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Neonatal Leave and Pay



Key information

Effective date:
Applies to babies born on or after **6th April 2025**

What is Neonatal Leave and Pay?

- Provides up to **12 weeks of paid leave** for parents of babies admitted to neonatal care **within 28 days of birth**.
- Leave is in **addition** to other family leave entitlements (e.g., maternity/paternity leave).
- **Day-one right** – no minimum service required for leave.

Eligibility Neonatal Care Leave (NCL)

- Must be an **employee.**
- Baby must be **born on or after 6th April 2025.**
- Parent, intended parent (surrogacy), or partner responsible for raising the child.
- Baby **must be in neonatal care for at least 7 continuous days.**
- Leave must be taken in **weekly blocks** within **68 weeks of birth.**

Eligibility for Neonatal Care Pay (NCP)

- **Employed for at least 26 weeks** by the 15th week before the baby's due date.
- Earns at least **£123 per week** (as of April 2024-25).
- **Paid at a flat rate or 90% of average weekly earnings** (whichever is lower).
- Payable for a **maximum of 12 weeks** within **68 weeks of birth.**

How & When Can Leave Be Taken?

- Leave can be taken after day 8 of neonatal care.
- Must be taken within 68 weeks of birth.

- **Two types of leave:**
  - **Tier 1**: Taken while baby is still in neonatal care (in weekly blocks).
  - **Tier 2:** Taken after neonatal care ends (in one continuous block).

Notice Periods

- **Tier 1 Leave:** Notify your employer before starting leave (as soon as practicable).

- **Tier 2 Leave**: 1 week of leave: At least 15 days' notice.

- **2+ weeks of leave:** At least 28 days' notice.

Your Rights During and After Leave

- **Job Protection:** You are entitled to return to your same job or a suitable alternative.
- **Redundancy Protection:** Protection during leave.
- If you take **6+ weeks of leave**, enhanced redundancy protection applies for **18 months**.
- **Employment Terms:** All contractual rights (except pay) continue, including holiday accrual.

For more details, visit: www.workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/neonatal-leave-and-pay