

Paternity leave procedure

Paternity Leave

SCOPE:

This document is BT's procedure on paternity leave and has been agreed with CWU and Connect.

This document applies to all employees of BT plc and includes BT Fleet employees.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Line managers are responsible for considering requests for paternity leave, authorising leave and ensuring it is recorded in accordance with procedures laid out in this document.

PROCESS

An employee who becomes a father will be entitled to paternity leave. An adoptive father, secondary carer or the mother's husband or partner is entitled to the same paternity leave as a biological father.

Paternity Leave consists of two weeks at basic pay rate, plus any regular allowances during this period, (overtime is not included),. . There is an option for up to a further two weeks unpaid leave. The paid element must be taken in blocks of one week or two consecutive weeks. The unpaid element can be taken in single days or whole weeks. All paternity leave must be agreed with the line manager in advance of the birth or adoptive placement (except in cases of premature birth, when managers will be expected to exercise discretion to agree the paternity leave at short notice) and should normally be taken within 56 days of the birth or adoptive placement. Any period of unpaid leave will normally count towards service and pay progression.

Employees should advise their line manager of their intention of taking Paternity Leave by the 15th week before the baby is due or by the 7th day before the expected date of adoption. Any changes in the intended dates should be notified in advance.

If there are medical complications at, or immediately after the birth of a child, or domestic problems (e.g., other children to be cared for), employees should be allowed to take paid leave in line with the urgent domestic problems and nursing sick relative provisions.

Under the Employment Act 2002, employees who are the biological father of a child, or the mother's husband or partner, will have the statutory right to two weeks leave, provided that:

- they have been continuously employed by BT for 26 weeks prior to the 15th week before the baby is due,
- they are expected to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.

Process

The person requesting the leave should download and complete the [application form](#) then forward it to their line manager, preferably by e mail.

It is the line manager's responsibility to create a case and attach the [application form](#) and submit to Accenture HR Services. (ensure all periods of leave are recorded locally.)

To create a case the manager must log into the [BT People System](#) then select **Manager Self Service > Create a case**

Then click the link **Create Case on an Employee** choose the employee
Next complete the appropriate details using **special leave** as the category and **paternity**
as the speciality type.
Use the **Attach a File** button to attach the completed form.

For full terms and conditions relating to unpaid paternity leave see [unpaid special leave](#).

FORMS / STANDARD LETTERS:

The paternity leave application form can be found as a downloadable document to the left of this page.

FAQs:

Why do I need to notify Accenture?

Accenture HR Services need to be notified so that the leave can be recorded, PayGroup are notified to cease pay during any period of unpaid leave and BT can reclaim a portion of the Statutory Paternity Pay paid.

How are pensions and other benefits affected by the period of unpaid paternity leave? How about annual leave entitlement? Does unpaid paternity leave contribute to your time employed for BT with respect to the calculation of pensions and any possible leaver/redundancy arrangements?

Annual leave entitlement is not affected by short periods of special leave (i.e. less than a month). Similarly, any period of unpaid leave less than 4 weeks counts towards continuous service for the calculation of any leaver payments/redundancy. During any unpaid leave, pensionable service would be adjusted to take into account any periods of unpaid leave. See the special leave policy for further details about this under the section on unpaid leave.

Under the terms of my contract I am eligible for and am a member of the BT Healthcare Scheme. Can I add my new child to the scheme?

Yes. This would be deemed a lifestyle change and should be added to your cover as soon as possible but within the policy year of birth April-March. Email the name, date of birth and any change to cover to EmployeeBenefits.HRServices@Accenture.com who will arrange for your Choices form (where your level of company paid healthcare cover is maintained) to be opened so that you can make the changes on-line.

Will there be any affects on my sharesave/saveshare, directshare or allshare?

This will not affect your entitlement to allshare as your period of leave will count towards your continuous service. For saveshare, you will need to check whether your reduced pay for the month(s) containing the period of unpaid leave remains enough to cover your saveshare deductions and if not, either make a separate payment to the Halifax or accept that you will miss one/two months' contributions and that your maturity date will be deferred accordingly. On the question of directshare, the maximum which can be allocated in any month is 10% of your gross salary for that month - if your salary for the month(s) affected is not enough to allow this maximum deduction, you will need to reduce your contributions accordingly.

Will my Home Computing Agreement be affected during the period of unpaid paternity leave?

Unpaid leave of less than one month has no effect, as long as there is sufficient pay to make your salary reduction. If this is the case, your monthly salary sacrifice commitments will cease for the month(s) in question and the 36-month term of the agreement will be extended by the number of months affected.

Is Paternity Leave different to Parental Leave?

Yes. Parental leave is a separate policy and provision which allows working parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid parental leave to care for a child up to their 5th birthday. In addition, parents of children who were aged under the age of 5 on 15th December 1999, have until 31st March 2005 to take their parental leave. For more information on Parental Leave see the HR article on [Parental Leave](#).

LINKS / CONTACTS:

All enquiries regarding this document should initially be referred to your line manager.

Peopleline can also be contacted on 0800 731 4747 where an employee does not have on-line access. (Please remember that a charge will be made to your OUC for each call)