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## **Parental Leave**

Every parent who has worked for his/her employer for at least one year and who has parental responsibility for a child, has the legal right to take up to 13 weeks' unpaid parental leave in total up to the time a child reaches the age of five. (For parents with parental responsibility for a child in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, the maximum is 18 weeks, and the right extends until the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday). The maximum leave which can be taken in each year is 4 weeks.

A recent Court of Appeal decision has made it clear that parents do not have the right to ask for parental leave in units of less than a whole week, except where the parental leave is in respect of a child who is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. In such situations the parental leave can be taken in periods of less than a week.

It is, of course, open to employers to agree, as a contractual term, that parental leave can be taken by all eligible employees in periods of less than a week.

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