

# **Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church (BSBC)**

## **Support for Dependents Policy**

### **Maternity Leave**

Pregnant employees should be given paid time off work to attend appointments for antenatal care.

A subsequent period of 26 weeks' additional maternity leave following the initial period of 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave is now available to all employees irrespective of length of service.

Statutory maternity pay is payable at the rate of 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings for the first six weeks and at a flat rate of £140.98 (or 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings if that is lower) for up to 33 further weeks.

In order to claim maternity pay an employee must have:

- 26 weeks' continuous service up to and including the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth;
- Become pregnant and have reached (or given birth) before reaching the start of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth;
- Have started a period of maternity leave
- Average weekly earnings for the 8 weeks up to and including the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth equal to at least the lower earnings limit for the payment of primary class one national insurance contributions, currently £113.
- Given 28 days' notice to her employer of the date when she expects liability for statutory maternity pay to begin or if 28 days' notice was not reasonably practicable, such lesser notice as was practicable
- Produced medical evidence of the pregnancy and of the expected week of childbirth.

### **Paternity Leave**

Fathers who have completed 26 weeks' continuous service ending with the week preceding the fourteenth week before the expected week of childbirth may take two weeks' paternity leave within 56 days of the child's birth. The father should be paid statutory paternity pay at the rate of £140.98 per week (or 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings if that is lower). Fathers must give their employer 28 days' notice of their intention to take paternity leave.

### **Shared Parental Leave**

Employees may be entitled to Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) where they are the parents of children born or adopted after 5 April 2015.

Employees can start SPL if they're eligible and they or their partner end their maternity or adoption leave or pay early. The remaining leave will be available as SPL. The remaining pay may be available as ShPP. (ShPP is paid at the same rate as SMP). Sometimes only one parent in a couple will be eligible to get Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). This means that they can't share the leave.

Eligible employees can take SPL in up to 3 separate blocks. They can also share the leave with their partner if they're also eligible.

Parents can choose how much of the SPL each of them will take. For example, a mother could end her maternity leave after 12 weeks, leaving 40 weeks (of the total 52 week entitlement) available for SPL. If both the mother and her partner are eligible, they can share the 40 weeks. They can take the leave at the same time or separately.

SPL and ShPP must be taken between the baby's birth and first birthday (or within 1 year of adoption).

To qualify for SPL, the child's mother (or adoptive parent) must be eligible for either maternity leave or pay, Maternity Allowance or adoption leave or pay Your employee must also:

- have worked for you continuously for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the due date (or date they are matched with their adopted child)
- still be employed by you while they take SPL
- give you the correct notice including a declaration that their partner meets the employment and income requirements which allow your employee to get SPL

### **Adoptive Parents**

Parents who adopt a child will be entitled to one year's adoption leave commencing either on the date on which the child is placed for adoption or on a date no more than 14 days before the expected date of placement.

To be eligible for adoption leave, a parent must have completed 26 weeks' service by the time they are matched with a child. Where a couple jointly adopt, only one of them will be entitled to take adoption leave but the other parent will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave.

The employee must give the employer notice of their intention to take adoption leave within seven days of being notified of having been matched with a child.

Statutory adoption pay should be paid for 39 weeks at the same flat rate (currently £140.98 or 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings if that is lower) as statutory maternity pay. There are no specific rights for foster parents.

### **Parental Leave**

Employees with at least one year's continuous service are entitled to take unpaid parental (called 'Ordinary Parental Leave') for the purpose of caring for the child if they are the parent of a child who is under 18 years old, or if they have adopted a child under the age of 18.

Employees may take a maximum of 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave. The employee's right to take leave lasts until a child's 18th birthday.

Ordinary parental leave is available for each child. If an employee has, for example, two children under the age of 18, he or she may take 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave in respect of each of those children. Leave can be taken in blocks or multiples of one week (unless the child has a disability in which case leave may be taken in blocks of one day) and employees may be required to give notice of their intention to take leave.

Employees may only take four weeks' leave in any twelve-month period and leave may be postponed by the Church for up to six months where the work of the Church

would be unduly disrupted. However, leave cannot be postponed when the employee gives notice to take it immediately after the time the child is born or is placed with the family for adoption.

### **Time Off for Dependents**

Employees are entitled to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off in order to take action which is necessary:

- (a) to provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted;
- (b) to make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured;
- (c) in consequence of the death of a dependant;
- (d) because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of the dependant; or
- (e) to deal with an incident which involves a child of the employee and which occurs unexpectedly in a period during which no educational establishment which the child attends is responsible for him.

This right does not arise unless the employee informs the Church of the reason for their absence as soon as reasonably practicable and tells the Church how long they expect to be absent.

Please note that this is intended as short term absence to enable other care arrangements to be made.

For these purposes a dependant means a spouse, a child, a parent, or a person who lives in the same household as the employee, otherwise than by being his employee, tenant, lodger or boarder. For the purposes of (a) and (b) above dependant also includes any person who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance on an occasion when the person falls ill or is injured or assaulted or to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury. For the purpose of (b) above dependent includes any person who reasonably relies on the employee to make arrangements for the provision of care.

**This policy was adopted by the Trustees on 14th October 2019 and will be reviewed every three years.**