to paternity leave as it cannot be taken once shared parental leave has started.

2.2 Annual leave and bank holidays

You will continue to accrue annual leave and bank holidays (on a pro-rata basis if you work part-time) while on shared parental leave.

Any leave accrued or carried over from the previous leave year **must** be taken before you return to work (i.e. taken at the end of the shared parental leave) unless otherwise agreed with your manager.

Any leave accrued from the current leave year may be used when you return to work - just book it on the appropriate system, e.g. Workday, WFM, MyAnglianWater and Holiday Planner in line with the Annual Leave Policy.

2.3 Pension

During **paid** shared parental leave, you will continue to pay your current percentage of pension contributions, based on the actual pay received. For any period of **unpaid** shared parental leave, you will have the option of making up your missed pension contributions on your return to work – if you want to make up your contributions, you have to make and confirm this decision within 60 days of your return. The Company will continue to pay its share of pension contributions during the entire paid shared parental leave period based on your usual salary.

2.4 Other benefits

You will retain all benefits while on shared parental leave, e.g. work mobile phone and membership of the Company's private health care scheme continues (you will continue to be taxed monthly on the latter). Some benefits, like your company car/cash allowance you can keep or choose to return to avoid the tax implications of the benefit.

Loyalty Saving Scheme – you can choose to make up payments missed during periods of no pay. If you choose to keep saving without making up the missed payments, at the end if you are eligible for a bonus this will be paid pro-rata, based on months you have paid into the scheme. Payroll will contact you on your return to work to discuss if you wish to make up your missing payments.

2.5 Contractual obligations

Whilst on shared parental leave you will continue to be bound by all of the terms of your contract of employment except the right to be paid, including the implied obligations of good faith and confidentiality. You are not permitted to work for any other employer or organisation, whether paid or otherwise, during your shared parental leave.

2.6 Reasonable contact

Reasonable contact is permitted and actively encouraged during your shared parental leave – you should agree with your manager when and how you would like to be contacted, e.g. phone or email. Your work IT account will be frozen during your shared parental leave; your Line Manager will be able to ask for it to be made available if you need access, e.g. for KIT Days.

2.7 Keep in touch days

You and your partner can take up to 20 Shared Parental Leave In-Touch (SPLIT) days each. For the mother, this is in addition to maternity Keep In-Touch (KIT) days. SPLIT and KIT days can be taken without losing statutory payments for that week or bringing the leave to an end. These days are optional and are designed to give you the opportunity of keeping up to date while on leave and/or to ease your return to work and are paid at your normal daily rate (calculated by Payroll). You will need to agree your SPLIT days with your manager and will need to record these days for payment in Workday > Time.

'Work' means any work done under the contract of employment and may include training or any activity undertaken for the purpose of you keeping in touch with the workplace.

3. **RETURNING TO WORK**

3.1 Confirming your return

You **must** tell us of your intention to return to work **at least 8 weeks before** your intended return date by submitting the details on Workday.

This means that you should contact your manager to discuss and agree your return to work arrangements, including the return date, hours of work and whether or not you wish to return on a part time basis (for 13 weeks or permanently³), and

³ You will be required to submit a Flexible Working Request.

arrangements for using up any accrued annual leave before you return **before** submitting the details on Workday.

If you fail to give 8 weeks' notice of your return, we may postpone your return by eight weeks or to the end of your shared parental leave period if that is shorter.

If you change your mind **after** you have submitted the details on Workday, you must give at least eight weeks' notice of your new proposed return date.

You cannot extend your shared parental leave beyond 50 weeks using annual leave. However, you can extend it by up to 4 weeks by using unpaid Parental Leave. For more information see the Parental Leave Policy on [Lighthouse](#).

We recognise that for some returning to work after shared parental leave may be an anxious time. We will do everything we can to make you feel comfortable, bring you up to date and ease your return. Please discuss and agree with your manager (before you return to work) a return to work plan to help make this as smooth as possible.

3.2 The right to return to the same job

You have the right to return to the job you held before your shared parental leave, **IF** your period of shared parental leave, when added to any other period of statutory maternity/adoption/paternity leave you have taken in relation to the same child is **26 weeks or less**.

IF your period of shared parental leave, when added to any other period of statutory maternity/adoption/paternity leave you have taken in relation to the same child is **more than 26 weeks** you are entitled to return to the job you held before your shared parental leave, but if it is not reasonably practicable for the Company to give you exactly the same job back, you are entitled to a suitable job at the same level with terms and conditions at least as good as the previous job.

If there is a redundancy situation during your shared parental leave or within 18 months of the birth/placement of your child you are entitled to be offered any suitable alternative vacancy.

SECTION 3 – PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Before you book any shared parental leave, discuss with your Line Manager how it can be accommodated. If you are scheduled through CAM, it may be appropriate for your Line Manager to speak to the CAM team for advice on an appropriate pattern.
- 1.2 There are three steps involved in booking shared parental leave, all of which require you to complete and load a form on to Workday:
 - Step 1: Ending maternity/adoption entitlement
 - Step 2: Giving notice of entitlement to shared parental leave
 - Step 3: Booking the leave.
- 1.3 The forms that you need to complete will vary depending on whether:
 - you are the birth mother;
 - you are the primary adopter; or
 - you are adopting by way of parental order; AND
 - whether you and your partner are both looking to take shared parental leave or just one of you.
- 1.4 We use the forms provided by ACAS for all steps of the process. Please ensure you pick the correct set of forms from Lighthouse to suit your circumstances:
 - [SPL Forms – Maternity](#).
 - [SPL Forms – Adoption](#).
 - [SPL Forms – Parental Order](#).

2. STEP 1: ENDING MATERNITY OR ADOPTION ENTITLEMENT

- 2.1 If you are the birth mother/primary adopter the first step of opting in to shared parental leave is for you to tell us that you want to bring your maternity/adoption leave to an end early (notice of 'curtailment') by changing the end date of your maternity/adoption leave on Workday and confirming whether you and/or your partner intend to take shared parental leave. You do this by completing Form 1 from the appropriate set of SPL forms on Lighthouse and loading it on to Workday.
- 2.2 Remember you:
 - have to give a minimum of 8 weeks' notice to bring your maternity/adoption leave to an end;
 - cannot restart your maternity/adoption leave once you have returned to work;
 - cannot cancel or withdraw the date you have said your maternity/adoption leave will end unless you gave notice before your child was born/placed with you, in which case you can cancel/withdraw the date up to 6 weeks after the birth/adoption placement by changing the dates on Workday and uploading a new Form 1.

3. STEP 2: GIVING NOTICE OF ENTITLEMENT TO SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

- 3.1 If you are the birth mother/primary adopter the second step of opting in to shared parental leave is for you to give us notice that you and/or your partner are intending to take shared parental leave.
- 3.2 You do this by completing either Form 2 or 3 from the appropriate set of SPL forms on Lighthouse and loading it on to Workday. You use Form 2 if you alone/you and your partner are taking shared parental leave and Form 3 if just your partner is taking shared parental leave.
- 3.3 If you are the birth mother/primary adopter and are not taking shared parental leave, but your partner is, you will need to complete Form 4 from the appropriate set of SPL Forms on Lighthouse so that your partner can claim their shared parental leave from their employer.
- 3.3 Remember:
- The date you wish to take shared parental leave could be a date in the future, which would allow your partner to take shared parental leave whilst you are on maternity/adoption leave.
 - Your partner will need to sign Form 2 if they want to take shared parental leave.

4. STEP 3: BOOKING THE LEAVE

- 4.1 To book your shared parental leave you must have loaded the appropriate forms from Step 1 and Step 2 on Workday and request your leave dates on Workday at least 8 weeks before the date you wish your shared parental leave to start.
- 4.2 Remember:
- You have to give 8 weeks' notice prior to each block of shared parental leave that you wish to take.
 - If you request a single continuous period of shared parental leave (this can be any length from 1 to 50 weeks) your Line Manager cannot refuse it.
 - If you request more than one period of shared parental leave in the same notice your Line Manager has 14 days to consider your request and may refuse on business grounds if you are unable to agree suitable alternative dates.
 - The maximum requests for shared parental leave you can make is 3.
 - All shared parental leave must be taken before your child's 1st birthday.
- 4.3 You can cancel or change the way shared parental leave and pay has been allocated between you and your partner by asking People Support or your Line Manager to amend or cancel leave dates on Workday. At least 8 weeks' notice of the change must be given, and these will count towards the maximum 3 requests limit that you can make.

SECTION 4 – SUPPORT

A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

Visit our well-being pages on [Lighthouse](#) for advice and guidance on maintaining a healthy pregnancy.

Our independent Employee Assistance helpline (EAP) may be able to help. It is a confidential service, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They provide health and wellbeing support for employees during their employment. Their telephone number is **0800 243 458**. You can find out more about this service on [Lighthouse](#).

There are a number of external organisations that offer support:

[Kicks Count](#) – the aim at Kicks Count is to raise awareness of baby’s movements in pregnancy to reduce the UK’s stillbirth and neonatal death rate – visit www.kickscount.org.uk

[Tommy’s](#) - provides expert and user led, accessible pregnancy information to support expectant parents in understanding what they can do to support a safe and healthy pregnancy – visit www.tommys.org

[ICPSupport](#) – provides facts about the condition Intrahepatic cholestasis of pregnancy condition as well as signposting you to more detailed information and forms of support – visit www.icpsupport.org

[NHS](#) – provides information about trying for a baby, pregnancy, labour and birth, including: where you can have your baby – for example, in a hospital, midwife-led unit, or at home; what pain relief in labour is available, such as gas and air (entonox) and epidural signs that labour might be starting – visit www.nhs.uk

PREGNANCY LOSS

Visit our well-being pages on [Lighthouse](#) for advice and guidance on miscarriage.

There are a number of external organisations that offer support:

Visit the NHS web pages for when pregnancy goes [wrong](#).

[The Miscarriage Association](#) is a charity that offers support to people who have lost a baby. They have a helpline (01924 200 799, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm) and an email address (info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk) and can put you in touch with a support volunteer.

[Petals](#) an organisation providing specialist counselling services after a pregnancy loss.

[SANDS](#) an organisation that can offer you support if your baby dies during pregnancy or after birth. They also run a helpline 10am - 3pm Monday to Friday and 6pm - 9pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings: 0808 164 3332.

[Child Bereavement UK](#) if your child or baby dies

[Arc](#) a national charity offering parents support during antenatal screening and following a termination.

[Cruse Bereavement Care](#) helps people understand their grief and cope with their loss. They have a helpline (0808 808 1677, Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 5pm) and a network of [local branches](#) where you can find support.

[Dying Matters](#) for help talking about dying, death and bereavement

[Mind](#) for mental health information and support

[Sue Ryder](#) for advice on coping with a death

GENERAL

[ACAS](#) –provides information on pregnancy and maternity rights. ACAS also runs a free telephone helpline service.

[GOV.UK](#) - the Government website sets out general information on maternity leave.

[Working Families](#) - provides information and advice for parents and carers. They have online information and a telephone helpline.