



Croner Compliance: Changes to Family Leave

Date: 27th May 2026

Run Time: Approximately 40 minutes

This session will start shortly (14:30)

The detail contained within this webinar is based on GB & Northern Ireland employment legislation.

Members in the jurisdictions of the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man are asked to please contact the Advice Service to obtain the information relevant to your jurisdiction.

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Agenda

- A clear timeline of changes to maternity, paternity, and adoption pay.
- Understanding the latest shifts in flexibility and rights for working parents and carers.
- Practical steps to update your handbooks and systems before the new rules take effect.

Hard hitting reality

- 2026 is going to be a busy year for employment law changes
- Changes will affect over 28 areas of employee management
- 173 separate pieces of law to be written/amended
- Laws will be spread over next 2 years
- Vast majority of changes will affect every employer in the UK regardless of size

Please put your questions in the chat!



What is Family Leave?

- Several statutory entitlements available to working parents:
- Maternity Leave and Pay
- Paternity Leave and Pay
- Adoption Leave and Pay
- Shared Parental Leave and Pay
- Neonatal Care Leave and Pay
- Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay
- Unpaid Carer's Leave ✓ Unpaid Parental Leave
- Unpaid Time Off for Dependants

Recent Changes

From April 2026

- The service requirement of 26 weeks (at the 15th week before childbirth) for paternity leave and one year for parental leave will be removed
- Both types of leave will become a day-one right
- The restrictions on taking paternity leave after shared parental leave will be removed
- Note: for paternity leave this only applies to the leave element, statutory paternity pay will still require service

Did You Know?

It's estimated an extra 30,000 people will become eligible for paternity leave

And 1.5 million for parental leave

Practical Impact

- Will an employee be able to start work on a Monday and take paternity leave or parental from the Tuesday?
- **Not necessarily.** The new rules will allow an employee to give their employer notification that they want to take paternity leave or parental leave from day one, and there are notice periods involved which are not changing.

Transitional Agreements

- Newly eligible parents will be able to give notice of their intention to take leave from 18 February 2026
- Notice period for paternity leave will be temporarily reduced to 28 days
- Reduced notice period will apply for babies with an EWC between 5 April 2026 and 25 July 2026.
- Notice period for already eligible parents, and the 21-day notice period for parental leave will remain unchanged

Parental Leave

What is parental leave used for?

- Spend more time with the child in early years
- Accompany the child during a stay in hospital
- Investigate new schools
- Settle the child into new childcare arrangements
- Enable the family to spend more time together, for example, taking the child to stay with grandparents

Eligibility & Entitlement

- Up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave per child up to 18th birthday
- Taken in blocks of at least 1 week
- No more than 4 weeks in a 12-month period
- Entitlement applies to each parent for each child
- Notice –21 days before the leave is to start
- You must agree to a parental leave request unless you can show that it would cause significant disruption to your business

Paternity Leave

Eligibility

- Employee must be:
- the father of the child; or
- be married to or be the partner of the child's mother or primary adopter
- Notice of intention to take leave 15 weeks prior to EWC / within 7 days of notification of matching and then 28 days' notice of actual leave dates

Paternity Pay

- Two weeks' pay at the lower of either:
- 90% of weekly earnings
- £194.32 (current rate from April 2026)
- 26 weeks service at 15th week before childbirth / matching notification week required
- Must earn at least the Lower Earnings Limit on average (currently £129 per week)

Paternity Leave Protections

- Right to return to the same job
- Protection from dismissal or detriment as a result of seeking to take, taking, or returning from paternity leave

Family Leave Payments – April 2026

- Maternity & Adoption Pay: 90% of earnings (first 6 weeks); then £194.32/week or 90% of earnings (whichever is lower) for up to 33 more weeks.
- Paternity, Neonatal & Bereavement Pay: £194.32/week or 90% of earnings (whichever is lower).

Bereaved partner's paternity leave (BPPL)

Entitlement and eligibility

- Statutory entitlement to support employees who lose their partner (the primary carer of a child) within the first year of the child's birth or adoption
- Allows a single period up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave to care for the child
- Employee must be father of the child, or partner of primary carer
- Leave can only start after the bereavement date and within a 52 week eligibility period

Notice Requirements

- If leave is starting within 8 weeks of the bereavement date, notice can be given before the start of the first day of absence – orally or in writing
- If leave is starting more than 8 weeks after the bereavement date, at least one weeks' notice must be given in writing

Other Provisions

- KIT days
- Up to 10 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days can be used during the leave without ending the leave
- Works in same way as maternity leave KIT days
- Employment protections

Summary

- Several changes to family leave entitlements came into play in April 2026.
- Eligibility requirements are changing for paternity and unpaid parental leave
- Eligible employees will be able to access a new right to bereaved partner's paternity leave
- Policies and documentation will need updating to reflect these changes

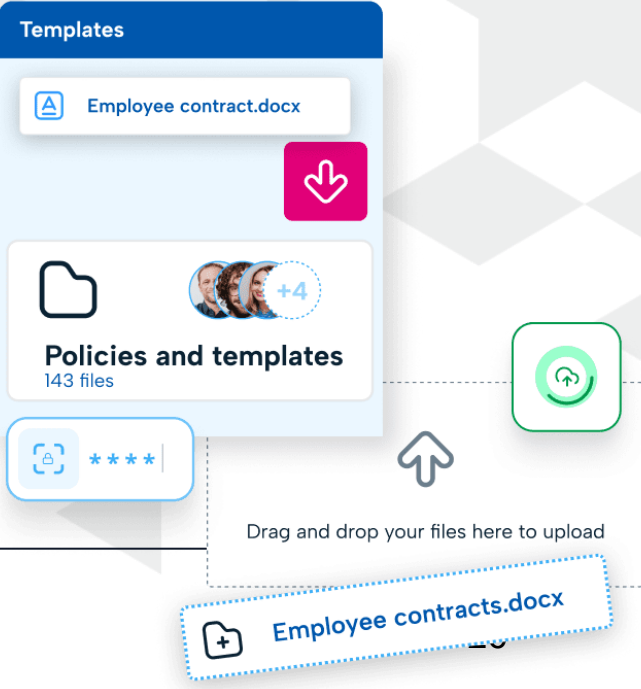
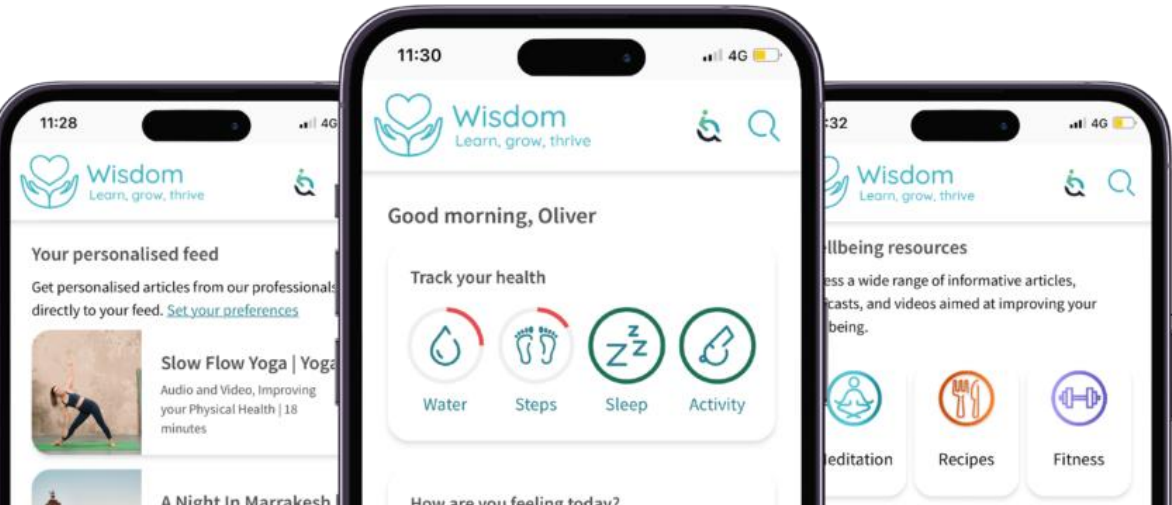
Additional Support Resources Reminder

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Thank you!

Any questions



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