

Shared Parental leave

About shared parental leave and pay

Shared parental leave (SPL) gives 2 parents more flexibility in how they can care for their child.

You and your partner may be able to get Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) if you are:

- having a baby
- using a surrogate to have a baby
- adopting a child
- fostering a child who you're planning to adopt

You can claim statutory ShPP for any of the remaining 37 weeks after the birth parent, mother, parental order parent, or primary adopter ends their:

- maternity or adoption pay
- maternity allowance (GOV.UK)

The final 13 weeks of the 50-week SPL period will be unpaid.

For example, if a mother stops her maternity or adoption pay after 30 weeks, you could receive ShPP for the remaining 9 weeks.

The school offers eligible employees enhanced maternity/adoption pay. If you end your maternity or adoption leave and pay early to apply for SPL instead, you and/or your partner will only receive statutory ShPP.

Eligibility

To qualify for statutory ShPP, you must:

- pass the continuity of employment test
- earn at least the lower earnings limit per week for 8 weeks before the 15th week of the expected birth or at the end of the week when you were notified of being matched with a child (adoption)

The other parent must meet the employment and earnings test.

How much you'll be paid

If you are eligible, you will receive statutory ShPP as either:

- ShPP at the rate set by the government @ £187.18 per week from April 2025
- 90% of your average weekly earnings You will receive whichever is lower.

If you have more than one job

If you work for a school and another organisation, and you're entitled to shared parental leave (SPL) with both, you must request and book your SPL with both employers at the same time.

If you are the birth parent, mother, parental order parent, or primary adopter, you must end (curtail) your maternity/adoption leave with both employers before you can take SPL. You cannot be on maternity/adoption leave with one employer and SPL with another.

The maximum SPL you can take if you have two or more jobs is based on the longest period of maternity/adoption leave you have taken.

Example

Kirsty returns to work after 28 weeks of maternity/adoption leave from the council and 26 weeks of maternity/adoption leave from her other employer. This means she will have up to 24 weeks of SPL to share between her and her partner.

Your employment rights

During your SPL, you are still entitled to all the terms and conditions of your employment contract, with the exception of your usual salary and other payments (remuneration), as you will be receiving shared parental pay (ShPP).

Changing your shared parental leave

When taking shared parental leave (SPL) each eligible parent has up to 3 opportunities to change or cancel the dates they have booked.

To change or cancel your SPL, you must give your manager 8 weeks of notice. You should complete the 'notice to cancel or vary shared parental leave' form and send it to your manager.

Notice to cancel or vary shared parental leave template - **see separate document.**

If your manager asks you to change your SPL

Your manager can ask you to change the dates of booked SPL. If you agree, this would not count as a notice to vary leave.

You do not have to agree to the change, and you must not be treated unfairly if you don't.

If your child is born early or prematurely

If your baby is born more than 8 weeks early, you do not need to give 8 weeks' notice to book or change your SPL dates. You should give notice to your manager as soon as possible. In these circumstances, if you change SPL dates that you've already booked, it will not count as one of your 3 notices to vary SPL.

If your child is born late and you or your partner are only planning to take compulsory maternity or adoption leave

By law, women must take at least 2 weeks of maternity/adoption leave immediately after childbirth. This is known as compulsory maternity or adoption leave. When you apply for SPL, you specify the date you want to end your maternity or adoption leave and switch to SPL.

If your baby is born late and you are still on compulsory maternity or adoption leave on the expected SPL start date, you must send a new 'Notice to End Maternity/Adoption Leave' to your manager and provide a new date to end your maternity/adoption leave.

See separate document

You must give your manager 8 weeks' notice, meaning you'll need to take at least 8 weeks of maternity or adoption leave before starting any SPL.

If you are a partner taking shared parental leave

If you have already given your manager a 'notice to take leave' form, you can still take SPL from the date of the child's birth if you had already requested to do so.

If you want to change the start date, send a completed 'notice to cancel or vary Shared Parental leave' form to your manager, giving them 8 weeks' notice.

See separate document

If your baby dies

If your child dies, you and your partner can still take the SPL that you've booked. You can also either:

- decide to take less SPL
- change discontinuous leave into 1 block of continuous leave

Your manager may ask for 8 weeks' notice before you return to work. You will not be able to book any new blocks of SPL and cannot request SPL after the death of your child.

You can still get maternity, paternity or adoption leave if you are the:

- birth parent
- mother
- parental order parent
- primary adopter

You and your partner may also be able to take compassionate leave and parental bereavement leave.

If the other parent dies

If you are eligible for SPL and the other parent dies, you can:

- still take SPL as planned

- transfer and use any SPL that the parent who died was due to take

If you want to book another block of SPL or change the dates of booked SPL, you do not need to give 8 weeks' notice but should inform your manager as soon as possible. Even if you have already made 3 'Notices to Book or Change SPL,' you can make one more.

You may also be eligible to take compassionate leave.

For further guidance on Shared Parental Leave please see www.acas.org.uk