



Staff Handbook

Schedule 11 - Time off for Adoption Appointments

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Schedule 11

Time Off for Adoption Appointments Policy

1. **About this policy**

- 1.1 This policy outlines the statutory right to take time off to attend adoption appointments.
- 1.2 This policy applies to employees and agency workers. It does not apply to self-employed contractors.
- 1.3 If you are an agency worker, the rights set out in this policy only apply to you once you have worked in the same role with us for at least 12 continuous weeks (which may include more than one assignment). For these purposes we will ignore any breaks due to holiday or other leave to which you are entitled, breaks due to industrial action, breaks of up to 28 weeks in cases of sickness or jury service, and breaks of up to six weeks for any other reason. We will treat breaks due to pregnancy or childbirth up to 26 weeks after birth, and any statutory maternity, paternity or adoption leave, as time worked.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. **Time off for an adoption appointment**

- 2.1 An adoption appointment is an appointment arranged by an adoption agency (or at the agency's request) for you to have contact with a child who is to be placed with you for adoption, or for any other purpose related to the adoption.
- 2.2 You may take time off to attend an adoption appointment once the agency has notified you that a child is to be placed with you for adoption but before the child is actually placed with you.

3. **If you are adopting a child with another person**

- 3.1 Where you and your partner are adopting a child, you must decide between you who will be treated as the primary adopter and who will be treated as the secondary adopter for the purposes of time off. You must tell us your decision the first time you request time off for an adoption appointment. This will affect how much time you can take off and whether it is paid.
- 3.2 You would usually choose to be the primary adopter if you intend to take adoption leave when the child is placed with you. You would not be able to take paternity leave if you have elected to be the primary adopter.
- 3.3 You would usually choose to be the secondary adopter if you intend to take paternity leave when the child is placed with you, although you may be able to take adoption leave if your partner is not taking it.

4. **If you are adopting a child alone**

If you are adopting a child alone, you are treated as the primary adopter.

5. **If you are adopting more than one child**

If the agency is placing more than one child with you as part of the same arrangement, this is treated as one adoption and will not increase the number of appointments you can take time off to attend. Any time off under this policy must be taken before the first child is placed with you.

6. **Amount of time off**

- 6.1 If you are adopting on your own or have elected to be the primary adopter, you may take paid time off to attend an adoption appointment on up to five occasions in relation to any particular adoption.
- 6.2 If you are the secondary adopter, you may take paid time off to attend an adoption appointment on up to two occasions only.
- 6.3 You must not take more than six and a half hours off for each appointment, including travel and waiting time.
- 7. **How to book time off**
 - 7.1 Please give us as much notice of the appointment as possible. You must provide HR with a signed statement or an email confirming:
 - (a) The date and time of the appointment.
 - (b) That the appointment has been arranged or requested by the adoption agency.
 - (c) Whether you are adopting a child alone or jointly with another person.
 - (d) If you are adopting with another person, whether you are electing to take paid or unpaid time off.
 - 7.2 If you are an agency worker you may have to notify your agency as well. You should check with the agency.
 - 7.3 We may sometimes ask you to try and rearrange an appointment where it is reasonable to do so. In exceptional circumstances we reserve the right to refuse a request for a particular appointment but we will not do so without good reason.