

Paternity policy tips for employers

Levelling the parenting playing field

How employers can support new fathers and non-birthing partners.
Adrienne Burgess, Joint CEO and Head of Research at The Fatherhood Institute

1

Be transparent about your policy - making you an employer of choice

Many companies don't openly shout about their parenting policies during the recruitment process, or even to current employees. According to new research from childcare service Koru Kids', 3 in 5 fathers and non-birthing partners said a substantial paternity package would be a key factor when looking for a new job.

Offering a solid paternity package will attract more quality candidates and help to foster a more open culture in the workplace too.

2

Prepare for their departure

The study also found just under half of fathers reported that they were only able to partially switch off from work while on paternity leave. New fathers and non-birthing partners must be able to focus all their attention on their new baby and on the needs of their partner and any other children.

The first year is crucial in terms of child development and bonding, as well as to family health and wellbeing; new fathers and non-birthing partners shouldn't feel pressured into checking emails or joining meetings whilst on leave. Ahead of their leave period, ensure you have adequate cover in place and have conducted thorough handovers.



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3

Don't exacerbate parenting stereotypes

The reality of being a parent is that schedules may need to change at the last minute. Mothers tend to bear the brunt of such changes, not least because schools tend to call on them, even when asked to contact the father as the first responder. 4 in 5 parents believe the unequal government policies for maternity/paternity leave reinforce traditional gender stereotypes.

Employers who offer a generous paternity package can 'leap frog' these inequalities, promoting gender equality, reducing their Gender Pay Gap, and changing the nation's gender culture.

4

Make dual caretaking visible in your organisation

Use the word 'father' liberally in materials relating to parenting policies and include diverse images too. Reduce the use of the term 'parents' (which is frequently heard as 'mothers') – instead, call out both parents by using 'mothers and fathers' and 'fathers and mothers'. Actively recruit fathers to workplace parenting groups and choose topics for presentation/discussion that relate directly to them.

5

Leaders should walk the walk

C-suite employees should lead by example when it comes to doing 'paternity leave' right so that others follow suit.

They should take the time off that they need, completely switching off from work duties, joining parenting groups and encouraging open and honest conversations on the subject. This would in turn result in a trickle-down effect and ensure fathers and non-birthing parents across the company feel supported and seen/heard.



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