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| **Human Resources** | **HR20 Parental Policy** |

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| **Version Number** | | **Date Issued** | **Review Date** |
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| **Prepared By:** | Beth Coombes |
| **Consultation Process:** | North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) in partnership with CCG management and Trade Union organisations via the HR Policy Working Group and the CCG Partnership Forum. |
| **Formally Approved:** | July 2022 |
| **Approved By:** | ICB Board |

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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| **Date** | **Issues** |
|  | To be completed, as outlined in the agreed 2022/23 HR EIA review schedule. |

**POLICY VALIDITY STATEMENT**

Policy users should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the documentation. The policy will remain valid, including during its period of review. However, the policy must be reviewed at least once in every 3-year period.

**ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION STANDARDS**

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as easy read, large text, braille or an alternative language please contact [necsu.icbhr@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.icbhr@nhs.net)

**Version Control**

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| **Version** | **Release Date** | **Author** | **Update comments** |
| 1.0 | July 2022 | NECS HR | First Issue |

**Approval**

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| **Role** | **Name** | **Date** |
| Approver | ICB Board | July 2022 |

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# **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

1.1 Parental Leave is provided to enable employees to take time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for a child’s welfare. Parents or those who have formal parental responsibility can use it to spend more time with children and strike a better balance between their work and family commitments.

1.2 This Policy should also be seen as operating with the provisions on flexible working arrangements and employment breaks (see appropriate policies for more information). It should be noted that Parental Leave is unpaid.

# **2. PRINCIPLES**

2.1 Employees who have nominated caring responsibility for a child, up to their 18th Birthday, are eligible for Parental Leave.

2.2 Training and support will be provided to all Line Managers in the implementation and application of this policy.

**Entitlement to Leave**

2.3 The right to parental leave entitles all employees who have completed 12 months continuous NHS service to take a period of unpaid leave to care for each child  *aged up to 18.* Managers may agree to parental leave requests from employees who have less than 12 months continuous NHS service.

2.4 The entitlement is 18 weeks unpaid leave per child to be taken in periods of at least one week at a time. In the case of twins, each parent will be entitled to 18 weeks for each child (18 weeks for parents of each adopted or disabled child). In cases where the child is disabled, parental leave may be taken in days rather than in weeks.

2.5 A maximum of four weeks can be taken in any one year. Both parents can take parental leave.

**Timescales for Taking Parental Leave**

2.6 Up to 18 weeks leave up until the child’s 18th birthday.

2.7 Parents can start taking parental leave as soon as a child is born or placed for adoption, or as soon as they have completed one years continuous NHS service, whichever is later.

**Requests for Parental Leave**

2.8 All requests for parental leave must be made on the appropriate form attached to this policy, signed by a departmental manager and copied to Human Resources and Salaries for monitoring and recording and payment purposes.

# **3. EQUALITY**

3.1 In applying this policy, the organisation will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination**,** promote equality of opportunity**,** and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

# **4. DATA PROTECTION**

4.1 In applying this policy, the Organisation will have due regard for the Data Protection Act 2018 and the requirement to process personal data fairly and lawfully and in accordance with the data protection principles. Data Subject Rights and freedoms will be respected and measures will be in place to enable employees to exercise those rights. Appropriate technical and organisational measures will be designed and implemented to ensure an appropriate level of security is applied to the processing of personal information. Employees will have access to a Data Protection Officer for advice in relation to the processing of their personal information and data protection issues.

# **5. MONITORING & REVIEW**

5.1 The policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically by Human Resources in conjunction with operational managers and Trade Union representatives. Where review is necessary due to legislative change, this will happen immediately.

# **Part 2**

# **1. PROCEDURE**

**Applying For Parental Leave**

1.1 When applying for parental leave the employee must, where possible, complete and hand in the form PAR 1 (attached) and:

* specify the length of leave required;
* give at least 21 days notice before the beginning of the period of leave.

**Postponing Parental Leave**

1.2 Parental Leave may be postponed in exceptional circumstances where the timing would cause significant operational problems.

1.3 If a request for leave is postponed:

* it will only be deferred once and alternative dates will be offered;
* postponement will be for no longer than three months;
* deferred leave offered will be for the same length of time as that requested, and the start and end dates of deferred leave will be mutually agreed;
* an employee will be given reasonable written notice of a deferral together with the reasons. The minimum notice will be:
* two weeks before the start of the requested leave where the leave is for two weeks or less;
* where the leave is more than two weeks, the same length as the parental leave requested;

An employee who considers that his/her request for leave has been unreasonably postponed, may appeal through the Organisations Grievance Procedure.

**Arrangements During Parental Leave**

1.4 Whilst taking parental leave, employees are on unpaid leave.

1.5 During the period of parental leave, the employee will retain all contractual rights except remuneration, including entitlement to annual leave, eligibility for an annual incremental payment, and pension rights. Pension contributions will continue to be payable during periods of parental leave. Arrears of contributions will be deducted by the Salaries department over an agreed period of time.

**Returning from Parental Leave**

1.6 On resuming work after a period of parental leave, employees will return to their job on remuneration and other terms and conditions no less favourable than if they had not taken parental leave.

1.7 Where the employee's job has been changed in his/her absence, the employee must be notified in writing of this change prior to their return and allocated a similar job with no less favourable remuneration and terms and conditions.

# **APPENDIX 1**

# **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Equality Impact Assessments will be updated to include statistical data. Equality Impact Assessments will be updated and included in each Human Resource policy, as per the agreed 2022/23 HR EIA review schedule.