

Enhanced Adoption Leave Policy

Our approach

Adopting a child is a life-changing decision. Whether you are adopting through an agency, fostering to adopt, or welcoming a child through surrogacy, we want to support you in the same way we support colleagues who give birth.

This policy sets out your leave and pay entitlements. Our enhanced adoption pay mirrors our enhanced maternity pay - because we believe welcoming a child into your family deserves the same recognition however that child arrives.

Who this policy is for

This policy applies if you are the primary adopter - the person who will be taking the main period of leave. If you are the secondary adopter (your partner is the primary adopter), you may be eligible for paternity/partner leave instead.

Only one person in a couple can take adoption leave. The other may take paternity/partner leave.

Your entitlement

You can take up to 52 weeks of adoption leave. This is made up of 26 weeks of Ordinary Adoption Leave and 26 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave.

When adoption leave can start

For UK adoptions: your leave can start on the date the child is placed with you, or up to 14 days before the expected placement date.

For overseas adoptions: your leave can start when the child arrives in the UK, or within 28 days of that date.

For surrogacy: your leave can start on the day of birth or the following day.

Letting us know

Please let your manager know within seven days of being matched with a child, or as soon as you reasonably can. You will need to confirm when you intend to start your leave and provide your matching documentation from the adoption agency.

Time off for appointments

As the primary adopter, you are entitled to paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments. The secondary adopter is entitled to paid time off for up to two appointments (up to 6.5 hours).

Adoption pay

Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)

If you meet the statutory eligibility criteria, you will receive SAP for up to 39 weeks, paid in line with Government rates.

Enhanced Adoption Pay

If you have at 26 weeks service by the end of the week in which you're notified that you've been matched with a child for adoption, you will receive:

- 13 weeks at 100% of your normal pay
- 13 weeks at 50% of your normal pay
- The remaining weeks at SAP

Enhanced adoption pay is inclusive of any SAP. It is paid through normal payroll and subject to tax and National Insurance.

Keeping in touch

You can work up to 10 Keeping in Touch (KIT) days during your adoption leave, by agreement. These are optional for both sides.

KIT days can be useful for training, team events, or just staying connected. They allow you to work without ending your leave or losing your pay. You will receive your full contractual pay for the hours worked, topping up any statutory maternity pay. If you would like to use them, agree the purpose and pay arrangements with your manager and the People Team in advance.

Coming back to work

If you take 26 weeks or less, you have the right to return to the same job on the same terms.

If you take more than 26 weeks, you still have the right to return to the same job - unless it is genuinely not reasonably practicable, in which case we will offer a suitable alternative.

Questions

Adoption can be a complex and emotional journey. If you have questions about this policy or want to talk through your options, speak to the People Team at peopleteam@milbank.co.uk.

milbankgroup.co.uk

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V1	05/01/2025	Milbank Group	Creation
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