

Neonatal Care Leave Policy

Our approach

If your baby needs neonatal care, the last thing you should be worrying about is work. This is a frightening and exhausting time, and we want to make sure you can be with your baby.

Neonatal care leave is a day-one right. You do not need any minimum length of service.

What neonatal care means

Neonatal care is medical or palliative care that your baby receives in the first 28 days after birth. It must last for at least 7 consecutive days. The care can be given in hospital or in any other setting.

Who can take neonatal care leave

You can take neonatal care leave if you have parental responsibility for a baby receiving neonatal care. This includes:

- A parent of the child
- An intended parent under a surrogacy arrangement
- The partner of the child's mother at the date of birth
- In adoption cases: the adopter, prospective adopter, or the partner of either, at the date the child is placed

If you do not fall into one of these categories but would like time off to support a baby receiving neonatal care, speak to your manager. We will consider requests on a case-by-case basis and may offer compassionate or other leave.

How much time you can take

You are entitled to one week of neonatal care leave for every 7 consecutive days your baby receives neonatal care, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

You must take the leave before the end of 68 weeks from the baby's date of birth (or date of placement in adoption cases).

When you can take it

There are two windows for taking neonatal care leave:

While your baby is receiving care (or within 7 days of care ending)

During this period, you can take the leave in non-consecutive weeks. This gives you flexibility to be at the hospital when you are most needed.

Leave cannot start until the day after your baby has received at least 7 consecutive days of neonatal care.

After this initial period

If you choose to take neonatal care leave later - for example, after your baby comes home - the leave must be taken in consecutive weeks.

If you are already on other leave

If your baby starts receiving neonatal care while you are on maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave, you can take your neonatal care leave after your other leave ends - as long as it falls within the 68-week window.

Letting us know

Please let your manager know in writing. We have kept the requirements as simple as we can, given that this is a stressful time.

You will need to tell us:

- Your baby's date of birth (and date of placement if adoption)
- When your baby started receiving neonatal care
- When neonatal care ended, if it has
- When you would like your leave to start
- How many weeks you would like to take

How much notice to give

If your baby is still receiving care (or care ended within the last 7 days): let us know before you are due to start work on the first day of absence, or as soon as you reasonably can.

If you are taking the leave later: give us at least 15 days' notice for one week of leave, or 28 days' notice for two or more weeks.

Changing your mind

If you need to change or cancel your leave, let us know using the same notice periods as above.

Pay

You are entitled to Statutory Neonatal Care Pay if you:

- Have at least 26 weeks of continuous service by the week before neonatal care starts
- Earn at least the lower earnings limit for National Insurance

Statutory Neonatal Care Pay is paid at the statutory rate set by the Government, or 90% of your normal weekly earnings - whichever is lower. You can receive up to 12 weeks of pay.

If you do not qualify for Statutory Neonatal Care Pay, you are still entitled to the leave - it will be unpaid.

To claim pay, let us know in writing at the same time as your leave notice.

Your terms and conditions

During neonatal care leave, all your normal terms and conditions continue - apart from pay, which is covered above.

Coming back to work

You have the right to return to the same job, on the same terms and conditions. If your total statutory leave (including any maternity, paternity or other leave) exceeds 26 weeks, and it is not reasonably practicable for you to return to the same role, we will offer a suitable alternative on no less favourable terms.

Other support

If your baby does not survive, our Parental Bereavement and Pregnancy Loss Policy sets out the leave, pay and support available to you.

If you need additional time, flexibility, or support beyond what is set out here, please speak to your manager or the People Team. We will do what we can.

Questions

If your baby is receiving neonatal care and you need help understanding your rights, contact peopleteam@milbank.co.uk. We will guide you through everything.

milbankgroup.co.uk

Version	Date	Author	Changes
V1	22/01/2026	Milbank Group	Creation
V2	30/04/2026	Milbank Group	Approved