



6. Adoption Leave and Adoption Pay

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Employees who adopt a child may be entitled to Adoption Leave and Statutory Adoption Pay. This right applies to both men and women.

The partner of an individual who adopts, or the other member of a couple adopting jointly, may be entitled to Paternity Leave and Paternity Pay.

When a couple adopts, they can choose between them who will take Adoption Leave and who will take Paternity Leave by electing which of them is the main adopter. Each individual can choose either type of leave (regardless of their sex).

Details of Paternity Leave for an adoptive parent can be found at the end of this section.

This policy applies to employees. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and the Company may amend it at any time.

6.1 Adoption Leave

To qualify for Adoption Leave, an employee must:

- Be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency;
- Have notified the agency that the employee agrees that the child should be placed with him or her and agreed the date of placement;

- Notify the Company of when he or she wants to take Adoption Leave no more than seven calendar days after being notified that he or she has been matched with a child.

Only one period of Adoption Leave will be available irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement.

Employees who meet the eligibility criteria are entitled to 26 weeks' Ordinary Adoption Leave and 26 weeks' Additional Adoption Leave, in order to care for a newly adopted child up to 18 years of age.

6.2 Ordinary Adoption Leave

During Ordinary Adoption Leave, an employee is entitled to receive all his or her normal contractual benefits (including annual holiday entitlement) but excluding pay.

An employee is entitled to return to his or her original job at the end of the Ordinary Adoption Leave period.

6.3 Additional Adoption Leave

Additional Adoption Leave follows immediately after the end of the Ordinary Adoption Leave. There can be no gap between the two.

During Additional Adoption Leave, an employee is entitled to receive all his or her normal contractual benefits (including annual holiday entitlement) but excluding pay.

The employee is entitled to return to his or her original job at the end of Additional Adoption Leave. However, if this is not reasonably practicable, the employee should be offered a similar job on no less favourable terms and conditions.

6.4 Notification Procedures

6.4.1 Notification of Adoption Leave

To be permitted to take Adoption Leave the employee must comply with the rules and procedures set out below.

1. Within seven calendar days of being matched for a child, the employee must give the Company notice of:
 - The date the placement is expected to take place; and
 - The date on which the employee intends to start Adoption Leave. This must be in writing if requested by the Company.

The employee should also give the Company the matching certificate from the adoption agency as evidence of entitlement to Adoption Leave.

Within 28 calendar days of the employee giving notice, the Company will respond in writing to the employee, confirming the date when the Adoption Leave will end. This will normally be 52 weeks from the start of the Adoption Leave.

2. An employee who is adopting may choose to start Adoption Leave:
 - From the date of the child's placement; or
 - From a fixed date which can be up to 14 calendar days before the expected date of the placement.
3. The employee may change his or her mind about the start date of Adoption Leave, as long as he or she gives the employer at least 28 calendar days' notice of the change. The period of 28 days must be before the earlier of the original planned start date or the new planned start date.

6.4.2 Notification of Return to Work

1. The employee does not need to give notice of a return to work if he or she simply returns at the end of the Adoption Leave period.
2. If the employee wishes to return to work before the full entitlement to Adoption Leave has ended, the employee must give the Company a minimum of eight weeks' notice of the date of the earlier return.
3. If the employee fails to give the required eight weeks' notice of an earlier return to work, the employer may postpone the return until the end of the eight weeks' notice the employee should have given, or until the end of the Adoption Leave period, whichever is earlier.

4. The employee may change his or her mind about the date of his or her return, but he or she must always give the Company at least eight weeks' notice of any changes.
5. An employee does not lose the right to return to work if he or she does not follow the correct notification requirements. However, the Company may take appropriate disciplinary action if the employee fails to return to work at the end of his or her Adoption Leave period.
6. If an employee decides that they do not want to return to work they should give notice of resignation in accordance with their contract of employment.

6.5 Contact with Employee

The Company may make reasonable contact with the employee during Adoption Leave.

6.6 Statutory Adoption Pay

To qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay, the employee must:

1. Have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the date he or she is informed by the adoption agency that the adopter has been matched with a child;
2. Have average weekly earnings equal to or above the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance purposes over the eight week period leading up to the date the adopter is matched with a child;
3. Give the Company the required minimum notice that he or she intends to be absent from work because of adoption;
4. Provide the Company with a matching certificate from the adoption agency as evidence of entitlement to Statutory Adoption Pay; and
5. Provide a written declaration that the employee has chosen to receive Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) rather than Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP).

SAP is payable for up to 39 weeks. The first six weeks are payable at the higher rate which is 90% of the employee's normal earnings.

Normal earnings are calculated based on the period of at least eight weeks up to and including the last normal pay day to fall before the first day of the week after the week in which the adopter is notified of being matched with a child. However, any pay rises made by the Company up to the end of the employee's Adoption Leave must be taken into account and SAP adjusted accordingly.

The remaining 33 weeks are payable at a standard rate ("SAP Lower Rate") which changes from time to time. Where the employee's earnings are below the standard rate, the employee should be paid at 90% of their normal earnings.

Employees who do not qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay may be able to claim financial support from their local Social Security or Job Centre Plus office.

6.7 Woodhurst Company Adoption Pay

Subject to the rules as outlined at Section 6.8 (Successive Adoptions) Woodhurst Company Adoption Pay (CAP) is available to employees who fulfil the following criteria:

- They have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the date he or she is informed by the adoption agency that the adopter has been matched with a child; and
- they are eligible to take, and do take, Adoption Leave as the main adopter; and
- they satisfy the conditions as detailed in Section 6.6 Statutory Adoption Pay.

Company Adoption Pay

- 26 weeks @ 100% of basic salary inclusive of any applicable SAP payments
- 13 weeks @ SAP Lower Rate
- 13 weeks unpaid

CAP will be calculated based on the employee's basic salary on the date that Adoption Leave commences.

In the event that the employee is awarded a salary increase as part of the annual salary review process during the Adoption Leave period, any CAP due to be paid

following the date of the increase will be recalculated to reflect the increased basic salary.

Please note that eligible employees will only receive CAP during weeks when they are on Adoption Leave. Payment of CAP will stop immediately when an employee's Adoption Leave ends, even if the employee has not used the full entitlement.

Woodhurst reserves the right to reclaim any enhanced company adoption pay provided to the employee if the employee does not return to work following their adoption leave, or if the employee voluntarily resigns within six months of returning to work. The decision to reclaim such payments will be at the sole discretion of the Company and will take into consideration individual circumstances.

6.8 Successive Adoptions

Subject to the employee fulfilling the eligibility criteria outlined above, the employee is entitled to receive Company Adoption Pay for a maximum of 52 weeks during their employment with the Company.

In the event that the employee exhausts their entitlement to Company Adoption Pay under the above rules, Statutory Adoption Pay will apply and any additional Company Adoption Pay will be paid at the Company's total discretion.

6.9 Pension Contributions during Adoption Leave

Where an employee has the benefit of contractual pension contributions made by the employer, these must continue to be paid at the full rate up to the end of the period when SAP is payable.

Where an employee is required to make pension contributions, these will be based on the pay he or she receives during Adoption Leave.

6.10 Keeping In Touch Days

Employees on Adoption Leave may do up to 10 days' work for the Company without losing their right to SAP.

Work will be paid at the employee's normal rate of pay, but any SAP will be taken into account. Neither the employee nor the Company is under any obligation to agree to Keeping in Touch Days.

6.11 Placement Ends

If the child's placement ends during the Adoption Leave period, the employee will be able to continue Adoption Leave for up to eight weeks after the end of the placement.

6.12 Paternity Leave and Adoption

A qualifying employee may take paid Paternity Leave to care for a newly adopted child or to support his or her partner on adoption.

Further details of Paternity Leave and Paternity Pay and the procedure that employees need to follow if they wish to take Paternity Leave are set out in the section on Paternity Leave and Paternity Pay.

6.13 Protection from Redundancy During Adoption Leave

Employees on Adoption Leave are entitled to enhanced protection from redundancy. This protection mirrors that provided to employees on maternity leave and extends for **up to 18 months following the child's placement for adoption**.

Key Protections:

- **Priority for Suitable Alternative Employment:** If a redundancy situation arises while an employee is on Adoption Leave, they are entitled to be offered any suitable alternative employment that is available within the Company. This offer must be made **before any other employees** at risk of redundancy are considered.
- **Conditions of the Alternative Role:** The alternative role offered must be on **terms and conditions** that are **no less favorable** than the employee's current position. This includes salary, benefits, status, and working hours. If no

suitable alternative role is available, the Company will follow its normal redundancy procedures, ensuring compliance with legal obligations.

- **Protection Period:** This redundancy protection applies from the date the employee begins Adoption Leave and lasts for **18 months after the child's placement**.

The aim of this protection is to provide job security for employees who are on Adoption Leave, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged in a redundancy situation due to their leave status. The Company is committed to supporting employees during this period and ensuring compliance with the relevant legal requirements.