

Reference:	<b>Parental Bereavement Leave Policy</b>
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V1	July 2020

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Liverpool Hope University recognises that, while dealing with any bereavement is difficult, the death of a child is among the most devastating events that an employee can ever face.
- 1.2. This policy sets out our commitment to supporting bereaved parents through their grief by ensuring they can take parental bereavement leave.
- 1.3. The policy applies to employees who suffer the loss of a child under the age of 18 on or after 6 April 2020. This includes parents who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.
- 1.4. The University also recognises bereavement involving a partner and provides support in such circumstances in line with this policy.
- 1.5. This policy sets out:
  - statutory entitlements in relation to parental bereavement and related family leave; and
  - the University's enhanced provisions, including paid and discretionary leave arrangements.
  - The University's provision for Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (BPP)

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees of Liverpool Hope University.
- 2.2. It covers:
  - the death of a child under the age of 18;
  - stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy;
  - miscarriage or pregnancy loss before 24 weeks;
  - neonatal death;
  - circumstances involving the death of a partner connected to pregnancy or childbirth, including where statutory Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave may apply.
- 2.3. This policy should be read alongside relevant family leave and wellbeing policies.

### 3. Definitions

3.1. For the purposes of this policy the definitions are as outlined below:

- **Child:** A person under the age of 18.
- **Stillbirth:** Loss of a baby after 24 weeks of pregnancy.
- **Pregnancy loss:** Loss of a pregnancy before 24 weeks (including miscarriage).
- **Partner:** A spouse, civil partner or someone living in an enduring relationship.
- **Parent:** Includes biological, adoptive, intended parents (surrogacy), and those with parental responsibility.

### 4. Who can take parental bereavement leave

4.1. Whatever your length of service, you can take this type of leave if you are the parent of the child who has died, or the partner of the child's parent. In general, you can take this type of leave if you have parental responsibility for the child. This includes adoptive parents or the 'intended parent' – due to become the legal parent through surrogacy, in line with statutory provisions.

4.2. In circumstances where the birth mother or primary adopter dies, an eligible partner may be entitled to Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (BPP) in accordance with statutory provisions. Employees should contact HR for guidance.

4.3. If you have suffered a bereavement, but are unsure if you are entitled to parental bereavement leave, please contact your HR Manager for clarification.

### 5. What leave can a bereaved parent take?

5.1. You can take two weeks of parental bereavement leave. You can take the leave as:

- a single block of two weeks; or
- two separate blocks of one week at different times.

5.2. You cannot take the leave as individual days.

5.3. You can take the leave at the time(s) you choose within the 56 weeks after your bereavement. You might choose, for example, to take it at a particularly difficult time such as your child's birthday.

5.4. If you have lost more than one child, you have a separate entitlement to bereavement leave for each child who has passed away.

5.5. Where Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave applies, the employee may be entitled to take up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave in accordance with statutory provisions.

## **6. Notice to take parental bereavement leave**

6.1. If you need to take parental bereavement leave within the first 56 days after your bereavement, you can take the leave straight away. You do not have to provide any notice. Please let your line manager know no later than when you are due to start work on the first day on which you wish to take leave or, if that is not feasible, as soon as you can.

6.2. To take leave more than 56 days after your bereavement, please give your line manager at least one week's notice.

## **7. Changing your mind about taking parental bereavement leave**

7.1. You can cancel your planned leave and take it at a different time (within the 56 weeks after your bereavement). Where your planned leave was due to begin during the first 56 days after your bereavement, please let your line manager know you no longer wish to take it before your normal start time on the first day of the planned leave.

7.2. Where your leave was due to begin more than 56 days after your bereavement, please let your line manager know at least one week in advance that you wish to cancel it.

7.3. You cannot cancel any week of parental bereavement leave that has already begun.

## **8. Pay during parental bereavement leave**

8.1. The University recognises the need to provide bereaved parents with as much support as possible, and so we will continue to pay your normal pay during your 2 weeks of Parental Bereavement Leave.

8.2. Where Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave applies, the employee may be entitled to take up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave in accordance with statutory provisions.

## **9. Rights during parental bereavement leave**

9.1. During the period of Leave, the member of staff is entitled to the benefit of all those contractual terms that would have been implemented had they not been absent.

9.2. Contributions will continue to the pension if you are on paid leave. No contributions to your pension will be made when you receive no pay. If you are contributing to the pension scheme, then the paid period of your leave will count as reckonable service for the purpose of assessing pension benefits on retirement. Unpaid periods do not count as reckonable service. However, you do have the option to buy back this service if you wish at a rate based on your normal monthly contributions. You should contact the Payroll Department for further details if you wish to pursue this option.

9.3. Annual leave will continue to accrue throughout

## **10. Returning to work after parental bereavement leave**

10.1. When you return to work after some time on parental bereavement leave, you generally have the right to return to the same job.

10.2. However, a slightly different rule applies if you return from time on bereavement leave that follows on immediately from some maternity, adoption, paternity leave or shared parental leave (taken in relation to the child who has passed away), and your total time on leave is more than 26 weeks.

10.3. In these circumstances, you have the right to return to the same job, unless this is not reasonably practical - in which case you have the right to return to a suitable and appropriate job on the same terms and conditions.

10.4. This rule also applies if your leave includes more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave (taken in relation to any child), regardless of the total length of the leave.

10.5. If you are taking parental bereavement leave, but are unsure where you stand on your return, please contact your HR Manager for clarification.

## **11. Data protection**

11.1. When dealing with parental bereavement leave, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with our Staff Guidance on Data Protection. In particular, we will record only the personal information required and keep the information only for as long as necessary.