



Elizabeth Finn Homes

Loving homes where people flourish

Family Leave Policy

Introduction

The Elizabeth Finn Homes Family Leave Policy outlines the rights and entitlements of our employees when welcoming a new child into their lives, and the procedures to follow when requesting such leave.

This policy sets out both basic and enhanced entitlements relating to new and expectant birth parents at work, birth parent leave, shared parental leave, adoption leave, co-parent leave, parental leave, parental bereavement leave and bereaved partner's paternity leave to ensure that all employees can understand and benefit from the Elizabeth Finn Homes (also referred to as EFH) provisions relating to Family Leave.

Purpose

Our aim is to provide all employees who become parents the opportunity to take time to bond with, support, and raise their child during the first year of the child's life, or in the case of adoption, the first year of an employee becoming a parent to the child. In this spirit, no employee will be treated less favourably, suffer detriment, or be dismissed because they request or take leave under this policy.

If an employee believes they are a victim of such treatment they should bring this to the attention of their line manager or a member of the People Team as soon as possible.

Scope

This policy applies to pregnant employees and those employees whose spouse, civil partner, or someone (of either sex) with whom they live in an enduring family relationship, but who is not their parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle, is pregnant. It also applies to employees who are adopting a child.

Language of Inclusion

Where possible, we have written this policy using non-gendered language. For the avoidance of doubt, where any legislation in the UK which governs maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave, parental leave or bereaved partner's paternity leave uses gendered language, our proposed alternatives of '**Birth Parent Leave**' as applicable to maternity leave and '**Co-Parent Leave**' as applicable to paternity leave do not propose to depart from the rights and entitlements contained under UK law. This policy covers, in turn, the policies and procedures for accessing the relevant period of leave for employees entitled to maternity leave under UK law ("**Birth Parents**"), employees entitled to paternity leave under UK law ("**Co-Parents**"), and employees who are adopting a child through an adoption agency, fostering a child with a view to possible adoption, or having a child through a surrogate mother ("**Adopting Parents**").

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1) New and Expectant Birth Parents at Work

Precautions taken to protect the health and safety of the workforce as a whole will, in many cases, also protect new and expectant birth parents. However, there are occasions when, due to their condition, different and/or additional measures will be necessary.

We will reduce any identified risks to new and expectant birth parents and provide guidance on specific control measures required to protect them. We acknowledge the relevant legislative provisions and confirm our commitment to compliance.

Elimination of Activities Hazardous to New and Expectant Birth Parents

We will ensure that work activities exposing new and expectant birth parents to unacceptable risks are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable. Measures to achieve this include preventing exposure to such risks by ensuring:

- relevant legal standards (dependent on the risk involved) are met
- official guidance and good practice are followed
- working conditions and/or hours are adjusted if a need is identified
- if necessary, new and expectant birth parents are removed from hazardous activities, i.e. as the employer, we will provide suitable alternative work or, if this is not possible, will place you, the employee, on paid suspension. Advice for paid suspension must first be sought from the People Team.

Assessment of Risk

A risk assessment will be carried out for all expectant birth parents. These will be reviewed with the new and expectant birth parent as part of an individual risk assessment. The assessments will consider the actual

risks associated with the work activities and where these risks are increased, due to any particular problems experienced by a new or expectant birth parent during the pregnancy or postnatal period.

Specifically, the assessment will consider risks associated with exposure to:

- physical agents
- biological agents
- chemical agents.

The assessment will also consider working and welfare conditions including facilities for rest and breastfeeding.

Risk assessments relating to new and expectant birth parents will be reviewed, and if necessary revised, regularly. All risk assessment must be stored on the employee's file.

Duties of Managers and Line Managers

Managers and line managers must ensure that:

- expectant birth parents are encouraged to disclose their pregnancy at the earliest possible opportunity
- the highest level of confidentiality must be maintained at all times
- risk assessments are carried out and reviewed for all work activities undertaken under their control, they consider risks specific to new and expectant birth parents and that associated records and documentation are maintained
- necessary control measures identified by the risk assessment are implemented, followed, monitored, reviewed and, if necessary, revised
- new and expectant birth parents are informed of any risks to them and/or their child and the control measures taken to protect them
- any adverse incidents are immediately reported to the People Team or Health & Safety as appropriate and investigated
- appropriate training is provided and recorded on the employees' file where suitable alternative work is offered and accepted
- provision is made to support new and expectant birth parents who need to take time off work for medical reasons associated with their condition
- emergency procedures are evaluated in terms of evacuation in the event of a fire.

Duties of New and Expectant Birth Parents

New and expectant birth parents must:

- inform their general practitioner (GP) or midwife of the nature of their work
- tell their employer about the pregnancy at least 15 weeks before the beginning of the week the baby is due. If this is not possible (for example because they did not know they were pregnant) the employer must be told as soon as possible
- follow any safety arrangements implemented for their protection, including attending training sessions and complying with control measures
- not act in a manner that adversely affects their own health and safety, that of their child and/or anyone else
- report any perceived or real shortcomings in protection to their line manager. If these shortcomings are not addressed then this must be escalated by the employee to the General Manager, or a member of the Executive team if working as part of the Central Support Team.

Information and Training

Suitable information, instruction and training will be provided to new and expectant birth parents to ensure their health and safety. Training needs will be identified and reviewed by a competent person and support

given to allow them to attend any required training sessions. The effectiveness of any training provided will be monitored and training regularly reviewed.

Training should also include ensuring that those people responsible for carrying out risk assessments are competent to do so.

2) Birth Parent Leave

Birth Parent Leave Entitlement

A pregnant employee is entitled to 52 weeks' Birth Parent Leave, regardless of their length of service, consisting of 26 weeks' ordinary Birth Parent Leave followed by 26 weeks' additional Birth Parent Leave provided that they comply with the notification requirements set out below.

Notification of Pregnancy

An employee must notify their manager in writing of their pregnancy no later than the end of the 15th week before their baby is due if this is reasonably practicable. They should state their expected week of childbirth and the date on which they intend to start their Birth Parent Leave. It is advisable to do this as early as possible so that any potential health and safety issues can be considered.

Antenatal Care

Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off for antenatal care as advised by a doctor, midwife or health visitor. The employee's line manager may ask to see an appointment card after the first appointment. Co-parents, whose partners are pregnant, are also entitled to time off work (unpaid) to accompany the birth parent to two antenatal appointments (each of no more than 6.5 hours).

Checking Entitlement to Birth Parent Leave

Once a manager has been informed about, or has become aware of, an employee's pregnancy, the manager should inform the home's Business Support Administrator or the People Team (for Central Support Team employees) who will check the employee's entitlement. The Business Support Administrator or People Team member will provide the employee with a copy of this policy and the 'Pregnancy Notification' form to complete and return to them. The Administrator and their line manager should be made aware of the proposed Birth Parent Leave dates to ensure that they are aware of when the employee is likely to be on Birth Parent Leave, so that they can plan appropriate cover and ensure they are not included on the roster for the period of time the employee will be on Birth Parent Leave.

Once in possession of the employee's pregnancy notification form, the Business Support Administrator (or People Team member for Central Support Team employees) will reply to the employee in writing within 28 days acknowledging their pregnancy and Birth Parent Leave arrangements. The acknowledgement letter will also confirm the employee's expected return to work date from Birth Parent Leave.

It is the Business Support Administrator's or People Team's (for Central Support Team employees) responsibility to ensure that Payroll are notified of the dates the employee will be on Birth Parent Leave and the employee's entitlement.

Provision of MAT B1 Maternity Certificate

The employee must provide medical evidence of their expected week of childbirth in the form of a maternity certificate, form MAT B1, available from the employee's doctor or midwife after the 20th week of pregnancy. It must be provided to the Business Support Administrator or People Team (for Central Support Team employees) as soon as possible, but no later than three weeks after the start of the Maternity Pay Period (MPP). No Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) will be payable without this certificate.

Working Arrangements

A pregnant employee may continue working as close to their expected week of childbirth (EWC) as they wish provided they continue to be in good health and capable of doing their job. If, however, a pregnant employee is absent from work for a reason connected with pregnancy within four weeks of the EWC, we have the right to trigger the Birth Parent Leave immediately. If there are any concerns for the wellbeing of the pregnant employee, the People Team should be notified immediately.

Occupational Health Referrals

We reserve the right to require employees to be referred to an external Occupational Health provider if it is felt that their health, or that of their baby, may be suffering as a result of their continuing to work.

New and Expectant Birth Parents Risk Assessment

The employee's manager will carry out risk assessments to assess any possible risks to new and expectant birth parents. Where the manager feels there may be a risk, they will take all reasonable steps to eliminate that risk and to warn the employee of the potential dangers. This may include changing the employee's working conditions, or providing suitable alternative work on substantially similar terms, where possible.

The manager of the pregnant employee should carry out a New and Expectant Birth Persons Risk Assessment as soon as they are notified of the employee's pregnancy and they should review this risk assessment within three and six months of the employees' pregnancy, then again between six and nine months of the employee's pregnancy. They should then carry out a further review before the employee returns from their Birth Parent/ Shared Parental Leave.

Once the employee is back at work following the end of their pregnancy, the manager should hold a further review of the New and Expectant Birth Persons Risk Assessment to ensure that appropriate consideration has been given to any support and/or needs the employee may have.

All risk assessments must be retained on the employee's file and should be signed and dated by both the line manager and employee.

Birth Parent Pay

Qualification for Birth Parent Pay

To qualify for Birth Parent Pay the employee must:

- tell their manager that they are pregnant.
- inform the manager of their expected week of childbirth.
- give notice to their manager of when they intend to start their Birth Parent Leave by the end of the 15th week before the EWC. If the employee changes their mind at a later date, they are entitled to do so, but must inform their manager of the revised start date at least 28 days before that date.
- in the case of a premature birth, they must advise their manager of that fact as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- to qualify for Elizabeth Finn Enhanced Birth Parent Leave Pay, they must have at least 26 weeks' continuous service (regardless of the number of hours worked per week) by the end of the qualifying week (which is the 15th week before the EWC. Their average weekly earnings over the eight-week period up to the end of the qualifying week must be over the lower earnings limit for National Insurance purposes.

If the above criteria are not met we can refuse to pay the employee's birth parent pay. In this instance, we will provide a written statement outlining the decision and the reasons supporting the decision. The People

Team must approve any decisions where ordinary maternity pay (OMP) is refused and must approve the letter.

If the employee does not qualify for Statutory Maternity Leave or Enhanced Birth Parent Leave Pay, they may be entitled to Maternity Allowance. This is a government paid allowance and subject to eligibility that the employee would need to apply for.

Birth Parent Leave Pay

Elizabeth Finn Homes is proud to offer sector-leading enhanced Birth Parent Leave pay to all employees who have at least 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the qualifying week (which is the 15th Week before the expected week of childbirth); our provision is as follows:

Policy	Entitlement
Birth Parent Pay	13 weeks @ 100% pay 13 weeks @ 50% pay 13 weeks @ Statutory Maternity Pay (" SMP ") rate 13 weeks unpaid
Birth Parent Leave: Time Off	52 weeks leave

During both ordinary and additional Birth Parent Leave the contract of employment continues as normal, except for any terms relating to remuneration.

Third Trimester Meetings

In addition to ensuring that regular meetings take place with the expectant birth parent during their pregnancy, the line manager is required to carry out a documented 'Third Trimester' meeting with the employee around the 30th week of pregnancy.

The purpose of this meeting will be to review the risk assessment, discuss the expected birth parents plans in relation to their leave and to discuss any additional adjustments that may be required to support them during the final weeks before their leave commences. An agreement should also be reached in relation to contact during the period of Birth Parent Leave.

A 'Third Trimester Meetings' form is available on the intranet and the completed document should be signed by both line manager and employee, then stored on the employee's file.

Maintaining Contact During Birth Parent Leave

During Birth Parent Leave, the employee's manager will maintain contact with them in order to keep them informed of developments in the workplace and to discuss (at an appropriate time) their plans to return to work. The frequency of the contact will be discussed between the manager and the employee during the Third Trimester Meeting before the employee's Birth Parent Leave begins.

Keep in Touch Days

By mutual agreement, we can arrange for employees on Birth Parent Leave to work up to ten "keeping in touch" (KIT) days. These days may be either separate days or one or more block of several days. Examples include the opportunity to attend a relevant training course or to attend a meeting. An employee offered such work is under no obligation to agree to do it. If, however, they do agree, their manager will discuss with them the terms of the work assignment including what they will be paid. Agreeing to work for up to ten KIT days will not affect the employee's leave entitlement, nor their entitlement to continue on Birth Parent Leave until the due return date.

It is the responsibility of the employee's line manager to agree the KIT days and notify Payroll of the specific KIT days the employee will be working (up to a maximum of ten).

Any KIT days worked will be paid to the employee at their usual rate of pay. Alternatively, an employee may request to accrue time in lieu while working KIT days, which can then be used to allow them additional time off with their child following their return to work. Such requests will be approved on a case by case basis by the General Manager in a home, or the department head in the Central Support Team.

Loss of Baby Before 24 Weeks' Pregnancy

In the event that an employee experiences a miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy, there will not be a right to take Birth Parent Leave.

It may be that the employee needs some time off work in these circumstances and the line manager should consider allowing the employee to take a period of paid compassionate leave. This should be discussed with the People Team in all circumstances before being finalised with the employee. This compassionate leave would be agreed to allow the employee to grieve and seek support.

If the employee suffers a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, entitlement to Birth Parent Leave and pay will not be affected and the employee will still be able to take the time off, and receive pay, as planned.

Parental Bereavement Leave is also available for employees' who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. More information on this entitlement is detailed under Parental Bereavement Leave within this policy.

Support for Employees who suffer a Miscarriage or Stillbirth

We recognise that miscarriage or stillbirth can have a significant and lasting impact on individuals and families. We subscribe to an employee assistance programme who offer a confidential, free to use 24-hour telephone counselling service that can be reached by ringing 0117 934 2121.

We also have a number of trained Mental Health First Aiders who will be able to offer support within the workplace.

We care for and value our employees and encourage managers to be empathetic, understanding and supportive of employees going through a difficult and traumatic time. Managers should ensure they contact the employee and have a welfare meeting where the employee is able to discuss how they are feeling, any needs of support they have and how these can be implemented. Discussions around compassionate leave can be had as well. This welfare meeting should be documented, saved on the employee's file and revisited to ensure it is up to date.

Other Employee Responsibilities

An employee who is taken into legal custody or works for another employer during the Birth Parent Pay period must notify the Business Support Administrator or People Team (for Central Support Team employees) as soon as possible, as their entitlement to Birth Parent Pay may be affected.

Benefits during Birth Parent Leave

All benefits, both contractual and non-contractual, remain in place during the period of Birth Parent Leave.

An employee will specifically be entitled to retain their Company vehicle or to continue to receive a car allowance during their absence. They will also be permitted to retain their Company mobile telephone.

Returning to Work After Birth Parent Leave

An employee returning to work during or at the end of ordinary Birth Parent Leave has the right to return to the same job and duties as the one they had before they commenced their leave.

An employee returning to work from additional Birth Parent Leave is entitled to return to the job in which they were employed before their Birth Parent Leave period began unless that is not reasonably practicable. In this case we are obliged to offer a suitable alternative job on terms and conditions that are the same, or more, favourable as those of the previous job. This must always be discussed with and supported by a member of the People Team.

If an employee wishes to return to work before completion of their full 52-week Birth Parent Leave entitlement they are required to give eight weeks' advance notice of the date on which they intend to return.

If the employee does not provide the correct notice, we are entitled to postpone the return to work until the correct notice has been provided (but will not postpone the return beyond the date their full Birth Parent Leave entitlement would have come to an end in any case).

An employee may not return to work within two weeks of having given birth, which is the compulsory Birth Parent Leave period.

If the employee is ill and therefore unable to return on the due date, they must notify their line manager and our Sickness Absence policy and procedure will apply.

Where an employee does not wish to return after their Birth Parent Leave, they must give notice of resignation as provided for in their contract of employment.

If an employee wishes to return to work immediately after the end of their full Birth Parent Leave entitlement they are not required by law to give advance notice. However, in order to enable us to plan effectively for their return, it would be helpful if they could let their line manager know that they intend to do so.

3) Adoption Leave

Leave Entitlement

To qualify for Adoption Leave, an employee must be newly matched with a child for adoption. The adoptive parent is entitled to 52 weeks leave split into 26 weeks Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) and 26 weeks Additional Adoption Leave (AAL). Adoption Leave can start on the date of the child's placement or up to 14 days before the date of placement.

Qualification for Adoption Leave Pay

To qualify for Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP), an employee must have at least 26 weeks' continuous service (regardless of number of hours worked per week) by the week the employee is matched with a child.

If the employee does not qualify for Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP), or Enhanced Adoption Leave pay, they may be entitled to Adoption Allowance. This is a government paid allowance and subject to eligibility that the employee would need to apply for through their local council.

Adoption Leave Pay

At Elizabeth Finn Homes we offer enhanced Adoption Leave pay as set out below:

Policy	Entitlement
Adoption Leave Pay	13 weeks @ 100% pay 13 weeks @ 50% pay 13 weeks @ Statutory Adoption Pay ("SAP") rate 13 weeks unpaid
Adoption Leave: Time Off	52 weeks leave

During both Ordinary and Additional Adoption Leave the contract of employment continues as normal, except for any terms relating to remuneration.

Maintaining Contact During Adoption Leave

During Adoption Leave, the employee's manager will maintain contact with them in order to keep them informed of developments in the workplace and to discuss (at an appropriate time) their plans to return to work. The frequency of the contact will be discussed between the manager and the employee before the employee's adoption leave starts. Contact with the employee must be recorded and documented on the employee's file.

Keep in Touch Days

By mutual agreement, we can arrange for employees on adoption leave to work up to ten "keeping in touch" (KIT) days. These days may be either separate days or one or more blocks of several days. Examples include the opportunity to attend a relevant training course or to attend a meeting. An employee offered such work is under no obligation to agree to do it. If, however, they do agree, their manager will discuss with them the terms of the work assignment including what they will be paid. Agreeing to work for up to ten KIT days will not affect the employee's Statutory Adoption Pay entitlement, nor their entitlement to continue on adoption leave until the due return date.

It is the manager's responsibility to agree the KIT days with the employee and notify Payroll of the specific KIT days the employee will be working (up to a maximum of ten).

Any KIT days worked will be paid to the employee at their usual rate of pay. Alternatively, an employee may request to accrue time in lieu while working KIT days, which can then be used to allow them additional time off with their child following their return to work. Such requests will be approved on a case by case basis by the General Manager in a home, or the department head in the Central Support Team.

Return to Work

Employees returning from Ordinary Adoption Leave are entitled to return to the same job and duties that they had before taking leave, provided it is an isolated period of leave or the last period of leave which was not Additional Maternity Leave, Additional Adoption Leave or more than four weeks of parental leave. If that is not the case an employee returning from Ordinary Adoption Leave, or an employee returning from Additional Adoption Leave, is entitled to return to the same job and duties unless it is not practicable to do so, in which case they will be offered suitable alternative employment after discussion with the People Team.

No notice is required if an employee wishes to return at the end of their full Adoption Leave entitlement. Employees wishing to return to work before the end of their full adoption leave must give their employer at least eight weeks' notice.

4) Neonatal Care Leave

Eligibility for Neonatal Care Leave

At Elizabeth Finn Homes we understand that having a child in neonatal care is an extremely stressful and challenging experience. As an organisation, we are committed to supporting you and doing what we can to help ensure that you are able to be by your child's side while looking after your own health and wellbeing.

Under the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023, employees who become parents on or after 6 April 2025 will be entitled to take paid leave if their newborn requires neonatal care. This will be a 'day one' right with no qualifying period of service necessary to be eligible.

A child may be placed into neonatal care if they:

- Are born early
- Are ill or injured when they are born
- Have a low birth weight
- The delivery was difficult

Neonatal care leave allows parents to have additional time off to be with a baby who is receiving Neonatal care.

Entitlement to Neonatal Care Leave

Eligible parents can take neonatal care leave once their child has been in neonatal care for at least 7 consecutive days.

Parents who have a baby admitted to neonatal care up to the age of 28 days might be eligible for up to 12 weeks of leave. This includes co-parents and partners of birth parents

What does Neonatal care include?

Neonatal care could include:

- medical care received in a hospital
- care given to the baby after leaving hospital, under the direction of a consultant
- ongoing monitoring and visits by healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital
- palliative or end-of-life care

Neonatal care might not take place in a neonatal unit. If a baby under 28 days starts receiving neonatal care, parents will be eligible to take neonatal care leave.

Eligible Parents

Parents who have shared or sole responsibility for a child are eligible. This includes if they are:

- the birth parent
- the co-parent
- married to, the civil partner of, or partner of the birth parent – this includes same-sex partners
- adopting a child, including fostering to adopt
- intended parents in a surrogacy

Each eligible parent will be entitled to a separate amount of leave. This includes parents who work for the same employer.

This is additional to other types of parental leave and pay.

Requesting Support

If you are finding it difficult to cope at work because your child is in neonatal care, you are encouraged to speak to your line manager. If for any reason you are unable to approach your line manager, you can speak to a member of the People Team.

We realise that this may not be an easy subject to talk about. However, we urge you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support.

Any information disclosed by you during discussions with your line manager or a member of the People Team will be treated sensitively and in strict confidence.

Neonatal Care Leave Entitlement

The amount of neonatal care leave that an employee can take is one week for every week the child has spent in neonatal care without interruption. A week is defined as a period of seven days starting from the day after the neonatal care began.

- The maximum number of weeks that an employee can take as neonatal care leave is capped at 12 weeks.
- Any neonatal care leave must be taken in blocks of at least one week.
- Employees can only take up to 12 weeks' neonatal care leave, even if multiple children from the same pregnancy require neonatal care.

Tiers of Neonatal Care Leave

Neonatal care leave is available to take in two tiers:

The "tier 1 period" begins when a child starts receiving neonatal care and ends on the seventh day after the child is discharged. If employees take neonatal care leave in the tier 1 period, it can be taken in one continuous block or a number of non-continuous blocks of a minimum of one week at a time.

The "tier 2 period" is any remaining period (within 68 weeks after the child's date of birth) that is not part of the tier 1 period. If employees take neonatal care leave during the tier 2 period, the leave must be taken in one continuous block.

Employees should be aware that the relevant notice requirements differ depending on which leave tier is taken (see Notice Requirements below).

Starting Neonatal Care Leave

Employees can start their leave on any day after their child has received seven days of uninterrupted neonatal care. The seven days are counted from the day after the neonatal care started.

For example, if the child started receiving neonatal care on 7 April, the seven-day count begins on 8 April. This means neonatal care leave can start on any day from 15 April. Any neonatal care leave must end within 68 weeks of the child's date of birth.

The right to neonatal care leave is in addition to any other statutory leave entitlements, such as birth parent leave, adoption leave, co-parent leave, ordinary parental leave, parental bereavement leave or shared parental leave.

The child must be in care for at least seven consecutive days. If a parent has already booked statutory parental leave, neonatal care leave can be added to the end of this.

Notice Requirements

Notice during Tier 1 Period

For each week of neonatal care leave that an employee wishes to take in tier 1, they should notify their line manager or the People Team by telephone or email, preferably before the first day of absence in that week. However, we understand that this is likely to be a challenging time, so please give notice as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Employees are also required to give notice of their intention and entitlement to take neonatal care leave using our Neonatal Care Leave notification form to provide notice of intention and entitlement to take neonatal care leave (birth). This form contains a declaration that will need to be signed.

There is no expectation to complete this form straight away while a child is receiving neonatal care. However, we do request that the form is sent to us within 28 days of the first day of the neonatal care leave, or if this is not possible, as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Notice during Tier 2 Period

Employees taking neonatal care leave in the tier 2 period will need to give notice in writing of their intention and entitlement to take neonatal care leave using our Neonatal Leave notification form to provide notice of intention and entitlement to take neonatal care leave (birth). This form contains a declaration that will need to be signed.

When taking a single week of neonatal care leave, notice should be received by us at least 15 days before the first date that you have chosen for your leave to start, or if this is not possible, as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

When taking two or more consecutive weeks of neonatal care leave, notice should be received by us at least 28 days before the first date of the leave to start, or if this is not possible, as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Changing your Neonatal Care Leave plans

If a Neonatal Leave notification form has been submitted to take neonatal care leave during the tier 2 period but the employee wishes to cancel that leave, they must inform their line manager or a member of the People Team as soon as practicably possible.

If an employee intends to take a single week of neonatal care leave, every effort should be made to notify their line manager or a member of the People Team at least 15 days before the first day of the leave.

Where two or more consecutive weeks are intended to be taken, every effort should be made to notify the employee's line manager or a member of the People Team at least 28 days before the first day of the leave.

Late Notice

We understand that having a child in neonatal care is an incredibly difficult time for parents. Please be assured that if it is not possible for you to meet the timeframes for giving or withdrawing notice as set out in this policy, we will accept later notice than this and, in some cases, we may waive the requirement for you to give notice altogether.

Neonatal Care Leave Pay Entitlement

Statutory neonatal care pay is payable during neonatal care leave periods, provided that an employee is entitled to it.

The rate of statutory neonatal care pay is set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

Employees will qualify for statutory neonatal care pay if they:

- are entitled to take neonatal care leave
- have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with us at the end of the relevant week
- remain in continuous employment from the end of the relevant week (or from the child's birth if they were born before the relevant week)
- have average weekly earnings of not less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions

- have complied with the relevant notice and evidential requirements and are able to provide the declarations as set out in this policy
- have confirmed when they wish to start receiving statutory neonatal care pay within our form to provide notice of intention and entitlement to take neonatal care leave (birth).

In this policy "relevant week" means the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth if you are entitled to statutory maternity or paternity pay. In all other cases, it means the week before the neonatal care begins. Neonatal care pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to normal PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Bereavement

Employees who have accrued entitlement to neonatal care leave can still take the neonatal care leave that they have accrued if their child passes away.

Employees may also be entitled to parental bereavement leave in these circumstances.

Where an employee has suffered a bereavement, please contact the line manager or a member of the People Team to discuss other support that we may be able to offer.

Your Rights During Neonatal Care Leave

During neonatal care leave, all terms and conditions of employment except normal pay will continue.

Employee's pay will be replaced with statutory neonatal care pay if they are eligible for it. However, other benefits such as holiday entitlement will continue to accrue and pension contributions will continue as set out below.

Holiday Entitlement

Holiday entitlements will continue to accrue as normal during any neonatal care leave.

Any holiday entitlement that has not been taken because of neonatal care leave can be carried over into the next holiday year.

Pension contributions

We will continue to make pension contributions based on the normal pay rate during any period of paid neonatal care leave. Employee contributions will be based on the actual pay received during neonatal care leave.

Our pension contributions will cease during any period of unpaid neonatal care leave.

Contact During Neonatal Care Leave

We reserve the right to maintain reasonable contact with employees during your neonatal care leave. This may be to discuss plans for taking leave, to discuss any special arrangements to ease time away from work, or to provide updates on developments at work.

Returning to Work after Neonatal Care Leave

Employees have the right to resume working in the same job and on the same terms and conditions if returning to work from a period of isolated neonatal care leave.

Where an employee returns from a period of neonatal care leave that follows on immediately from another period of statutory leave (such as birth-parent, adoption, co-parent, parental bereavement or shared parental

leave) and the total time on leave is more than 26 weeks, employees have the right to return to the same job wherever possible. However, if this is not reasonably practicable, we will offer a suitable alternative job on terms and conditions that are no less favourable than your previous role.

This also applies where employees have taken neonatal care leave consecutively with a single period of more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave.

5) Parental Leave

Parental Leave Entitlement

Each parent with a child under 18 years old can take up to four weeks per child per year up until they have either exhausted the 18 weeks entitlement or the child reaches the age of 18, The number of weeks taken in any year can be requested in one or more blocks of leave.

Eligibility for Parental Leave

To be eligible for parental leave, the employee must be named on the child's birth certificate or adoption certificate, or expected to have parental responsibility for an expected child. Employees will be entitled to parental leave from day one of employment.

We reserve the right to request evidence of the employee's eligibility to parental leave.

Qualifying parents of any gender are entitled to take up to 18 weeks parental leave per child for whom they have responsibility.

The right to take Parental Leave ends when the child reaches eighteen.

Requesting Parental Leave

When an employee wishes to take parental leave, this must be requested in writing to their manager at least 21 days before the requested leave is due to start.

It is important to note that while requested parental leave cannot be refused (unless the required notice is not given), it can be postponed for up to 6 months where the business would be particularly disrupted if the leave were taken at the time requested.

Pay Entitlement

Parental leave is unpaid leave.

Return to Work

An employee who takes parental leave of four weeks or less is entitled to return to work to the same job on the same terms and conditions as before. If leave is taken immediately after Additional Birth Parent or Additional Adoption leave, the employee must be permitted to return to the same job or if not practicable to do so, to suitable alternative employment.

6) Shared Parental Leave

Eligibility for Shared Parental Leave

To be eligible for Shared Parental Leave, an employee must have 26 weeks' service by the end of the 15th week before the expected birth date of the child and must remain employed until the start of the period of Shared Parental Leave.

Shared Parental Leave enables eligible birth parents, co-parents, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or placed. This could mean that the birth parent or adopter shares some of the leave with their partner, perhaps returning to work for part of the time and then resuming leave at a later date.

Leave Entitlement

Qualifying parents are entitled to Shared Parental Leave (SHPL) which comprises 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SHPP), which can be shared between eligible parents. Shared Parental Leave can be taken either as a continuous period or at different times throughout the year, in multiples of complete weeks.

Each parent can have up to 3 blocks of SHPL within a year of the child's birth and must give 8 weeks' notice of their request (this can be less time when a child is born up to 8 weeks prematurely).

Pay Entitlement

Statutory Shared Parental Pay is paid at the prevailing SHPP rate or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

If the birth parent or adopter curtails their entitlement to birth parent pay, adoption pay or maternity allowance before they have used their full entitlement, shared parental pay can be claimed for any remaining weeks.

To qualify for shared parental pay a parent must, as well as passing the continuity of employment test, also have earned an average salary of the lower earnings limit for the 8 weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected due date or matching date. As with Shared Parental Leave the co-parent in the family must meet the employment and earnings test.

Maintaining Contact during Shared Parental Leave

During Shared Parental Leave, the employee's line manager will maintain contact with them in order to keep them informed of developments in the workplace and to discuss (at an appropriate time) their plans to return to work. The frequency of the contact will be discussed between the manager and the employee before the employee's shared parental leave starts.

Shared Parental Leave in Touch Days (SPLIT)

At our discretion, we can offer an employee on Shared Parental Leave the opportunity to work for up to 20 "keeping in touch" (SPLIT) days. These days may be either separate days or one or more blocks of several days. Examples include the opportunity to attend a relevant training course or to attend a meeting. An employee offered such work is under no obligation to agree to do it. If they do agree, their manager will discuss with them the terms of the work assignment including what they will be paid. Agreeing to work for up to 20 SPLIT days will not affect the employees' SHPP entitlement, nor their entitlement to continue on Birth Parent Leave until the due return date.

It is the employee's manager's responsibility to agree the SPLIT days and notify Payroll of the specific SPLIT days the employee will be working (up to a maximum of 20).

Any SPLIT days worked, will be paid to the employee at their usual rate of pay. Alternatively, an employee may request to accrue time in lieu while working SPLIT days, which can then be used to allow them additional time off with their child following their return to work. Such requests will be approved on a case by case basis by the General Manager in a home, or the department head in the Central Support Team

Return to Work

An employee's rights on return to work following a period of Shared Parental Leave will depend on how much leave they have taken overall. If an employee returns to work after a period of Shared Parental Leave which, together with any other relevant statutory leave, is 26 weeks or less, that employee is entitled to return to the same job.

If an employee returns to work after a period of Shared Parental Leave which, together with any other relevant statutory leave, is more than 26 weeks or which was the last of two or more consecutive periods of relevant statutory leave (including additional Birth Parent leave, additional Adoption leave or Parental leave of more than four weeks), then the employee is entitled to return to the same job or, if not reasonably practicable, to another job which is suitable.

An employee may work for up to 20 'SPLIT' days during their overall Shared Parental Leave period. These are similar, and additional to, the 'keeping in touch' or KIT days which a birth person can use during their Birth Parent Leave.

7) Co-Parent Leave

Eligibility for Co-Parent Leave

At Elizabeth Finn Homes, we offer an enhanced Co-Parent Leave entitlement for employees who have at least 26 weeks continuous service. For employees with less than 26 weeks continuous service, the statutory entitlement will be in effect from day one of employment.

Leave Entitlement

We offer enhanced Co-Parent Leave entitlement where employees are eligible to take 6 weeks co-parent leave. This leave should be taken in minimum blocks of one week and must be taken in full within 52 weeks of the birth or placement of the child. Leave cannot be taken before the birth of the child.

The employee must give reasonable notice of Co-Parent Leave, this can be given by completing the Co-Parent Leave form available on the intranet and providing a printed copy to the Business Support Administrator or the People Team (for Central Support Team employees), who will provide a copy to Payroll to ensure the employee is correctly paid.

Pay Entitlement

Our enhanced Co-Parent Leave pay provision is as follows:

Policy	Entitlement
Co-Parent Pay	4 weeks @ 100% pay 2 weeks @ 50% pay
Co- Parent Leave: Time Off	6 weeks leave

During Co-Parent Leave the contract of employment continues as normal, except for any terms relating to remuneration.

8) Parental Bereavement Leave

Entitlement to Parental Bereavement Leave

Qualifying parents of any gender, are entitled to take up to 2 weeks Parental Bereavement Leave (PBL) on the death of a child under the age of 18 or a still-birth from the 24th week of pregnancy. The entitlement to

Parental Bereavement Leave is available to all employees with parental responsibility for a child, regardless of length of service.

Leave can be taken in a two-week block or separate one-week blocks. All leave must be taken within 56 weeks of the date of death.

Pay Entitlement

Elizabeth Finn Homes offers enhanced Parental Bereavement Leave Pay as follows:

Policy	Entitlement
Parental Bereavement Leave Pay	2 weeks' @ 100% pay
Parental Bereavement Leave: Time Off	2 weeks leave

During Parental Bereavement Leave the contract of employment continues as normal, except for any terms relating to remuneration.

Support for Employees who suffer a bereavement of their child

We recognise that miscarriage or stillbirth can have a significant and lasting impact on an employee. EFH subscribe to an employee assistance programme who offer a confidential, free to use 24-hour telephone counselling service, which can be reached by ringing 0117 934 2121.

We also have a number of trained Mental Health First Aiders who will be able to offer support within the workplace.

We value our employees and encourage managers to be empathetic, understanding and supportive of employees going through a difficult and traumatic time. Managers are encouraged to be compassionate and considerate to the employee at this difficult time.

Return to Work

An employee who takes Parental Bereavement Leave is entitled to return to their job and duties under the same terms and conditions.

9) Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave

Eligibility for Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave

Eligible employees have a statutory right to bereaved partner's paternity leave from day one of employment in circumstances where a child's primary carer dies.

In a birth case, the employee will be entitled to take leave if the child's birth parent has died and they are the father of a child or if they are not the child's father but, immediately before the death of the child's birth parent, was married to, or was the civil partner or the partner of, the child's birth parent.

In an adoption case, the employee may be entitled to take leave if they were married to, or were the civil partner or the partner of, the child's adopter on the date on which the child was placed for adoption or immediately before the death of the child's adopter.

The employee must have the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child and the purpose of the leave must be to care for the child.

Leave Entitlement

Eligible employees may take a single period of up to 52 weeks' leave. Leave can only be taken after the bereavement date and within the 52-week paternity leave eligibility period, which begins from either:

- the day after the child is born
- the day after the child is placed for adoption
- the day after the child enters Great Britain (for overseas adoption).

Where the bereavement date occurs within the last two weeks of the paternity leave eligibility period, the eligibility period will be extended, and the employee will be entitled to a maximum of two weeks' leave.

During bereaved partner's paternity leave the employee is entitled to the benefit of their normal terms and conditions of employment, except their pay and they are bound by any obligations arising under those terms and conditions except in so far as they are inconsistent with the right to bereaved partner's paternity leave.

Pay Entitlement

Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave is unpaid.

Requesting Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave

Employee must give notice of their intention to take bereaved partner's paternity leave.

If employees wish to start the leave within the first eight weeks following the bereavement date, they must provide notice before they are due to start work on their first day of absence. They can give notice verbally or in writing.

The notice must set out:

- the bereavement date
- the date they want their leave to start
- the date on which either the child was born, placed for adoption, or entered Great Britain for adoption.

If the employee wishes to start the leave after the initial eight-week period following the bereavement date, they must provide at least one week's notice in writing.

This must include the information set out above and:

- the date they intend to return to work
- a declaration that the leave will be for the purpose of caring for the child and that the child's birth parent or main adopter has died
- a declaration that they have an eligible relationship with the birth parent or main adopter.

If the employee starts their leave within eight weeks of the bereavement date and they give notice of their intention to take leave verbally, they must also give notice in writing of the date they intend to return to work. If the intended return date is more than eight weeks following the bereavement date, the written notice must also include the above declarations. Employees must give the written notice no more than eight weeks after the bereavement date and at least one week before their intended return date.

Entitlement When the Purpose of Caring for the Child Cannot be Met

Employees may still be entitled to leave where they would be eligible but for a "relevant event" happening.

These events are:

- the death of the child
- the child being returned after being placed for adoption
- the child ceasing to live with the employee (overseas adoption).

In these circumstances, employees are entitled to take bereaved partner's paternity leave until the earliest of:

- eight weeks following the end of the week the relevant event occurred in
- the end of the 52-week paternity leave eligibility period.

Where this situation arises, in addition to following the notification requirements set out above, the employee must inform us of the date and nature of the relevant event before the first day of bereaved partner's paternity leave following the relevant event. The employee can do this verbally or in writing.

Keeping in Touch Days

Employees may by mutual agreement, work for up to ten days during their leave. For this purpose, any work carried out on any day, even just an hour's work, is deemed to constitute "a day's work". Any days' work done under this provision will not have the effect of extending the total duration of the bereaved partner's paternity leave period. Payment in respect of these "keeping in touch" days will be agreed beforehand.

Return to Work

If the employee wishes to return to work after a period of 26 weeks or less of bereaved partner's paternity leave, they are entitled to return to the same job, with the same terms and conditions, in which they were employed before their absence.

If the return to work after a period of more than 26 weeks' bereaved partner's paternity leave, they are entitled to return to the same job in which they were employed before their absence or, if that is not reasonably practicable, to another job which is both suitable and appropriate for them in the circumstances on terms no less favourable. The employee's manager will explain how this affects them based on their individual circumstances.

If the employee wants to return to work but has not notified us as set out above, we may postpone the return to work to a date when they would have returned if they had followed the notice requirements. We will always give notice in writing of the postponement.

We will not postpone the return to work past the end of the paternity leave eligibility period.

If we postpone the return to work, employees will not be entitled to their usual remuneration until the date set out in the notice of postponement if the return to work is before that date. This will apply unless we have revoked the notice of postponement in writing.

Support for Employees who suffer a bereavement of their child's primary carer

At Elizabeth Finn Homes we recognise that bereavement can have a significant and lasting impact on an employee. We subscribe to an employee assistance programme who offer a confidential, free to use 24-hour telephone counselling service, which can be reached by ringing 0117 934 2121.

We also have a number of trained Mental Health First Aiders who will be able to offer support within the workplace.

We care about and value our employees and encourage managers to be empathetic, understanding and supportive of employees going through a difficult and traumatic time. Managers are encouraged to be compassionate and considerate to the employee at this difficult time.

Other policies

EFH Flexible Working Policy

EFH Special Leave Policy

Review date	Next Review Date
April 2026	April 2029