



HR SNAPSHOTS

FAMILY-FOCUSED UPDATES

Changes to Paternity Leave *Effective Date: 8th March 2024*

The Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which will come into force on 8th March and will apply only to children whose expected week of birth begins after 6th April, will allow fathers or partners to divide their statutory paternity leave into one-week blocks rather than taking it all at once.

Fathers and partners will be permitted to take leave at any time during the first year, rather than only the first eight weeks after birth or placement for adoption. Under current legislation, employees must notify the employer that they wish to take leave 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. However, the notice period necessary for each term of absence has been reduced to four weeks.

Statutory Paternity Pay will go up slightly in April 2024 in line with the usual Government statutory update, from £172.48 to £184.03 per week (or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings if this figure is less).

Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023 *Effective Date: 6th April 2024*

The Act expands the current laws protecting pregnant employees or those on, or returning from, maternity/adoption/shared parental leave, facing redundancy.

At the moment, employees on maternity/adoption/shared parental leave have enhanced protections in redundancy situations, including the right to be offered a suitable alternative vacancy over other employees at risk, if one is available.

From April 2024, the Act expands protection to include pregnant employees from the moment they notify their employer of their pregnancy, through to 18 months after childbirth.

TIP: *Seek professional advice before commencing a restructure/redundancy project, the financial risk is significant if you get this wrong and find yourself up against a discrimination claim.*

Carers Leave Act *Effective Date: 6th April 2024*

This Act will grant a new entitlement of one week of unpaid leave annually for employees who care for dependants with long-term needs. This right to leave will be available to all employees from day one of employment.

Long-term needs are defined as:

- Anyone with a condition that meets the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010
- Illness or injury (physical or mental) that requires or is likely to require care for more than 3 months
- Old age

TIP: Introduce a policy to cover this so that both managers and employees are clear on entitlements.