

CLERGY MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION AND PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Policy Purpose

This policy sets out clear guidance on maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave and pay. This policy also signposts to further information, support and guidance.

Scope

This policy applies to stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy in the Diocese of Worcester including curates, ordinands in training and those of incumbent status.

Background and Commitment

This policy for the Diocese of Worcester follows the guidelines of the National Church of England [Family Friendly Policy](#) (click on the link to read the policy). This policy aims to support clergy who need time to care for family, including guidance and information on maternity leave. The Diocese of Worcester is committed to supporting ordained clergy who are planning, expecting or bringing up a family and to providing them with clear guidance on leave and pay.

We will ensure that, as far as possible, you can combine your family and ministry responsibilities. We value all contributions and encourage clergy women to return to their ministry after maternity leave and for all parents to be supported as they balance family life and ministry.

Leave entitlement.

Immediately on commencement of their office, office holders have the following statutory entitlement to leave:

- maternity leave - 52 weeks
- adoption leave – main adopter has the same rights as maternity leave

Office holders with a least 26 weeks' service up to any day in the 'qualifying week' are entitled to:

- Paternity leave - 2 weeks
- Shared Parental Leave

Please note eligibility carries across, without break, from training to ordination.

Pay entitlement during parental leave

The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd has agreed to add to the statutory entitlement so stipendiary clergy receive their stipends in full, or pro rata for part-time posts, (taking into account statutory maternity pay, shared parental pay, paternity pay and adoption pay) during:

- The first 39 weeks of statutory maternity and adoption leave.
- A period of shared parental leave.
- The two weeks of statutory paternity leave.

Annual Leave during parental leave

You still accrue your holiday entitlement while on:

- maternity leave
- paternity leave
- adoption leave
- shared parental leave

For example, if you take a year of maternity leave, you'll return with a whole year's accrued holiday. Please advise the HR team whether you will take this holiday before or after your parental leave.

Ante natal Care

You have the right to (paid, if stipendiary) time off for ante natal care.

Maternity Leave

Notification:

Once your pregnancy is confirmed, please inform the HR team and your Archdeacon. With your permission and agreement, together we will inform our Dean of Women's Ministry and your Area Dean, who will be able to offer you support as you plan for your leave and for the arrival of your baby. They will offer guidance in setting out expectations for pregnancy, leave and return with your Churchwarden/s and Incumbent and Clergy colleagues as appropriate.

- The Diocesan HR team will then make arrangements to advise you of the current maternity leave and payment arrangements, in line with National Guidelines and the enhanced pay as listed above. We will support you with advice on any forms or notifications required.
- You will be given a copy of your Maternity Certificate (MAT BI form including the expected due date) by your midwife at your 20 week scan and you are required to send this to the Diocesan HR team who will ensure Clergy Payroll Services receive a copy.
- The National team will need your certificate at least 28 days before the start of your leave and will need to know the date you plan to start your leave - you can amend this at a later stage.

Leave:

- You are entitled to up to 52 weeks' maternity leave, which is comprised of 26 weeks Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks Additional Maternity Leave.
- Non-stipendiary office holders are already entitled to statutory maternity leave regardless of length of service.

Pay and Benefits:

- The DBF currently offers enhanced Maternity Pay during the first 39 weeks of statutory maternity leave for stipendiary clergy. This means you receive your full stipend (or pro-rata if you are part-time) during those 39 weeks. This enhanced pay eligibility is irrespective of whether you qualify for Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay or the length of time you have held office in this diocese.
- Clergy receiving maternity or other pay will continue to earn pension as usual. If they pay voluntary contributions, these also continue but can be reduced or stopped. If clergy take unpaid leave, this is not pensionable.
- Clergy office holders remain in the provided house during maternity (and other parental) leave.
- Self-supporting ministers have the same entitlement to maternity (and other parental) leave as other beneficed and licensed clergy but are not eligible to receive maternity (and other) pay, as they do not receive a stipend.
- If self-supporting ministers are provided with a house for the better performance of their duties, they have a right to stay in the house during any period of leave, as they remain in office during their maternity (and other) leave.
- If you become pregnant, we will offer maternity benefits in accordance with National Guidance at that time. Any changes in the guidance will be notified to those clergy affected as appropriate.

Cover

As office holders, clergy (unless they are Curates in Training) are legally responsible for arranging their own cover for any reason, including maternity, paternity, parental, shared parental and adoption leave, as they remain in office whilst on maternity (and other) leave.

We will support you by planning with you for cover arrangements. This will be done collaboratively with your Area Dean, Archdeacon, Incumbent and Clergy colleagues where appropriate, but will be led by you with your Area Dean and Archdeacon. During the leave, cover will be the responsibility of the Parish and the Area Dean/Archdeacon.

Self-supporting ministers will also need assistance with cover while on maternity or adoption leave (they are unlikely to share leave, as they will not be eligible to receive shared parental pay) and when returning from leave.

“Keeping in Touch Days” (KIT Days)

Clergy office holders do not lose pay if they stay in touch with the parish or diocese or carry out some of the duties of their office during their maternity leave. There is therefore no requirement to arrange formal Keeping in Touch (“KIT”) days.

However, clergy will need to think through in advance carefully what arrangements they want to make for keeping in touch during any period of maternity (and other) leave, as they may wish to set out clear boundaries.

Maternity and Parental leave – Policy for Training Posts

The length of a training post may be extended to take account of time spent on maternity, adoption, parental or shared parental leave.

In the case of a training curacy, maternity (and other) leave will result in the curacy being extended (with an accepted increase in costs such as housing which we regard as investments in someone's ministry.) This is to ensure that full training is provided.

Clergy returning to work after maternity (and other) leave who wish to complete their training on a part time basis and have the length of their training curacy extended should use the process for making a request for time off or adjusting their duties to care for a dependant. You can see the procedure [here](#)

Ordinands

We follow the National Guidance for dioceses and TEs on policies for ordinands who are about to become parents

Please contact the HR team or the Director of Ordinands and Vocation for further details

Returning to Ministry following Leave

We recognise there may be a need for additional support and phased return after maternity (and other) leave, when clergy resume carrying out the duties of their office. The period immediately after maternity (and other) leave may be a challenging one and the HR team, Area Dean, Archdeacon and Dean of Women's Ministry are available to offer guidance to clergy in this position so you are receiving the support you need.

This may be a time to be flexible and creative and consider the possibility of part time stipendiary ministry. Clergy should be able to request a temporary variation in how they carry out the duties of their office if they do not wish to return immediately to full time ministry. See the procedure [here](#)

For longer term planning around part- time ministry, in the first instance please talk to your Area Dean and Archdeacon who together with the HR team will offer guidance.

It may not always be possible to grant all requests, but we bear in mind that, even if this results in additional costs, this might be better than having to provide the parish with additional support for a longer period during a vacancy if the office holder is not able to continue in ministry. Our overall aim is to be flexible as well as realistic.

Paternity leave and pay

Pay

In this Diocese, stipendiary office holders receive two weeks' Paternity Pay at full stipend, irrespective of whether they qualify for Statutory Paternity Pay or how long they have held office in the diocese for.

Leave

You can take either 1 or 2 weeks' leave. If you choose to take 2 weeks, you can take them together or separately. You get the same amount of leave even if you have more than one child (for example, twins).

A week of leave is the same amount of days that you normally are on duty in a week. For example, if you only work on Mondays and Tuesdays, then a week of leave is 2 days.

Your leave cannot start before the birth. It must end within 52 weeks of the birth (or due date, if the baby is early). The start and end dates rules are different [if you adopt](#).

Notification

You will need to complete an SC3 Government Form – further information and a link to the SC3 form can be found within this [page](#). Send your form to the Diocesan HR team HR team who will notify clergy payroll.

Shared Parental Leave

Parents who meet the conditions for entitlement to Shared Parental Leave may share the mother/main adopter's entitlement to 50 weeks of leave. After taking two weeks' compulsory leave, a mother (or adopting parent) is entitled to reduce their entitlement to their remaining maternity (or adoption) leave, either by returning to work before the full leave entitlement has been taken or by giving notice to curtail their leave at a specified future date. They may then share the balance of any remaining statutory leave and pay with the other parent.

In order to be eligible for Shared Parental Leave, each of the parents needs to have been employed continuously by their respective employers for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the due date (or by the end of the week an adopting couple were matched with the child).

Each parent must remain employed by their respective employers while they take Shared Parental Leave. Stipendiary office holders who are eligible for and exercise their entitlement to Shared Parental Leave are entitled to statutory Shared Parental Pay at the same rate as statutory maternity/adoption pay.

The eligibility and notification requirements for Shared Parental Leave and Pay are quite complex and we encourage you to get in touch with the HR Team to explore this initially.

Adoption leave and pay (and shared adoption leave and shared adoption pay)

The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd has agreed to add to the statutory entitlement so stipendiary clergy receive their stipends in full during:

- The first 39 weeks of adoption leave.

Please inform the HR team at the Diocese of the date you wish your ordinary adoption leave to start.

Parental Bereavement Leave

Clergy do not, at present, have a legal entitlement to parental bereavement leave. However, Our overriding consideration is to treat bereaved parents compassionately and ensure that clergy are given the appropriate amount of special leave, which is likely to exceed the statutory two week minimum provided for in the regulations.

Unpaid Parental Leave

- All office holders who are parents are entitled to parental leave of up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday. However, unless agreed otherwise, a parent cannot take more than 4 weeks of parental leave for each child in any year.
- Parental leave must be taken in blocks of whole weeks, rather than in individual days, unless agreed otherwise or if the relevant child is disabled. . In order to qualify for parental leave, an office holder must have held office for more than a year and either be named on the child's birth or adoption certificate or have or expect to have parental responsibility.
- Office holders must give 21 days' notice before their intended start date. . Any unpaid leave will be non-pensionable.

Further Support

- We seek to create greater awareness of issues of clergy care and wellbeing across the whole church. We believe that, when we care for and are accountable to one another, when we take some time to reflect on our own situation and needs, and when we are able to enter openly into dialogue with both the local and wider church about their well-being, this is a blessing for the whole church.
- Whilst the Covenant for Clergy Care and Well-being is focussed on ordained ministers, our Flourishing in Ministry booklet, which can be downloaded below, is intended as a practical resource for all those exercising licensed lay and ordained ministry in the Diocese of Worcester. We hope that these resources will help to articulate principles that promote ministerial flourishing and support every minister to thrive in their life and ministry.

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-church-role/clergy/clergy-wellbeing/flourishing-in-ministry>

- Clergy Support Trust are an incredibly generous grant making body, that can help towards childcare costs and/or a family holiday, among other things. <https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/>
- Please also see: <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-church-role/clergy/support-for-clergy/financial-support-clergy>