

Adoption Leave Policy &

Support Pack



NatWest
Group

Including Surrogacy Arrangements

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We regularly update this document. Make sure you have the latest version by downloading it from the intranet.

This policy and support pack is not contractual and is subject to change at NatWest Group's discretion. It will be reviewed from time to time to make sure it continues to meet the Group's legal obligations and business needs.

Who's this for?

This policy applies to employees and line managers in the **Republic Of Ireland (ROI)**.

It **does not apply** to agency workers or contractors.


How should you use this policy?

- ☑ This policy and support pack outlines core policy principles and covers general information for everyone as well as specific information/actions for employees and line managers.
- ☑ Look out for these symbols to help you navigate the policy:

 Highlights further information or a specific action for employees and line managers.

 Highlights where you'll find further information sources which may be other sections of this policy, other related policies, or other intranet pages.

Where to go for more information

 If you have any questions on the policy or supporting process or if you're dealing with a complicated case, you can [Ask Archie](#) for further support and guidance.

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1. Adoption Leave explained

1.1. Length of leave and how it can be taken

- You're entitled to take up to 42 weeks of Adoption Leave.
- The first 26 weeks is referred to as Adoption Leave and the last 16 weeks is referred to as Additional Adoption Leave.
- You're able to take this regardless of how many hours you work (i.e., whether you work full or part time) and regardless of how long you've worked for the Group.
- You're eligible for Adoption Leave provided you're adopting a child or in the case of surrogacy, as long as you'll become 'parental order parents'.
- Where a couple adopt jointly, only one person is entitled to Adoption Leave. The couple may choose which partner takes Adoption Leave. The other partner may be entitled to Partner Leave. This is the same for couples having a child through surrogacy.
- Adoption Leave will not normally be available in the following situations:
 - If a private adoption is arranged
 - If you become a special guardian or kinship carer
 - If you adopt a stepchild
 - If you adopt a family member

1.2. When can Adoption Leave start?

- The earliest adoption leave can start is 14 days before the expected date of placement or, in the case of surrogacy, on the date of the child's birth. If you're at work on that date, it'll start on the following day.
- You can choose to start adoption leave from the date of the child's placement or birth.
- Subject to agreement with your line manager, annual leave can be taken immediately before the start date of the Adoption Leave. After your child is placed with you, you must be on Adoption Leave not annual leave.
- Any annual leave that hasn't been taken before your Adoption Leave starts will be available to you to take at the end of your Adoption Leave.
- In the case of a foreign adoption, some, or all the 16 weeks additional Adoption Leave may be taken before the date of placement, for the purpose of familiarisation with the child or for purposes of arranging the placement.

1.3. Notice of intention to take Adoption Leave

1.3.1. How do I notify the bank I intend to take adoption leave?

- You should advise your line manager of your intention to adopt or that you're having a baby via a surrogate at the earliest opportunity. This will enable them to operationally plan whilst you're off.
- We know that sometimes little notice is given for the actual placement of a child, which makes early visibility of your plans more important.
- You must also submit your request on [Workday](#) as early as possible and within 7 days of being notified by your adoption agency that you have been matched with a child or at least 28 days in advance of when you wish to take Adoption Leave.
- For surrogacy, you must submit your request by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC).



Action for employees

When logging your request on Workday you'll need to know:

- The week of expected placement of your child, or birth
- When you intend to start adoption leave
- You'll also need to upload a copy of any certificates/proof to Workday when submitting your request.
- When providing notice, you should also agree with your line manager any annual leave you want to take immediately before Adoption Leave starts.
- You'll receive a letter detailing your leave and pay entitlements within 7 days of the documents being processed.

1.3.2. If you change your mind about when Adoption Leave starts

You need to notify your line manager and contact HR through [Ask Archie](#) to confirm the change at least 28 days before you wish to begin your Adoption Leave.



Action for line managers

Where there's a change of start date, you'll need to update the employee record in [Workday](#) to ensure there are no impacts, for example to pay and benefits.

1.4. Adopting more than one child

If you're adopting more than one child at the same time/as part of the same arrangement, you'll only be able to take one period of Adoption Leave.

2. Pay during Adoption Leave

2.1. Pay definitions

In this section, we'll refer to different pay related terminology and criteria. To support your understanding, here's a list of these key definitions:

The guidance uses the following key terms and abbreviations:

- **Adoptive Benefit:** Weekly payment which is a state benefit paid to you by your local Benefits Agency during adoption leave.
- **Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP):** Adoption leave pay enhanced by the Group for employees of the Group who are eligible. Any enhanced Group payments are always inclusive of Adoptive Benefit.

2.2. Pay principles

- The amount of adoption pay you'll receive depends on your length of service.
- The tables below explain the adoption pay you'll be paid based on your length of service at the qualifying week (the week in which you're notified of being matched with a child for adoption or the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth in a surrogacy situation).
- If you're on one of the Group's health benefit schemes (Disability Cover, Permanent Health Insurance (PHI), Income Continuance (IC), Permanent Health Protection (PHP)) you'll receive 100% of the health benefit you're being paid instead of your full Value Account.
- If you're on a fixed term contract, you're eligible for OAP if you meet the criteria outlined in the relevant table below. However, when your contract ends you won't receive any further OAP, you may still be eligible for Adoption Benefit.

2.3. Adoption pay

2.3.1. Employees who aren't eligible for OAP

- You aren't eligible for OAP if you have less than 26 weeks continuous service at the qualifying week (the week in which you're notified of being matched with a child for adoption or the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth in a surrogacy situation).
- You may however be eligible for State Adoptive Benefit through your local benefits agency who pay any benefit direct to yourself. You'll find further information on the benefit on their website – www.welfare.ie.

Length of Service	What and when you're paid
Less than 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the qualifying week	<p>In weeks 1 to 2 you'll receive:</p> <p>Full Value Account: 100% of current salary, pension funding and (if paid) benefit funding (less any Adoptive Benefit)</p> <p>In weeks 3 to 42 you'll receive:</p> <p>Adoptive Benefit may be available from the Department of Social Protection.</p> <p>No salary, pension funding and (if paid) no benefit funding. For further information on the treatment of your pension and benefit elections please see Part 7 Benefits during adoption leave.</p>



Action for employees

You should claim Adoptive Benefit six weeks before your Adoption Leave is due to begin.

The necessary forms can be obtained from any local office of the Benefit Section, McCarter's Road, Ardaran, Buncrana, Donegal, Ireland.

Tel: (01) 471 5898/Local: 1890 690 690.

2.3.2. Employees who are eligible for OAP

Length of Service	What and when you're paid
26 weeks or more continuous service by the 6th week before the baby is due.	<p>In weeks 1 to 27 you'll receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full Value Account inclusive of any Adoptive Benefit. <p>In weeks 28 to 42:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may receive Adoptive Benefit direct from your local benefits agency.• You'll find further information on the benefit on their website – www.welfare.ie.• You won't receive any salary, pension funding or benefit funding.

2.4. Pay related information Q&A

2.4.1. How is Adoption Leave paid?

- OAP is calculated on a weekly basis, paid on the normal salary date, and can start on any day of the week including weekends.

- OAP is paid on the number of calendar days in the month. Payments can differ on a month to month basis depending on the number of calendar days in the month. For example, February's pay may be less than the pay you received in January because it is a shorter month.
- It isn't possible for the Group to pay your Adoption pay in any other payment schedule other than what's outlined in the policy. For example, we can't spread 27 weeks OAP over 12 months.

2.4.2. Can I get a monthly breakdown of my adoption pay?

- We can't provide you with a letter to show your monthly pay. This is because adoption pay is calculated in completed weeks, and you'll therefore receive a letter detailing what your weekly pay is.
- Your pay may be different month on month depending on how many weeks there are in each month.
- If you change your adoption start date, we won't issue a new letter. Your Adoption pay will start from the new date.

2.4.3. What happens if I get a pay rise before I go on Adoption Leave?

- Any pay rise will be reflected in your adoption pay.
- If you're eligible for OAP this will be based on your most up to date salary at the time of leave.

2.4.4. What happens if I get a pay rise during my Adoption Leave?

- Any pay rise will be reflected in your adoption pay.
- Any pay rise triggers a re-calculation of adoption pay where applicable.
- If you're eligible for OAP this will be based on your most up to date salary during your Adoption Leave.

2.4.5. How do I access payslips whilst on Adoption Leave?

- Paper payslips will be sent to your home address whilst on you're on Adoption Leave.
- Payslips also remain available on [Workday](#). You may want to download the Workday App on to your personal device so you can access your payslips digitally whilst you're off.
- If you receive an additional payslip at the end of the month, this is usually because you've had a pay correction processed.

2.4.6. What happens if I get less than the standard rate of State Adoption Benefit?

You should advise [Ask Archie](#) of the rate of Adoption Benefit to be paid along with copy of the confirmation received. We will then change the deduction of Adoption Benefit from your Occupational Adoption Pay to match with the amount you are to be paid.

2.3.7. What happens if you leave the Group?

- If you leave the Group at any point, you will not be expected to pay any adoption pay back.
- If you're receiving OAP and you resign, you won't be eligible to receive any OAP after the termination date. You may continue to receive Adoption Benefit.
- If you're made redundant whilst on Adoption Leave, you should refer to the [Restructures and Adoption Leave section](#) in the policy.

2.4.8. (Surrogacy) What happens if your baby is born before your Adoption Leave start date?

- If your baby arrives early, adoption pay and adoption leave will be effective from the date of the baby's birth.



Action for employees

You should inform your line manager of the date that your baby was born as soon as possible so that they can update your [Workday](#) record and ensure you're paid correctly.

2.4.9. I am currently on one of the Group's health benefit schemes?

- If you adopt whilst you're off work and receiving a health benefit (Disability Cover, Permanent Health Insurance (PHI), Income Continuance (IC), Permanent Health Protection (PHP)), you don't have to come off your scheme if you don't want to, but you can't be on Adoption Leave and be on a scheme at the same time.
- If you choose to come off your scheme and go on to Adoption Leave, you'll only be eligible to receive OAP if you meet the criteria outlined in this policy. Your OAP will be 100% of the health benefit you're being paid instead of your full Value Account.
- If you choose to come off your scheme, there's no guarantee you'll be accepted back on to the scheme when your Adoption Leave ends. You'll be re-assessed before being accepted onto the scheme again. If you re-join your scheme after Adoption Leave, any time already spent on your scheme before your Adoption Leave will count towards the total time you can spend on the scheme. For example, if your disability benefit allows you up to five and a half years and you were on your scheme for two years before your Adoption Leave, you'll only have a further three and half years on the scheme. The 'clock' doesn't re-start from the beginning.



You'll find more information on health benefit schemes through [Ask Archie](#).

2.5. Discretionary performance bonus

- If you're eligible for a discretionary performance bonus, you'll receive a pro-rated bonus to reflect the period you've worked during the relevant performance year.
- Where eligible, the bonus will be paid regardless of whether you're receiving Adoption Leave payments at that time.
- Any bonus will be paid on the defined payment date according to the bonus payment schedule.



You'll find further information on [discretionary performance bonuses](#) including the guide to deferral on our Human Resources pages accessed through Human Resources > Pay > Bonus and awards > Deferred awards.

2.6. Sharing in success

- If you're eligible for a Sharing in Success award (i.e., have demonstrated satisfactory performance during the year and are employed by the Group on the last working day of the year), if you've not resigned before the date of the grant, you'll be told of any award due as soon as it's known.
- If you resign and leave the Group before the date of grant, you won't receive an award.
- The award will be paid on the defined payment date regardless of whether you're receiving Adoption Leave payments at that time.
- Prior to your period of leave you should update your contact details with EquatePlus to receive emails to your personal email address. You can access EquatePlus at any time from your personal device.




You'll find further information on [sharing in success](#) on our Human Resources pages accessed through Human Resources > Pension and benefits > Benefits > Sharing in Success.

3. Benefits during Adoption Leave

3.1. NatWest Group Benefits – general principles

- Before and during Adoption Leave, you can reduce or cancel some of your benefit elections. To see what you can amend, go to the [NatWest Group Benefits Hub](#) (Human Resources > Pensions and benefits > Benefits Hub).
- When you return from Adoption Leave, you'll be able to change some of your elections within 30 days of the end of your Adoption Leave and you'll be able to participate in the next Annual Election Window (AEW) as usual.
- To action this, you'll be sent a return-to-work letter prompting you to review your elections and make your changes (even if you're taking holidays immediately afterwards). You'll receive an online confirmation statement confirming any changes you've made.

 You'll find further information on how to manage your benefits on the [Benefits Hub](#) accessed through Human Resources > Pensions and benefits > Benefits Hub.


3.2. NatWest Group Benefits – Treatment of charges for your benefit elections

If you're receiving your full Value Account (salary, pension funding and (if paid) benefit funding):

Charges for your benefit elections will continue to be made against your Value Account as normal.

If you're not in receipt of any part of your Value Account (i.e., you're on nil pay):

- Charges for your benefit elections will continue to be made against your Value Account as normal.
- If you don't receive enough pay to cover the cost of these charges, the Group will cover the shortfall during this period and will not pass any charges against your statutory payment.

 You can find out which benefits are subject to tax and National Insurance by visiting the [Benefits Hub](#) accessed through Human Resources > Pensions and benefits > Benefits Hub.

Benefit	Treatment of benefit
Private Medical Cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Private Medical Cover benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. • Your Private Medical Cover benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. If you want to add your baby/child to your cover or have any other questions relating to your Vhi healthcare during your leave, you should contact them directly to discuss on 1850 44 44 44 or online at http://www.vhi.ie/ • The next option you will have to add your baby to cover is within 30 days of your Return to Work or you'll need to wait until the next Annual Election Window. • If you have any questions or changes required for Vhi during your leave you should contact them directly to discuss. Contact Vhi healthcare on 1850 44 44 44 or online at http://www.vhi.ie/
Job Need Cars	You can keep your car and continue to pay the benefit in kind tax liability but if you want to return it you should contact Merrion Fleet Management Ltd on 0044 0353 1206 1118 to arrange collection.

Banking Benefits	All banking benefits continue during your leave. Any borrowing on special staff terms will continue, such as mortgage, personal loans and overdrafts. It's not possible to freeze any payments to loans or mortgages. If you're experiencing financial difficulty, please speak to your local branch.
Staff saver commuter tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You'll continue to pay for your ticket while you're on leave and receiving pay. If you enter into a period of unpaid leave any outstanding amount will be deducted from your final salary payment. If you want to, you can also cancel your ticket. If you need to cancel your ticket you'll need to return your ticket with the Refund Form by the 14th of the month directly to the following address: Property Services, Tax saver Commuter Tickets, Ground Floor, Dublin Mortgage Centre, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Depot code: 035. Phone 00353 1 709 2000 Purchasing and Property Operations will in turn contact Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann or Bus Éireann to work out the appropriate refund due to you if applicable. If you want to work out the value of the refund, please refer to the Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann or Bus Éireann websites for more details on when refunds are applicable.
Annual Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You'll continue to build up contractual (annual leave) and bank holiday entitlement for the current holiday year (and the previous holiday year if your leave started in the previous holiday year) whilst you're on Adoption Leave. You can take all or part of these entitlements before your leave starts Alternatively, you may want to end your leave early and take all or part of your holiday entitlement before returning to work. You should discuss and agree holiday arrangements with your line manager before Adoption Leave starts Any contractual (annual leave) or bank holidays not taken before Adoption Leave starts will carry forward to the next leave year. There's no limit on the days you can carry forward if there is not sufficient time remaining in the leave year for you to take all the holidays you accrued during your Adoption Leave. However, except for 5 days, these holidays must be taken immediately after your Adoption Leave. 5 days can be taken at any time in the new leave year, as per the normal rules for holiday carry over. You must discuss and agree holiday arrangements with your line manager before your Adoption Leave starts to ensure the business can plan for the full length of time you're away.
Life Cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Life Cover Benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. With the new addition to the family, you might want to think about updating your 'nominations of beneficiaries' form. Details of our pension websites are here Human Resources > Pensions and benefits > Pensions and retirement savings > Retirement savings.
Spouse/Partner Life Assurance	Your spouse/partner Life Assurance benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave.
Disability Cover	Your Disability Cover benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave.
Critical Illness Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Critical Illness Insurance benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any children under 18 are automatically added to your cover, you don't need to take any action.
Personal Accident Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Personal Accident Insurance benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. Any children under 21 are automatically added to your cover, you don't need to take any action.
Dental Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Dental Insurance benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. Your Dental Insurance benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. If you want to add your baby/child to your cover, this should be done within 60 days after the birth of your child, or you'll need to wait until the next Annual Election Window. This can be done via the Benefits Hub (or if accessing from home you can log into nwg.tbs.aon.com) > select Update my Benefits > Benefits you might be able to change. You'll need to add your child as a dependent first before linking them to cover, this can be done by selecting Manage dependants on the Update my Benefits page.
Health Assessment	Your Health Assessment benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave.
Bike to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Bike to work benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave. If your current scheme ends whilst on leave, you'll need to wait until you return from leave before you can select a new bike.
Holiday buy	Your Holiday buy benefit will continue whilst you're on Adoption Leave.
Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plan & Retirement Savings Plan	If you're in the DB Pension Plan or making contributions to the Retirement Savings Plan, your membership will be unaffected during Adoption Leave and, unless you elect otherwise, your contributions will continue at the same level.

<p>Save as You Earn (ShareSave)</p>	<p>Existing Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to the rules of the plan, during leave you can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make monthly payments to any existing ShareSave contracts by payroll deduction if you have sufficient pay; or • If you're not receiving pay, you'll need to contact Computershare to continue to make monthly contributions to any existing ShareSave contracts by an alternative method. To set this up, you'll need to contact Computershare on 44 (0)370 702 0109 and to advise Payroll to suspend deductions from your pay using the online form detailed below; and • Take up any new ShareSave offers (subject to terms applying). • Under the UK ShareSave plan employees can choose to take a payment holiday of up to a maximum of 12 payments by contacting Payroll via an online "ShareSave Payroll Instruction - Payment Suspension" form, HR > Pensions and benefits > Benefits > Shares > ShareSave <p>Note: Suspending payments will delay when the savings plan finishes, as you'll need to catch up on the missed payments. If you miss more than twelve payments, you will lose the right to buy NatWest shares.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you want to reinstate payment through your pay, you should contact both Computershare and Payroll one month before you wish your payment to be taken by Payroll. <p>New plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Sharesave offers are subject to approval by the Board and there is no guarantee that ShareSave will operate in any given year. • Once details of a ShareSave offer are announced, a ShareSave invitation letter will be posted to your home address from Computershare. You'll need to ensure your personal home address and contact details are kept up to date on their EquatePlus account. <p>Further information regarding ShareSave can be found on the Share Plan Hub.</p>
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4. Further information for before, during and at the end of Adoption Leave

4.1. Before Adoption Leave

4.1.1. Performance Review

A performance check in should be completed before the employee starts Adoption Leave. It's a good idea to capture the key points from the check in conversation in Workday via the check in conversation template. You can find out more information about meaningful check ins on the Beyond Hub.


4.1.2. Pre-Adoption Procedural Meetings

- Employees involved in adoption, regardless of hours worked or length of service, are entitled to paid time off for pre-adoption procedural meetings and appointments (for surrogacy arrangements – antenatal appointments).

- The adoption process can be a long and stressful journey for employees, so it's important that we provide them with adequate time off to attend all the necessary appointments. This can include, but is not limited to:
 - training courses
 - social worker visits to the employee's home
 - attendance at mandatory adoption meetings
 - regular visits to the foster home of the child they will be adopting – these can be at various times of the day to allow the adopter to experience different parts of the child's daily routine.
- Employees should be supported by a mix of paid time off and flexible working approaches.
- Where an employee is adopting a child, whether they are the primary or secondary adopter they are allowed to take paid time off to attend up to 10 pre-adoption meetings or antenatal appointments, lasting up to a duration of 6.5 hours per appointment.
- Time off will be paid at the employee's normal rate of pay. If appointments are arranged during normal working hours, the employee should inform their line manager giving as much notice as possible so that arrangements can be made to cover absence.
- Shorter appointments should be managed by way of flexible working, such as the employee starting a bit earlier or working later to allow them to take some time out during the day to attend a shorter appointment. If further time off is requested to attend appointments, this may also be paid but is subject to line manager approval. Line managers should consider individual circumstances when considering such requests.

4.1.3. Nominating a buddy

- You should nominate a buddy to help you keep up to date with any significant news happening in your business whilst you're on Adoption Leave.
- A buddy is another colleague who will act as a point of contact and someone you're comfortable with contacting you outside of work.
- A buddy isn't there to replace your line manager, and you'll still need to ensure you stay connected to your line manager throughout your Adoption Leave. You'll find further information on keeping in contact with your line manager during Adoption Leave [here](#).

 Further information on the role of a buddy can be found in the [Buddy Support Pack](#) (Human Resources > Absence > Adoption Leave > Things to know). The support pack includes a form you'll need to complete together with your buddy confirming your contact details and agree a method of/frequency of contact during your leave.

4.1.4. Systems access

- You'll need to agree with your line manager the level of systems access (if any) that you want to retain while you're on Adoption Leave.
- For example, basic access to work systems would include access to the Intranet, Engage, [Ask Archie](#), NatWest Group Benefits, Oracle, Fieldglass and Planview.
- Your line manager can arrange your agreed systems access using the usual ServiceLine Express process under Manage my Teams Access.
- You can also download the Workday and Ask Archie App onto either your corporate or personal device.

Information for line managers

Arrange any access that is to be retained during the employees adoption leave by using 'Manage my Teams Access' on ServiceLine Express.

4.2. During Adoption Leave

4.2.1. Keeping in contact

- It's important to remember that you're still part of the team whilst you're on leave and maintaining regular contact with your line manager during this time will support this.
- You'll need to agree the level of contact you'd like to have with your line manager, and how you'd like them to keep in contact (e.g., calls, emails, or texts).
- Your line manager will keep you informed of any business changes that take place during your leave, including if your team/business goes through a restructure. You'll find further information on this process [here](#).
- If there are changes while you're on leave, you'll be sent all the relevant communications.



Information for employees

You must ensure all your contact details are up to date in Workday so that you're easily contactable as agreed with your line manager.

4.2.2. Group communications during Adoption Leave

During your Adoption Leave you can expect to receive some standard items of communication as outlined below:

Communication	When	How
Payslips	Monthly	Sent to your home address or can be accessed via the Workday App
Pay review comms	End February/early March	Sent to you by your line manager or can be accessed on the Workday App after the conversation with your line manager has taken place
Our View survey	September	Invited to access online by your line manager
ShareSave – invitation to join the Group's scheme	When a ShareSave option is announced	Accessed through your profile on ShareSave

4.2.3. Leaving the Group whilst on Adoption Leave

- If you're eligible for OAP and you resign, you won't be eligible for any further OAP beyond your last day.
- If you're made redundant whilst on Adoption Leave you should refer to the section Restructures and Adoption Leave in this policy and the Redundancy Policy and Support Pack.



Further information on the [resignation process](#) including the treatment of pay and benefits, can be accessed through Human Resources > Working here > Leaving the bank > Resigning.

4.3. After Adoption Leave

4.3.1. Notice to return to work

You must provide at least 28 days written notice of your intention to return to work.



Information for line managers

If an employee wants to return to work earlier than the estimated date on Workday, you'll need to update [Workday](#) to reflect the new return date. You can find help on how to do this at Human Resources > Workday Help > Absence > How to return a colleague from extended leave.

4.3.2. Returning to work – general principles

- When you return to work, in most cases you should return to your old job. Where this is not reasonably possible, you will be moved to an alternative job of equivalent or greater pay or status at the same work location or within reasonable travelling distance of your existing workplace.
- You may apply for flexible working after returning from adoption leave.
- You're able to apply to work flexibly when returning from Adoption Leave. Further information on our flexible working arrangements can be found in the [Flexible Working Policy and Support Pack](#) accessed through Human Resources > Working here > Life balance > Flexible working.
- Depending on the discussion before your return, your line manager may put a training programme in place. This training will be informal and will vary from job to job.
- The degree to which training is needed will also depend on the length of time you've been on leave.

4.3.3. Phase back

- The option to phase back after Adoption Leave can help the transition back to work, especially where you've taken the full 42 weeks of leave.
- You're able to take up to 12 weeks phase back and the phase back period should be proportionate to the amount of Adoption Leave taken. For example, if you've taken 42 weeks of Adoption Leave, utilising the full 12 weeks phase back is appropriate. If you've taken less leave, you may want to consider a shorter period of phase back.
- During phase back, you'll work reduced hours over a set period, and you'll receive your full Value Account during this time.
- There's no set programme of return as each request will be considered on an individual basis.
- Operational needs will also be taken into consideration when agreeing a phase back arrangement, however, line managers must make sure that all requests are treated with consistency.
- Phase back might involve a build-up of hours each day or the number of days in a week.
- Where you're phasing back to a part-time work pattern it's likely you'll do this sooner than someone phasing back to full-time.
- Any requests for phase back arrangements should be discussed as early as possible with your line manager or during your [return to work meeting](#).
- During a phase back period, performance goals will be based on actual working hours.
- For the purpose of assessing performance, employees are classed as having returned to work as soon as their Adoption Leave ends.
- If you need to take holiday during your agreed phase back period, you only need to book off the days that you're expected to be working. For example, if you're phasing back and are currently only working Monday and Tuesday of a full week, but you want to take annual leave for that full week, you will only need to book off Monday and Tuesday.

- Regardless of the hours worked during your phase back, you'll be paid your full Value Account reflecting your full contractual hours and not just the hours worked.

Here's 3 examples of how phase back could apply:

Example 1: Return to full time hours after 42 weeks of Adoption Leave

If you take the full 12-week phase back, you might work for 2 days a week for the first 2 weeks, 3 days a week for the next 5 weeks, and 4 days a week for the remaining 5 weeks before returning to your full time hours 5 days a week from week 13.

Example 2: Return to full time hours after 27 weeks of Adoption Leave

If you take 8 weeks phase back, you might work 3 half days a week for the first 4 weeks and 4 full days a week for the remaining 4 weeks before returning to your full time 5 days a week from week 13.

Example 3: Return to part time hours (e.g., 20 hours per week) after 39 weeks of Adoption Leave

If you take the full 12-week phase back, you might work the first 4 weeks as 1 day a week for 5 hours, weeks 5 to 8 as 2 days a week for 5 hours, weeks 9 to 12 as 3 days a week for 5 hours before returning to 20 hours per week.

4.3.4. Return to work meeting

A return to work meeting between you and your line manager should be held 8 weeks before you're due to return to work.

At the meeting the following should be discussed:

- The date you're proposing to return to work (including how you'll use any remaining holiday).
- Any phase back arrangements.
- Any other arrangements to make the return to work as smooth as possible.
- Any training, support, or development requirements to support your return to work.
- If you're making a flexible working request, further information can be found in our [Flexible Working Policy and Support Pack](#) accessed through Human Resources > Working here > Life balance > Flexible working.

4.3.5. What if you want to reduce your hours when you return from Adoption Leave?

If you're making a flexible working request, including a reduction in hours, further information can be found in our [Flexible Working Policy and Support Pack](#) accessed through Human Resources > Working here > Life balance > Flexible working. If you're reducing your hours, you'll have to request a change of hours in Workday when you return from adoption leave or holiday (if you're taking holiday immediately after your adoption leave ends).

Information for line managers

A change in hours needs to be submitted via Employee > Actions > Job Change > Change Job on Workday.

-  If you're considering reducing your hours, you may want to consider a [job share](#). Further information can be found here Human Resources > Working Here > Life Balance > Flexible Working > Job Share.

4.3.6. What if you can't return to work?

If for medical reasons, you're unable to return to work on the day you planned you must follow the normal sickness absence procedures as outlined in the [Sickness Absence Policy and Support Pack](#) (Human Resources > Absence > Sickness Absence).

4.3.7. What if childcare problems arise?

- If you encounter childcare problems when you return to work (e.g., your child or carer falls sick, or childcare arrangements fall through). If you have such problems, you may be entitled to Special Leave. The [Holiday and Other Leave Policy and Support Pack](#) provides further details on available leave.
- Alternatively, you may want to consider unpaid Parents or Parental Leave (depending on the length of leave required) and further information is available in our [Parental Leave Policy](#) (Human Resources > Absence > Parental Leave).

4.3.8. Information for line managers - The return-to-work process

Once the return-to-work discussion has been completed line managers must:

- Ensure the Adoption Leave absence is closed on Workday and return to work details are completed.
- Follow the flexible working application process where a request has been made. Further information on flexible working and the application process can be found in our [Flexible Working Policy and Support Pack](#) accessed through Human Resources > Working here > Life balance > Flexible working.
- Any job changes must be processed in Workday, taking effect the day Adoption Leave ends. Where a period of holiday is taken immediately after Adoption Leave, employees must be returned to work on Workday and then put on annual leave to ensure the correct payroll is applied.

There are several other things to consider and action when an employee returns to work and these may include (remembering that some of these can take time to set up so ensure action is initiated in good time):

- Securing a desk, laptop and telephone if required.
- Re-activating e-mail accounts and systems access.
- Updates to car parking registrations.
- Arranging refresher training.
- Extending invites to team meetings and social events.
- Re-instating 121s.
- It's also useful for you to set some time aside on their first day back and ask other team members to update the employee on any news, active projects, and anything else significant that you haven't already covered as part of your keeping in contact.

Remember that some of these can take time to set up, so ensure action is initiated in good time.

4.3.9. What if the you don't want to return to work?

If you decide not to return to work, you need to give the Group proper contractual notice by writing to your line manager. They will then return you to work on Workday and start the [resignation process](#).

5. Disruption of adoption leave

Adoption leave is disrupted if it has started but:

- You are notified that the placement will not take place;
- The child is returned to the adoption agency after placement; or

- The child dies after placement
- In case of disruption, your entitlement to adoption leave and pay (if applicable) will continue for a further eight weeks from the end of the week in which disruption occurred, unless your entitlement to leave and / or pay would have ended earlier in the normal course of events. This is the same for those using the 'Foster for Adoption' scheme.
- The same applies where an employee is taking adoption leave following the birth of a child to a surrogate mother.
- If the child has died you are also entitled to a minimum of 2 weeks paid bereavement leave following the adoption leave, and within 56 weeks of the child's death.

 Further guidance can be found in the [Holiday and Other Leave Policy and Support pack](#) (HR> Absence > Holiday and other leave).

6. Restructures and Adoption Leave

6.1. Consultation

- If your business restructures whilst you're on Adoption Leave, you'll be included in the consultation process.
- Where possible, you'll be told of the business change at the same time as others in your team, but this will depend on your personal circumstances. This will be done face to face where possible and may involve a manager visiting your home or in a mutually convenient place.
- If you can't attend in person, you'll need to tell your manager how to contact you.

 Further guidance on the [redundancy process](#) during Adoption Leave can be found at Human Resources > Working Here > Leaving the bank > Redundancy > Redundancy Policy and Support Pack.

Information for line managers

If your employee has been served notice and is due to return from their leave, email the team at ~ UB Redundancy to remove the pending Workday action. You should then follow the return from extended leave actions in [Workday](#) and confirm back to the Redundancy Team once complete.

6.2. Redundancy payments

- Payment of outstanding OAP, up to the end of the Adoption Leave period, will be made to eligible employees who leave the Group early due to Voluntary Redundancy (VR) or Compulsory Redundancy (CR).
- This will be paid in a lump sum in the month you leave the Group.
- Eligible employees will receive a payment which will include:
 - Group redundancy pay.
 - Any balance of outstanding OAP. Pension funding and where applicable benefit funding may continue to be paid up to your exit date depending on what stage of leave you're in.
- Payment for any outstanding holidays. These will be paid based on base salary only (i.e., excluding any pension funding and if applicable benefit funding).

Information for line managers – action to correctly process pay

Where an employee has been served notice:

- You should ensure that they receive full pay during the notice period, by arranging a top up of adoption pay to full pay if required.
- Notice pay is inclusive of adoption pay during the notice period and should not be paid in addition to adoption pay.
- Any additional notice top up pay will be paid as a lump sum at the end of the notice period.

7. Supporting working parents

We offer a number of policies and products which provide further support for working parents, and this support is outlined below.

7.1. Onsite nursery

There's an onsite nursery available at Gogarburn in Edinburgh. Further information can be found at Bright Horizons <https://www.bright Horizons.co.uk/our-nurseries/rbs-day-nursery-and-preschool>.

7.2. Wellbeing Hub

- Our [Wellbeing Hub](#) (Human Resources > Wellbeing) provides a range of useful information including details of our Employee Assistance Programme which offers advice, information, and support on a wide range of issues, including childcare and parenting. It's a free and confidential service available to you and your immediate family members.
- There's also useful information on the Hub in the Family and carers zone, including support through our HomeLife Employee Led Network.

7.4. Other supporting policies

We have a number of policies that offer additional leave to support childcare responsibilities once you've returned from Adoption Leave. These are listed in the [related content](#) section of this policy.