

PARENTAL LEAVE

HR 31 (c)

DEFINITION

Parental leave is unpaid time off work to care for a child or to make arrangements for a child's welfare. The leave may be used simply to enable parents to spend more time with young children.

SCOPE

- Parental Leave is available to all employees (both mothers and fathers) who have had a baby or adopted a child on or after 15 December 1999 and who have completed one year's continuous service with the channel by the time they want to take their leave.
- Parental Leave is also available to employees who had a baby or adopted a child between 15 December 1994 and 14 December 1999 and who have completed one year's continuous service either with Channel 4 or a previous employer during 15 December 1998 and 9 January 2002.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Parental Leave Entitlement

Parents can take up to 13 weeks leave in total per child. A parent of twins will therefore be entitled to 26 weeks' parental leave.

Parents of disabled children can take up to 18 weeks in total. A disabled child is one for whom disability living allowance has been awarded.

For an overview of parental leave entitlements, please refer to the [table](#) at the end of this document.

Leave Arrangements

Leave can be taken in blocks. The minimum block is 1 week; the maximum block is 4 weeks. A maximum of 4 weeks' leave can be taken in any one year. For part-time employees, if a typical working week is, for example 3 days, this will count as one week for parental leave purposes.

Parents of disabled children can take leave in blocks or multiples of one day, up to the child's 18th birthday.

Notification Requirements

Parental leave can be taken at any time (subject to a minimum of 21 days' notice).

Channel 4 may postpone the leave for up to 6 months where absence will cause severe disruption. However, leave cannot be postponed if a parent wants to take it immediately after the birth of a child or if an adoptive parent wishes to take it immediately after placement for adoption. New fathers can also have 2 weeks paid leave in addition to their parental leave entitlement. See [Paternity Leave](#).

Limitations

Parents of children born on or after 15 December 1999 can take the leave up until the child's fifth birthday, or in the case of adoption until the child's 18th birthday if that comes sooner.

Parents of children born between 15 December 1994 and 14 December 1999 can take the leave up until **31 March 2005**, or in the case of adoption, until the child's 18th birthday if that is sooner.

Benefits

All contractual benefits continue to apply as normal during parental leave except for salary and pension.

Pension

During unpaid leave of absence, deductions into the pension scheme will cease as there is no salary from which they can be taken. This absence will not count towards pensionable service unless individuals choose to pay back missed contributions upon their return to work. Individuals are given up to 6 months to make any back payments. Please notify HR of your intentions by completing the [Parental Leave Request Form](#). This period will then be credited as pensionable service in full for the purposes of calculating your benefits.

Other references: [Maternity Leave](#)
[Maternity Leave - Frequently asked questions](#)
[Paternity Leave](#)
[Work Life Balance](#)

Parental Leave Entitlements– Quick reference

Date of birth or adoption		
	On or after 15 December 1999*	Between 15 December 1994 - 14 December 1999**
Born	13 weeks' parental leave to be taken by child's 5 th birthday	13 weeks' parental leave to be taken by 31 March 2005
Born disabled	18 weeks' parental leave to be taken by child's 18 th birthday	18 weeks' parental leave to be taken by child's 18 th birthday
Adopted	13 weeks' parental leave to be taken by 5 th anniversary of the date of placement for adoption (or child's 18 th birthday if that is sooner)	13 weeks' parental leave to be taken by 31 March 2005 (or child's 18 th birthday if that is sooner)

*Employees must have 1 year's qualifying service with the channel to be eligible for this leave.

**Employees must have one year's continuous service with Channel 4 or a previous employer between 15th December 1998 and 9th January 2002 to be eligible for this leave.

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