

Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave: Guidance for Employees and Managers

This guidance accompanies the Council's BPPL Policy. It explains the process in practical terms and provides additional support and advice for employees and managers.

This guidance applies to Council employees and contractors. It does not apply to school-based staff unless a school governing body separately adopts the policy.

Understanding Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave

This right applies to bereavements occurring on or after 6 April 2026.

BPPL gives the surviving partner time away from work to care for their child after the death of the child's primary carer.

This is an extremely difficult time, and the Council is committed to handling all cases with sensitivity, compassion and flexibility.

Eligibility

You may qualify for BPPL if:

- You are the child's father, or
- You are the spouse, civil partner, or partner of the mother, primary adopter, or parental order parent who has passed away, and
- You have (or expect to have) the main responsibility for caring for the child.

There is no minimum service requirement.

If you are unsure whether this applies to you, contact [HR via Service Desk](#) for confidential advice.

What You Are Entitled To

- Up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave to care for your child.
- Leave can start at any time within the first year following birth, placement or parental order.
- If the bereavement happens right at the end of that year, you can take up to 14 days even if it slightly exceeds the 52-week window.

Telling Your Manager

We recognise this may be a very distressing time. You can tell your manager verbally if that feels easier. Written confirmation can follow later.

What your manager needs to know

- When the bereavement occurred
- Your child's birth/placement date

- That you intend to take BPPL
- When you intend to start your leave

Your manager will then alert [HR via Service Desk](#) so the process can begin.

Evidence

HR may request documentation (e.g., death certificate) but we understand this may be difficult, so you will have 4 weeks to provide it.

Support Available

The Council partners with [Optima Health](#) (formerly CareFirst), who can provide:

- Emotional support and bereavement counselling
- Practical advice
- Confidential help at any stage

You can access this service anytime.

Managers should proactively signpost this support.

During the Leave

Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days

You can work up to 10 optional days during your leave if you want to stay connected or catch up on key updates.

KIT days are voluntary and must be mutually agreed.

Maintaining Communication

Your manager will check in at agreed intervals to ensure you remain supported and informed, while respecting your needs and space.

Returning to Work

Before returning, you and your manager should discuss:

- Any adjustments you may need
- Phased return options
- Current service/workload updates
- Any ongoing support needs

You will return to your role, or where that is not possible, to a suitable alternative with equivalent terms.

Managers: How to Handle a BPPL Request Compassionately

- Respond immediately and sensitively.
- Ensure privacy and avoid unnecessary questions.
- Give space and avoid pressuring the employee for dates or paperwork too quickly.
- Confirm all agreed information in writing (including expected return date).
- Coordinate handover arrangements urgently but discreetly.
- Maintain appropriate, respectful contact during the leave.
- Involve HR early, especially if any risk of redundancy arises.

Contact HR before placing an employee taking BPPL at risk of redundancy.

Combining Leave Types

Employees might be eligible for other forms of leave (e.g., parental bereavement leave, paternity leave, SPL).

Managers and HR should work together to sequence these in a way that is:

- legally compliant
- supportive to the employee
- operationally manageable