

Parental Bereavement Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Parenthood Policy. It does not form part of any team members contract of employment and may be amended or withdrawn (in whole or in part) at any time and works in conjunction with respective policies as appropriate.

Who is this for?

This policy applies to:

- Team members
- Line managers

In the following countries:



When does it apply?

This policy applies at all times to all team members regardless of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. It outlines what support is available to team members, in terms of leave and pay, following the loss of a child under the age of 18.

The Compassionate Leave policy is also available for when team members suffer the loss, serious illness or acute need of someone they have a close relationship with. Additional information is also available on supporting team members with Pregnancy Loss.

In these circumstances, Whitbread recognises that team members will require support, a sympathetic approach and may require appropriate time away from work.

A 'bereaved parent' is any of the following:

- The child's parent, including adoptive parent and a person who has become a parent under the statutory provisions on surrogacy and fertility treatment.
- A natural parent of the child where the child has been adopted but there is a court order for the child to have contact with the natural parent.
- A person with whom the child has been placed for adoption (by an official adoption agency) or under a fostering for adoption scheme, as long as that placement has not been terminated.
- Where the child has entered the countries this policy applies in from overseas for the purposes of adoption, a person living with the child who intends to adopt them and has received official notification from the authorities that they are eligible to adopt.
- An intended parent under a surrogacy arrangement where it was expected that a parental order would be made.

- A “parent in fact” – someone in whose home the child is living and who has had day to day responsibility for the child’s care for at least the four weeks prior to death (excluding paid carers other than local authority foster carers, or anyone if the child’s parent or person with parental responsibility is also living in the home with the child).
- The partner of any of the above, meaning someone living with another person and the child in an enduring family relationship and who is not the other person’s parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle.

Leave and pay entitlements

Team members are entitled to two weeks’ leave following the death of a child under the age of 18, or who suffer a stillbirth from 24 weeks of pregnancy regardless of working hours or length of service. If the team member has lost more than one child, there is a separate entitlement to bereavement leave for each child who has passed away.

Team members that have worked continuously for at least 26 weeks by the week before the week in which the child passes away, and who meet the lower earnings criteria are also entitled to a minimum of [statutory parental bereavement](#) pay during that time.

If the child is stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy, or the baby passes away after being born team members are entitled to up to 52 weeks [Maternity Leave](#). [Paternity Leave](#) also applies in this situation if eligible.

Team members also have the statutory right to take reasonable [time off for dependants](#), allowing them to deal with an emergency, such as the death of a child, to take the immediate necessary action needed, for example registering the death. This entitlement is only to unpaid leave and does not allow for longer time off to grieve.

Line managers must consider other complexities such as any bereavement requirements in relation to religion, such as an extended period of mourning (with the onus on the team member to tell the line manager about these requirements).

What makes it work?

Team members must contact their line manager as soon as possible if they need to take parental bereavement leave, so that they can know what is happening and understand what support can be provided for the individual’s needs. A phone call is sufficient. If the parental bereavement leave is within the first 56 days after the bereavement, the leave can be taken straight away without providing any notice.

The leave can be taken in one block or two separate blocks of a week, within the 56-week period following the child’s death. Leave cannot be taken as individual days. If the leave is taken after 56 days of the bereavement, a minimum of a weeks’ notice is required.

Line managers may ask the team member some questions in order to find out how best support them and respect their wishes. Some examples to support the conversation:

What support is needed
Establishing whether the team member would like to take their two weeks entitlement off together or on two separate week blocks. (Leave taken within 56 days of the bereavement)

doesn't require any notice, leave after this, up to 56 weeks requires a minimum of one weeks' notice).
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What to tell the team – does the team member want others to know?

Would the team member want to be contacted by friends from work?
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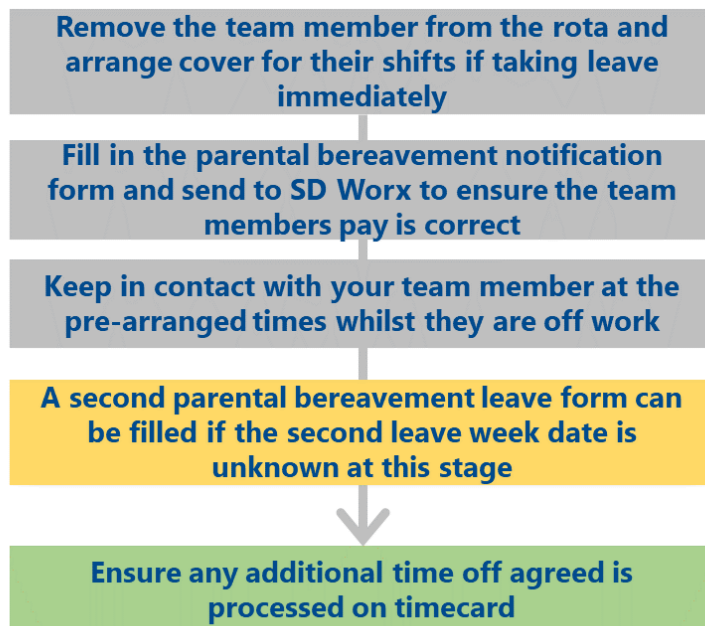
Whether the bereaved team member's religion or culture requires them to observe specific practices or make special arrangements requiring them to be off work at a particular time.

Many parents finding themselves in this situation will need further time off to grieve following the parental bereavement leave period. It may be appropriate to enable other options such as using annual holiday entitlement or taking a period of unpaid leave if holiday pay has been exhausted.

The Sickness Policy should be referred to if a team member is taking sickness absence as a result of ill health brought on by the bereavement.

Administration tasks/process

Line managers must take the following actions to process agreed leave:



How does it work?

Contents of sections below

1. Whilst on leave
2. Support returning to work
3. Data management in the process

1. Whilst on leave

Team members are entitled to return to the same job, on the same terms and conditions as would have applied had they not been absent from work during the period of parental bereavement leave.

This differs slightly if leave follows on immediately from some maternity, adoption, paternity leave or shared parental leave (taken in relation to the child who has passed away), and the total time on leave is more than 26 weeks. In these circumstances, team members have the right to return to the same job, unless this is not reasonably practical - in which case they have the right to return to a suitable and appropriate job on the same terms and conditions.

This also applies if leave includes more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave (taken in relation to any child), regardless of the total length of the leave.

Team members must not be treated less favourably or dismissed for taking or seeking to take parental leave or for any other reason connected with parental leave.

Prior to the team member going on leave, line managers must try to agree and action the amount and frequency of contact that will be maintained during the leave with the team member.

Holidays

Holidays will continue to accrue as normal whilst on leave and it may be appropriate for team members to consider taking any accrued holiday with their leave.

Team members who resign whilst on leave and have any outstanding holiday pay due will be paid, based on the difference between the amount already taken and the entitlement accrued. However, if the team member has taken more holiday than accrued, their final pay will be deducted by the amount overpaid.

Additional support

Hospitality Action is free, independent and confidential and can provide support to both the team member and their family 24 hours, 365 days a year.

The team members GP can offer support for grief or depression if needed and below are some external sources of help and support:

Child Bereavement UK supports families both when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, and when a child is facing bereavement. Call 0800 02 888 40 or <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

Bereavement Advice Centre - Offers a free helpline for people who are bereaved and for professionals. It also has information on its website about practical matters and coping with grief. Helpline number 0800 634 9494 or visit bereavementadvice.org

Cruse Bereavement Care offer emotional support to anyone affected by bereavement. Helpline 0808 808 1677 or visit <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

(For Scotland contact **Cruse Scotland**) Visit <http://www.crusescotland.org.uk/> Helpline number 0845 600 2227

National Association of Funeral Directors - Find a registered funeral director near you or get some advice about organising a funeral. Tel. 0121 711 1343 or visit nafd.org.uk

Tell Us Once - A free service that enable the reporting of a death to most government organisations in one go. When the death is registered, the registrar will advise if the service is available in the area and provide a contact number. They may also give a unique reference number to use the Tell Us Once online service. [Visit gov.uk/tell-us-once](https://gov.uk/tell-us-once)

What to do when someone dies – A step by step guide <https://www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies>

2. Returning to work

Our Diversity and Inclusion policy outlines how we value difference at Whitbread and line managers supporting team members returning from leave well is a great way to demonstrate:

- We believe in equal opportunities for all, with no barriers to entry and no limits to ambition.
- We treat everyone fairly, with respect and kindness. We have zero tolerance to discrimination.

Line managers must work closely with team members on leave to ensure a smooth and considered return to work taking into consideration the life changes the team member will be experiencing and the additional support that may be required. This may include reviewing the hours, days or times of work to ensure a balanced approach to home and work life. The Parenthood Policy outlines some of the other policies and areas that can support throughout the different stages of Parenthood. These include use of the Flexible Working and Workplace Adjustments policies, the support available on the Wellbeing Hub and from Nest who work in partnership with Hospitality Action.

Line managers should take time to make the team member aware of any changes which have occurred while away and re-familiarise ways of working. Introductions should be made to new team members and updates given about team and business changes. Any passes/swipe cards/email accounts etc should be reactivated.

Time off for emergencies

Team members have a legal right to reasonable time off to look after a dependant, such as a child or partner. Refer to the Time off for Dependents policy.

Resignation

Should a team member wish to not return to work following leave, then the usual resignation process applies, and the team member must put this in writing to their line manager giving contractual notice and their intention to resign.

If the team member does not return to work once leave has finished without contacting their line manager, this absence will be regarded as unauthorised, and the Unauthorised Absence policy will apply.

3. Data Management in the process

It is important that you store any sensitive or personal data securely and in line with the Data Protection Guidance contained within the iSAT e-learning modules, Group Data Protection

Policy and within the Finance Procedure Manual. Failure to follow the Data Protection Guidance will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

- Do make sure personal or sensitive data that you gather is stored securely.
- Hard copy documents should be held in a locked cabinet and access should be restricted to those who require access to do their roles.
- Electronic files must also be stored securely on a company server and must be password protected.

Updates to this policy

Published **March 2023**

Last updated **March 2023**

- Replaced previous Maternity, Adoption, Paternity, Shared Parental Leave, Parental Leave policies to restate Whitbread's position on Parenthood and make clearer accountabilities/responsibilities for team members and line managers.

September 2021

- Language updated to be more inclusive based on feedback from network groups.

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