

## Family Leave Policy

### 1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Six Company is committed to helping employees with child-caring responsibilities to balance work and family life. It will do this by following consistent, fair and transparent processes while ensuring that the interests of Six Company are met.

Six Company recognises that there are a diverse range of family formations and this policy has endeavoured to use inclusive language throughout in an attempt to reflect this diversity. The language of 'maternity' and 'paternity' leave reflects government policy, and Six Company recognises that parents may not identify with these terms. Similarly, for ease of understanding, the policy uses the term 'mother' to describe the birthing parent, but recognises that some birthing parents do not identify with this term.

This policy is designed to help employees understand their rights in the following areas:

- When you are pregnant, on maternity leave and on your return to work after your baby is born.
- Paternity leave when your partner gives birth or adopts a child (and you are not taking adoption leave).
- If you are an adoptive parent wanting to take adoption leave from work. Shared Parental Leave.
- Entitlement as a mother or father to take time off from work to look after your child.

### 2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

2.1 To help Line Managers understand employees' rights to maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave and ensure that there is a consistent and fair approach to expectant mothers and parents upon their return to work.

2.2 The policy will provide guidance to Line Managers and employees to ensure a safe working and continuation of duties during pregnancy and return to work where necessary.

2.3 This policy applies to all staff that are eligible for maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave, who are employed under a contract of employment with the organisation.

2.4 This policy does not apply to independent contractors and agency workers working for the organisation under a contract for services.

### 3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles	Responsibilities
Human Resources	Human resources will provide support and advice on all aspects of the application of this policy and process.
Line Managers	<p>It is the responsibility of Line Managers to ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are familiar with this policy and their responsibilities within this process.</li> <li>● Communicate appropriately with employees.</li> <li>● Deal with actions in a timely manner. Maintain and retain accurate records in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.</li> <li>● Maintain confidentiality at all times.</li> <li>● Attend training on policy updates and/or legislation changes.</li> </ul>
Employees	<p>Employees are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicating appropriately with their Line Manager when absent from</li> </ul>

	<p>work as outlined in the Sickness Absence Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operating in the use of these procedures. Attending review meetings and return-to-work meetings with the appropriate manager</li> </ul>
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## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML)	The first 26 weeks of maternity leave.
Additional Maternity Leave (AML)	The last 26 weeks of maternity leave.
Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)	An employee benefit, part of the provision of parental leave in the UK, which is paid for up to 39 weeks.
Paternity Leave (PL)	A period of absence from work granted to a father after or shortly before the birth of his child.
Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)	An employee benefit, part of the provision of parental leave in the UK. It is paid for either one or two consecutive weeks at 90% of your average weekly earnings or at Government fixed amount whichever is lower.
Shared Parental Leave (SPL)	Enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after

	their child is born or placed for adoption.
Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)	The eligible couple is entitled to shared parental leave in the UK, which is paid for up to 39 weeks.
Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL)	The first 26 weeks of adoption leave.
Additional Adoption Leave (AAL)	The last 26 weeks of adoption leave
Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)	An employee benefit, part of the provision of parental leave in the UK. It is paid the same as the statutory maternity pay
Parental Leave	Time off that employees who are parents can take to spend time with their child up until the child's 18th birthday. It is usually unpaid and can last up to 18 weeks
Keeping in Touch Days (KIT)	Employees can work up to ten days during their maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave without their leave coming to an end. This will be remunerated up on their return to employment.
Shared Parental Leave in Touch Days (SPLIT)	Employees can work up to 20 days during shared parental leave without it coming to an end. This is in addition to the ten KIT days.
Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)	This is the week calculated by a GP or Midwife as

	the expected date of the birth of the child. In calculating an expectant mother's length of service and entitlement to maternity leave and pay, the week is counted backwards from the EWC. Any length of service requirement must be met by the 15th week before EWC.
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## **5.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

5.1 The law relating to parental rights is complex and where possible this policy has simplified the process for all employees.

5.2 Employees and Line Managers should seek further guidance from the HR Team if further information is required.

## **6. PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY PROVISIONS**

6.1 Informing us of your pregnancy

6.1.1 We encourage you to tell us about your pregnancy as soon as you feel comfortable in doing so but you must tell your Line Manager by the start of your "qualifying date"(15th week before EWC). This is the latest date you can tell us that you plan to take maternity leave.

## 6.2 Taking time off during pregnancy

6.2.1 You are entitled to reasonable paid time off to attend antenatal care appointments. This includes appointments with your doctor, midwife or any hospital or other appointments recommended by a health professional that are connected to your pregnancy.

## 6.4 Maternity Pay

6.4.1 To qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay you must:

- Have been continuously employed by Six Company Ltd or 26 or more weeks by the “qualifying date”. Quality date is the 15th week before EWC.
- Have stopped working for reasons connected to your pregnancy or the pregnancy itself.
- Be pregnant or have had the baby by the 29th week of pregnancy.
- Not have average earnings below the lower earnings limit set by the Government.
- Have given at least 28 days’ notice of the date you expect to start receiving Statutory Maternity Pay (usually the day you wish to start your maternity leave).
- Have supplied a certificate (usually a MATB1) from a midwife or doctor, confirming the date of your expected week of childbirth.

6.4.2 Statutory Maternity Pay is payable for 39 weeks in total. You will receive your Statutory Maternity Pay during the whole period of your Ordinary Maternity Leave and for the first 13 weeks of your Additional Maternity Leave.

6.4.3 Statutory Maternity Pay is paid at 90% of your average weekly earnings for the first six weeks of your maternity leave and will then reduce to the statutory lower amount for the remaining 33 weeks. This amount is fixed each year by the Government.

6.4.4 Statutory Maternity Pay replaces your usual salary whilst you are on maternity leave. Should you return to work before the end of the 39- week period, SMP will cease and you will return to your normal salary.

6.4.5 Statutory Maternity Pay is subject to normal tax and national insurance deductions.

## **7. PATERNITY LEAVE PROVISION**

### 7.1 Informing us of your need for Paternity Leave

7.1.1 We encourage all employees to inform their Line Managers, as soon as they feel comfortable to do so, of their need for Paternity Leave.

7.1.2 If you require Paternity Leave following the birth of your child you must provide us with the following information:

- When the baby is expected to be born.
- When you want your paternity leave to start.
- Whether you want to take one or two weeks' leave.

7.1.3 You must provide confirmation of 28 days' notice before leave is taken

7.1.4 If you require Paternity Leave following the matching of a child for adoption you must confirm the following:

- The date of placement for adoption.

- When you want adoption related paternity leave to start.
- Whether you want one or two weeks' leave.

7.1.5 You must provide notification of your need for adoption related paternity leave no later than seven days after receiving notification that a child is being placed for adoption.

## 7.2 Length of Paternity Leave

7.2.1 Whether taking paternity leave following the birth of your child or following the placement of a child for adoption, you are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave.

7.2.2 Leave can be taken as one block of two weeks or two separate one week blocks

7.2.3 You can take the leave either as single weeks or two consecutive weeks but you cannot take individual days.

## 7.3 Statutory Paternity Pay

7.3.1 If you meet the qualifying conditions for Paternity Leave you will be entitled to Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP). In addition to the conditions for Paternity Leave your average earnings must not be below the lower earnings limit that is set by the Government in order to gain your Statutory Paternity Pay. Payroll or HR will inform you if your earnings fall below this standard.

7.3.2 In order to receive your Statutory Paternity Pay you must confirm the following:  
For paternity pay relating to the birth of a child:



- Whether you want to receive SPP for one or two weeks and when you want this to commence.
- That you are the baby's biological father or mother's partner and that you will have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- That you will care for the child or the child's mother whilst receiving SPP. For paternity pay relating to the adoption of a child:
  - Whether you want to receive SPP for one or two weeks and when you want this to start.
  - That you are married to or are the partner of the child's adopter and that you will have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
  - That you will care for the child or the child's adopter whilst receiving SPP.
  - That you are not receiving Statutory Adoption Pay.

7.3.3 The amount of SPP is set by the Government each year and will be paid via normal payroll processes. SPP is subject to normal tax and National Insurance deductions and replaces your salary for the period of Paternity Leave.

7.3.4 If you come back to work before the end of your Paternity Leave period, SPP will stop and your usual salary will begin again.

## **8.0 SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE**

### 8.1 What is Shared Parental Leave?

8.1.1 Shared Parental Leave provides parents and adopters to consider the best arrangements to care for their child during the child's first year by giving parents the opportunity to split leave periods between them during the course of the year.

8.1.2 The amount of leave available is calculated using the mother's/adopter's entitlement to Maternity/Adoption Leave, which allows them to take up to 52 weeks leave following the birth of their baby or placement of their child.

8.1.3 Unlike Maternity and Adoption Leave, eligible employees are able to stop and start their Shared Parental Leave and return to work between periods of leave.

## 8.2 Eligibility for Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

8.2.1 To qualify for shared parental leave you must share responsibility for raising the child at the time of birth or adoption with the other birth parent or adopter or your partner (married, civil partner or co-habiting).

8.2.2 The mother or primary adopter must be eligible for statutory maternity pay or leave, adoption pay or leave, or maternity allowance.

8.2.3 To qualify for shared parental leave you must also be an employee with a minimum of 26 weeks' service with your employer by the end of the 15th week before the due date or matching date for adoption and meet the minimum earnings threshold. For more detail and to check whether you are eligible for the statutory rights visit [Gov.uk eligibility checker](#).

## 8.3 Shared Parental Leave

8.3.1 Mothers can end their maternity leave after two weeks and split up to 50 weeks of shared parental leave with partners, anyway they like.

- For example, both parents take 25 weeks at the same time, Mother takes 44 weeks, Partner takes the first 6 weeks at the same time, Mother takes the first 12 weeks, and then Partner takes the remaining 38 weeks.

8.3.2 Shared Parental Leave can start on any day of the week but can only be taken in complete weeks i.e. Tuesday to Tuesday.

8.3.3 SPL can be taken using three separate booking notices to allow parents the opportunity to be flexible with their arrangements.

8.3.4 The leave can also be taken by the partner whilst the mother or adopter is still on Maternity or Adoption Leave provided that they have reduced their entitlement to their Maternity or Adoption Leave.

## 8.4 Statutory Shared Parental Pay

8.4.1 Should a mother or adopter qualify for Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay or the Maternity Allowance and do not wish to take the full 39 weeks of this pay entitlement, the funds could become available for Shared Parental Pay.

8.4.2 Shared Parental Pay is paid at the same rate as Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay.

8.4.3 To qualify for Shared Parental Pay the mother or adopter must:

- Meet the 'Continuity of Employment Test'.
- Have earned above the 'Lower Earnings Limit' leading up to and including the 15th week before the child's due/matching date.

- Still be employed by the same employer at the start of the first period of Shared Parental Leave. The partner must:
- Meet the ‘Employment and Earnings Test’.

Continuity of Employment Test	Employment and Earnings Test
The individual has worked for the same employer for at least 26 weeks at the 25 <sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy or 15 weeks before the placement of the adoptive child and is still working for the same employer at the start of the leave period.	In the 66 weeks leading up to the baby’s expected due date or matching date the person has worked for at least 26 weeks and earned an average of at least £30 a week in any 13 weeks.

8.4.4 If the employment of either the partner or the mother/adopter comes to an end while they are still entitled to some Shared Parental Pay then any remaining weeks will usually remain payable unless they start working somewhere else.

## 8.5 Continuous or Discontinuous Leave

8.5.1 Shared Parental Leave can either be booked in ‘continuous’ blocks of leave or multiple ‘discontinuous’ blocks of leave.

8.5.2 A continuous block of leave means taking an unbroken period of leave.

8.5.3 A discontinuous block of leave means asking for leave over a set period with breaks in between the leave dates.

8.5.4 Your Line Manager must discuss your leave requests within 14 calendar days of the submission to them.

8.5.5 All staff are encouraged to discuss the options for Shared Parental Leave with their Line Manager as soon as practicably possible to ensure that they are mutually agreeable for the individual and for the organisation. Further guidance is available by contacting the HR Team.

## 8.6 Informing Us of Your Intention to Take Shared Parental Leave

8.6.1 Provided that you are eligible for Shared Parental Leave we encourage all staff to inform their Line Managers of their intentions to take Shared Parental Leave as soon as is practicably possible.

8.6.2 As Shared Parental Leave could involve separate organisations across different industries, the company needs certain information to ensure that the process is being applied appropriately.

## 8.7 Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) Days

8.7.1 You can work up to 20 days during Shared Parental Leave without bringing the leave period to an end. These days are optional.

8.7.2 The 20 SPLIT days are in addition to the ten KIT days already available to those on Maternity or Adoption Leave.

8.7.3 You will be paid for any SPLIT days when you return to work. The days will be paid at your normal hourly rate minus any Shared Parental Pay you may have received.

## **9.0 ADOPTION LEAVE PROVISIONS**

### 9.1 Informing us of your adoption

9.1.1 We encourage employees who are looking to adopt to let your Line Manager know as soon as you feel comfortable in doing so.

9.1.2 You must notify your Line Manager within seven days of being told by your adoption agency that you have been matched with a child or as soon as is practicably possible.

9.1.3 You will need to advise your Line Manager of the following:

- When the child is expected to be placed with you.
- When you want your adoption leave to start.

### 9.2 Adoption Appointments

9.2.1 You are entitled to take paid time off for up to five adoption appointments in line with the statutory guidance.

### 9.3 Adoption Leave

9.3.1 You are entitled to 52 weeks' adoption leave from the first day of your employment with Six Company, provided that you meet the eligibility criteria listed below:

- You are newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency.
- You are a member of a couple jointly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency. You have notified the agency that you are accepting the placement and have agreed a date

for it to start. Your spouse or partner will not be taking adoption leave with their employer (although they may be entitled to take paternity leave).

9.3.2 Adoption leave is split into 26 weeks' Ordinary Adoption Leave and 26 weeks' Additional Adoption Leave.

9.3.3 You are not eligible for adoption leave or pay if you already have caring responsibilities for the child e.g. as step parent or foster carer.

9.3.4 You can start your adoption leave on the day that the child is placed with you or 14 days before the date you expect the child to be placed with you.

## 9.4 Adoption Pay

9.4.1 In order to be eligible for and to receive your Statutory Adoption pay you must meet all the criteria set out in Section 6.3.1 and in addition confirm the following:

That your average earnings are not below the lower earnings limit set by the Government. Your name and address.

That you intend to take statutory adoption pay and not paternity pay.

9.4.2 You must notify your Line Manager at least 28 days before you want your Statutory Adoption Pay to start.

9.4.3 The provision of Statutory Adoption Pay is the same as detailed in section 6.4.3 to 6.4.6 for Statutory Maternity Pay.

## 9.5 Disruption to Adoption Leave

### 9.5.1 If during Ordinary Adoption Leave or Additional Adoption Leave:

- The adoption agency informs you that the child will no longer be matched with you; or
- The child's placement with you ends, then your adoption leave will end eight weeks after the end of the week in which the disruption took place or the end of your Statutory Adoption Pay if this date is sooner.
- Your right to Statutory Adoption Pay will also end at the same time.

9.5.2 If during Ordinary Adoption Leave or Additional Adoption Leave, the child dies, you will be entitled to the same amount of adoption leave and occupational adoption pay as if your baby was born alive.

## **10. PARENTAL LEAVE**

### 10.1 What is Parental Leave?

10.1.1 Parental Leave enable parents to take unpaid leave from work to look after their children's welfare.

10.1.2 You have to have worked with Six Company continuously for 12 months before you are eligible to request Parental Leave. Your child/ren also have to be under 18 years of age and you must have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child/ren.

10.1.3 You can take up to 18 weeks' Parental Leave for each eligible child up to their 18th birthday. The 18-week entitlement does not start again if you move employment.



10.1.4 Parental Leave must be taken in blocks of one week up to a maximum of four weeks in any 12-month period. If your child is disabled you can take your Parental Leave in single days.

10.1.5 Your terms and conditions of employment will remain unchanged during a period of Parental Leave and you are entitled to return to the same job after a period of four weeks' leave or less.

## **11. TIME OFF FOR DEPENDANTS**

11.1 You are eligible to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to assist or make care arrangements for dependants.

11.2 You must inform your line manager of the reason for your absence and how long you think you'll require as soon is practicably possible. Time off under this section is considered to be no more than 1 or 2 days in most cases.

11.3 You may use this right to take reasonable cases where there is unexpected disruption to your child/children's care arrangements. However, this is not to be used as a mechanism to seek time off to take care of your child/children where childcare has not been arranged.

# SIX COMPANY

	<b>Maternity</b>	<b>Adoptive</b>	<b>Shared Parental Leave</b>	<b>Paternity</b>	<b>Parental Leave</b>	<b>Parental Bereavement Leave</b>
<b>Leave</b>	26 weeks Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) 26 weeks Additional Maternity Leave (AML)	26 weeks Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) 26 weeks Additional Adoption Leave (AAL)	Dependent on eligibility*	2 weeks	18 weeks	2 weeks
<b>Statutory Pay</b>	39 weeks Six weeks 90% 33 weeks lower rate of Statutory Maternity Pay	52 weeks 26 weeks Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) 26 weeks Additional Adoption Leave (AAL) (13 weeks Statutory Adoptive Pay (SAP) rate + 13 weeks unpaid)	Maximum 39 weeks Shared Parental Pay (ShPP rate)	Two weeks Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP rate)	18 weeks unpaid	Two Weeks at either £151.20 a week or 90% of average earnings (whichever is lower)
<b>Time off for appointments</b>	Two paid antenatal	Two paid adoptive Four days adoptive leave				
<b>Keep in touch days (KIT)</b>	10 days	10 days	Up to 20 days			

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