



## **Parental rights and flexible working practices**

This factsheet aims to provide information on practices that should be used to support the changing workforce in terms of parental and caring arrangements.

### **Parental rights**

Maternity leave, pay and benefits are required to be given by employers for 26 weeks if the employee has served 26 weeks. In addition, employers must ensure an employee's health and safety throughout the pregnancy of the employee and for 26 weeks after childbirth. For further information go to [www.maternityalliance.org.uk](http://www.maternityalliance.org.uk)

Paternity leave and pay are required to be given by employers for 2 weeks if the employee has served 26 weeks.

Adoption leave and pay are required to be given by employers for 26 weeks if the employee has served 26 weeks.

Employees are entitled to 13 weeks of unpaid parental leave if the employee has served one year and if they give the required 21 days notice.

### **Time off for dependents**

All employees have a legal right to take a reasonable period of time off of work to deal with an emergency concerning dependants. Employees have a right not to be dismissed or victimised for exercising their right to time off.

### **Right to request flexible working**

Parents of children have the right to request flexible working arrangements to care for children. Flexible working includes flexitime, working from home, term-time only working, or job sharing.

Train managers to understand the organisation's obligations and their own responsibilities in supporting their staff.

Employers can demonstrate flexible working practices by offering job sharing, career breaks, voluntary reduced time, term-time working, and support with childcare.

If you offer more generous terms, make sure you offer them to all employees equally, to avoid possible discrimination.

Incentives for employers to institute enhanced parental rights and flexible working practices include:

Greater applicant pools

Less costs spent on recruitment

Satisfied employees

Retention of employees

Increased productivity

Reduced absenteeism

Publicise benefits so that employees know what is available to them and build a culture of trust so that employees have confidence in raising any problems with responsibilities.

**This information is taken from the publication *The Good Employment Guide (2005)*.  
Find out more at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications)**

To find out more on the minimum requirements on leave or flexible working arrangements, please visit the following websites:

1) Acas: Provides information relevant to all new and existing employers  
[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

2) askNCVO: NCVO provides free information, signposting and services for trustees, staff and volunteers  
[www.askncvo.org.uk](http://www.askncvo.org.uk)

3) Department of Trade and Industry (Dti): For various employment matters  
[www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk)

4) Health and Safety Executive (HSE): For information around health and safety and the law  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

5) HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC): Provides information for employers on issues including tax credits and child benefits.  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

6) Working Families: Provide information for employers on flexible working practices and case studies  
[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)