

NEONATAL CARE LEAVE AND PAY PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 and Regulations (2025) introduce a day one entitlement for up to twelve weeks' leave per year for any employee of the University who is a parent or intended parent of a baby born on or after 6 April 2025 in receipt of neonatal care. This leave is paid or unpaid subject to eligibility (see 2.6).
- 1.2 The University recognises that this may be a difficult time for you and your family. We are committed to taking a flexible and supportive approach during your leave and as you transition back to work. If you have any concerns or need support relating to your Neonatal Care Leave (NCL), please speak with your line manager or HR. These conversations will be treated with confidence. You may also wish to access the range of employee assistance services available through the University [Staff Wellbeing Hub](#).
- 1.3 Definitions of terms used in this document are provided in the appendix at the end of this document.

2. ELIGIBILITY FOR NEONATAL CARE LEAVE

- 2.1 The entitlement applies to babies born on or after 6 April 2025. It is available to staff who are parents or partners of parents (including intended parents). This includes adoptive parents and those having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement. The leave must be taken for the purpose of caring for your baby.
- 2.2 You can take the full amount of NCL within the first sixty-eight weeks after your baby's birth. When the leave can be taken depends on the tier it falls under (see section 3.10).
- 2.3 To be eligible, Your baby's neonatal care must begin within twenty-eight days of birth (counted from the day after they are born).
- 2.4 The care must continue for at least seven days (from the day after it begins). If the care lasts less than seven days, there is no entitlement to NCL.
- 2.5 There is no minimum length of service requirement for NCL, it is available from the first day you are employed by the University.

- 2.6 You will not need to provide medical evidence that your baby is receiving neonatal care in order to take NCL.

3. **LENGTH OF NEONATAL CARE LEAVE**

- 3.1 NCL can be taken in the following two periods:

Tier one period: This is immediate leave for emergency situations. It begins when your baby starts receiving neonatal care and ends seven days after that care stops. You can start your leave after your baby has had at least seven days of continuous neonatal care. This leave can be taken in blocks of at least one week, and does not need to be continuous.

Tier two period: This starts any time after the Tier One period ends and lasts until sixty-eight weeks after your baby's birth. Leave taken in this period must be taken in one continuous block. You will take any NCL that you accrued but did not take during Tier One, for example because you were on Maternity, Paternity or Adoption Leave.

- 3.2 You are entitled to one week of NCL for each full week your baby receives neonatal care, up to 12 weeks maximum. The minimum leave you can take is one week. If your baby receives fewer than 12 weeks of neonatal care, your entitlement will match that length. NCL is based on your usual working pattern and pay; for example, if you work three days a week, each week of NCL would be three days.
- 3.3 If your baby is admitted to neonatal care for at least seven consecutive days, discharged and readmitted for another period of seven consecutive days, both periods will count towards NCL, provided that the second admittance occurs before twenty-eight days from birth.
- 3.4 Whether you have a single baby or twins (or more), the entitlement to NCL remains the same.

4. **NEONATAL CARE PAY**

- 4.1 To be eligible for Neonatal Care Pay (NCP) you must have at least twenty-six weeks' continuous service by the end of the relevant week (see appendix). If you do not meet this requirement, you will still be entitled to Neonatal Care Leave, but it will be unpaid.
- 4.2 NCP is paid at the statutory rate, which increases annually every April in line with other statutory payments. The current rates can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).
- 4.3 Whether you have a single baby or twins (or more), the entitlement to NCP remains the same.

5. **PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFYING AND NOTICE PERIOD**

- 5.1 Please complete the Neonatal Care Leave and Pay form on [MyView](#).

5.2 You should notify the University as soon as reasonably practicable if your baby has been admitted to neonatal care and when they have been discharged.

5.3 Notice periods for taking NCL (and NCP if applicable) are as follows:

Tier one period: NCL – for each week of absence, notice should be provided before you are due to start work on your first day of absence in that NCL week or if this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. Notice does not need to be via MyView if this is not possible. NCP – within 28 days of the first day of the statutory pay week, notified via MyView.

Tier two period: NCL – 15 days’ notice to take a single week. 28 days’ notice to take two or more consecutive weeks. NCP notice requirements are the same for NCL in the tier two period. Notification must be made via MyView.

5.4 The University recognises that, particularly during the Tier One period, it may be difficult for you to meet the above notice periods and line management discretion will be applied where appropriate.

6. INTERACTION WITH OTHER STATUTORY LEAVE

6.1 You are entitled to take NCL (and NCP if applicable) in addition to Maternity, Adoption, Paternity or Shared Parental Leave.

6.2 If your baby’s neonatal care occurs within twenty-eight days of their birth you may already be on one of the types of leave set out in 6.1 when your entitlement to NCL commences as Maternity Leave will automatically start the day after the baby’s birth. Maternity and Adoption leave cannot be interrupted by any other type of leave. The sixty-eight-week cut-off date enables you to stay on that leave and take NCL and NCP during the Tier Two period once you have completed maternity or adoption leave and pay, provided it is taken within sixty-eight weeks of your baby’s birth.

6.3 Two weeks’ Paternity Leave can be followed by Neonatal Care Leave (NCL), if the baby is still receiving neonatal care. If NCL begins within the first 28 days after birth but you need to take Paternity Leave within the 56-day window, NCL can be paused and resumed after Paternity Leave ends.

6.4 NCL can be taken before, after or in between blocks of Shared Parental Leave.

6.5 Please see the [Carer Support Policies](#) pages for more information on Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental leave, and other types of leave that you may wish to consider.

APPENDIX

Summary of terms and definitions

Neonatal care	<p>Medical care received in a hospital.</p> <p>Medical care received in any other place providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your baby is/was an inpatient in hospital and needs continuing care after leaving the hospital;• the care is under the direction of a consultant; and• the care involves ongoing monitoring and visits from healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital where baby was an inpatient. <p>Palliative or end-of-life care.</p>
Partner	A person who lives with the baby's birth parent or adopter in an enduring family relationship but is not a relative
Continuous service	The date you commenced working for the University without a break in employment.
Relevant week	<p>If you are entitled to SMP or SPP (birth), the 15th week before expected week of your baby's birth.</p> <p>If you are entitled to SAP or SPP (adoption), the week in which you are notified of being matched with the baby for adoption.</p> <p>In all other situations, relevant week is the week immediately before week in which the neonatal care begins.</p>

Review / Contacts / References	
Reference:	HR PO045
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Related internal policies, procedures, guidance:	Carer Support Policies
Policy owner:	HR – Employee Relations
Lead contact:	Head of Employee Policy & Relations