

## Neonatal Leave and Pay

Welcoming a new baby into the world is an exciting yet challenging time, especially if medical complications arise. Neonatal leave is designed to support you during this critical time, by providing additional leave from work, to care for a baby who requires specialist medical attention.

If your newborn is admitted to a neonatal unit, this leave ensures you have the flexibility and financial security to be by their side without the added stress of work commitments. Whether you are navigating unexpected hospital stays or adjusting to life at home, neonatal leave offers you the necessary time to spend with your family.

The provisions in this policy are available to all staff regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected characteristic.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment. The university reserves the right to amend the terms of this policy when required.

This policy applies to employees living and working in the UK, if you have an approved arrangement to work abroad, please contact [hr@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcl.ac.uk) to understand the provisions available to you.

Managers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy.

## Essential Information

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Neonatal Leave and Neonatal Pay are separate entitlements.

### Neonatal Leave

If your child is admitted into neonatal care, on or after 1 April 2025, you will be granted additional leave to help you care for your child or support your partner. Neonatal care means care of a medical or palliative nature which lasts for at least 7 consecutive days within the first 28 days of birth.

You will be entitled to one week of leave, for every week of admittance into neonatal care, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. Eligibility is based on consecutive days of admission into neonatal care and each week is a period of 7 calendar days.

It does not matter how long you have been employed by us or the number of hours that you do. This policy applies to surrogates as well.

The amount of leave available does not increase if you have a multiple birth, such as twins.

## **King's Neonatal Pay**

King's offer up to 12 weeks paid Neonatal Leave, to all eligible employees.

To be eligible you need to:

- be an employee at King's at the point of childbirth, and
- be responsible for the child's upbringing.

King's neonatal pay is made up of different elements and is enhanced to full pay.

To receive King's neonatal pay you need to commit to come back to work after your leave and work with us for at least three months from your return. If you should leave in the first three months of your return to work, you are expected to pay back the enhanced element of the neonatal pay received.

## **Statutory Neonatal Pay**

If you are eligible for Statutory Neonatal Care Pay (SNCP) this will be paid automatically through King's payroll and enhanced to full pay, the rate of the statutory payment is set by the UK Government each financial year.

To qualify for Statutory Neonatal Care Pay you must have been employed at King's, for more than 26 weeks' continuously at the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth and earn at least the [lower earnings limit](#) set by the UK Government each year.

## **Taking Neonatal Leave**

We understand that work will not be a priority if your baby is admitted into neonatal care, however there are important details to consider and that we will need to know.

Neonatal Leave is accrued based on the length of your child's admittance into neonatal care and how you take the leave depends on what family leave type you are due to take.

Please take time to consider the information below and when you are ready, contact your manager and [hr@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcl.ac.uk) to discuss your leave dates.

## **Maternity or Adoption Leave**

If you are the mother or primary carer, your Maternity or Adoption Leave will automatically start once the child is born and once curtailed cannot be restarted. Therefore, Neonatal Leave can only be taken as one continuous block of leave at the end of your Maternity or Adoption Leave.

You will need to

- provide us with your child's date of birth
- give us 28 days' notice of your intention to take the leave and how long you intend to take, and
- complete the leave within 68 weeks of the birth.

## **Paternity and Partners Leave and Shared Parental Leave**

If you are the partner or secondary carer, you are able to take Neonatal Leave in blocks of one week (7 calendar days) at a time, whilst your child is still receiving care.

If you wish to claim the Neonatal Leave whilst your child is in neonatal care, you will need to

- provide us with the child's date of birth,
- inform us of your circumstances within 28 days of your child's admittance into neonatal care, and
- let us know the date your child has been discharged.

Once your child is discharged from neonatal care your current Neonatal Leave must be completed within one week of discharge.

If you are due to take Paternity and Partners Leave this can be taken at any time within 52 weeks of the child's birth. Any remaining Neonatal Leave can be taken at a later date within 68 weeks of the child's birth in one continuous block.

If you are due to take Shared Parental Leave this must be taken within 52 weeks of the child's birth, please contact [hr@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcl.ac.uk) to discuss any changes to your original leave dates. Any remaining Neonatal Leave can be taken at a later date within 68 weeks of the child's birth in one continuous block.

## **Things to Think About**

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### **Returning to Work**

You may have been out of the workplace for some time, and it can take a little while to settle down. You will still have access to Keeping in Touch Days during your leave, however things may have changed while you have been away. When you return, your manager should provide a general update and give you time to complete any mandatory training.

### **Changing Work Patterns**

We appreciate that it is challenging to balance having a new child and work. Flexible working may help. Look at our [Flexible Working Policy](#) for further information.

### **Returning to Work Outside the UK**

If you are intending to work remotely outside the UK on your return to work following your leave, you should talk to your manager before making any arrangements. You should also read our [Global Staff Mobility Policy](#), as this may have tax and social security implications.

If you require any further guidance, contact [hr@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcl.ac.uk).

### **Unable to Return to Work**

We hope that all staff can return to work after their leave. However, we understand there may be reasons stopping this. We ask that you talk to your manager about this so they can help you find ways to allow a return to King's.

If you are unable to return to work because of ill health, contact your manager prior to your return date. This will be considered as sickness absence and managed using the [Sickness Absence Management Policy](#).

### Pay Increments

You will continue to receive the normal increment on your pay scale in accordance with your contract of employment.

### Holidays

During your leave you will accrue full contractual annual leave, including bank and public holidays. Holiday built up during this time and not taken within the leave year may be carried across and taken before the end of the following leave year.

Concessionary days that happen while you are on Neonatal Leave will not accrue.

## Further Support

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If you have any questions about Neonatal Leave and pay, please speak to your manager in the first instance. Managers should contact [hr@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcl.ac.uk), for further support if required.

Having a child can mean there are big changes in your personal life, and you may need extra advice and support in adapting to this.

At King's we offer parental coaching through [Vita Health](#), who provide the [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

In addition, the [Parents and Carers hub](#) includes information that you may find useful, including details of the Parents and Carers network (NEST) who can offer peer support for new parents.

VERSION CONTROL	
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