



Royal Air Force New Parent Pack

Managing Shared Parental Leave

A Guide for Service Personnel and
their Line Managers

v3

The contents of this booklet are intended to simplify the procedure and entitlements of Shared Parental Leave and are for guidance only.

The following guidelines do not overrule policy in any way.

Please contact Air-COSPers-Del-ParentWllbg@mod.gov.uk for amendments or updates.

What is Shared Parental Leave (ShPL)?



Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) offers eligible service personnel who are parents a flexible way to share time off work in the first year after their child is born, born through surrogacy or placed with them for adoption.

How much leave can be shared?



A mother must take a minimum of 2 weeks maternity leave following the birth of a child. An adopter or parent of a child born through surrogacy must take at least 2 weeks of adoption leave following the placement or birth of the child. Therefore, the maximum amount of ShPL that can be taken is 50 weeks.

Only one period of ShPL can be applied for regardless of the number of children born in a single pregnancy, the number of children matched for adoption at the same time or adopted from overseas as part of the same adoption arrangement.

Who is Eligible?



ShPL can only be used by the child's 2 parents.

One parent must be the mother, adopter or parental order parent of a child born through surrogacy.

and

The other parent must be the father of the child, or the spouse, civil partner or partner of the child's mother,

adopter or parental order parent of a child born through surrogacy.

Both parents must be in an enduring family relationship and share the main responsibility for the care of the child at the time of the child's birth or placement for adoption.

What other criteria needs to be met for ShPL?



Some further criteria need to be met in order for a service person to be entitled to ShPL:

- The mother or primary adopter of the child must be eligible for statutory maternity or adoption leave and/or statutory maternity or adoption pay.
- Notice must have been given to reduce any maternity or adoption leave.
- The service person must be serving in the Armed Forces at the start of each period of ShPL.
- The service person must inform their Commanding Officer (CO) of their eligibility for ShPL and provide the necessary declaration and evidence.

In addition to the above, the service person needs to satisfy the Continuity of Employment Test and the other parent needs to satisfy the Employment and Earnings test as detailed in the following table:

Service Person Continuity of Employment Test	Spouse, Civil Partner or Partner Employment and Earnings Test
The Service Person has been a serving member of the Armed Forces for a minimum of 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the qualifying week (the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC) or matching date (for adoption)) and is still serving at the start of each ShPL period.	In the 66 weeks before the EWC or matching date (for adoption), the other parent must have worked for at least 26 weeks (not necessarily continuously) and earned at least £30 per week (on average) in any 13 weeks of the 66-week period.

Please note – if a parent is self-employed, they will not be entitled to ShPL or Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) but if they satisfy the Employment and Earnings Test this may enable their serving partner to access ShPL and ShPP.

How to Apply for Shared Parental Leave



Applications for ShPL should be submitted to the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR Staff at least 8 weeks prior to the start of the leave. ShPL should be applied for using [JPAR007](#). Service personnel must ensure they have

confirmed their entitlement to ShPL with their HR Centre or Unit HR staff and discussed potential leave and pay patterns with the other parent before submitting their applications.

Line Managers should have an informal discussion with personnel applying for ShPL as soon as possible during the application process. This is an opportunity to talk through the ShPL process and identify any effects taking ShPL may have on the service person or Unit.

How many bookings can be made?



Three notifications of ShPL can be submitted. Notifications of ShPL consist of a pattern of leave submitted at the same time in one notification. Three separate weeks of leave submitted on the same [JPAR007](#) count as one notification and not three.

A line manager can accept more than three notifications of ShPL if operational circumstances allow. Advice from relevant HR Centres or Unit HR staff should be sought before authorising a notification exceeding the cap of three.

Please note – an application to change or book ShPL will count towards one of the authorised notifications.

Can Shared Parental leave bookings be changed?



If a child is born before or after the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), a service person who has already submitted an application for ShPL may take the leave at the equivalent time to when they would have, had the baby been born on time. An application to vary the leave should be submitted to the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR staff using [JPAR007](#) as soon as possible following the birth of the child. This will not affect the cap of 3 notifications allowed. Changes in ShPL in cases of cancelled adoption is covered later in this leaflet.

Leave Patterns



ShPL must be taken in complete week blocks and can start on any day of the week. Up to 3 notifications can be submitted and can be booked as either Continuous, Discontinuous or Concurrent leave.

- **Continuous leave** is ShPL that is taken in one period of unbroken leave.
- **Discontinuous leave** is ShPL split up into blocks of weekly leave. These blocks of leave can be submitted in a single notice. If a CO refuses discontinuous leave, the refusal must also have HR agreement and a continuous leave pattern agreed.

- **Concurrent leave** means that as long as maternity/ adoption leave has been curtailed for a future date, the remainder of leave can be taken as ShPL by the other parent whilst the parent is still on maternity/ adoption leave.

Please note – Service personnel applying for ShPL should discuss their intended ShPL leave patterns with their LM before submitting [JPAR007](#).

Deferral or Recall from Leave



Deferral of a period of ShPL that has already been booked or recall of a service person from ShPL should only be for exceptional service reasons. Deferral or recall of ShPL can only be authorised by an officer of OF4 or above. If ShPL is deferred or a service person is recalled for any reason, they should be informed of this in writing by their Chain of Command using [JPAR007](#) as soon as possible giving the service person a minimum of 4 weeks' notice. A copy of the completed [JPAR007](#) should also be sent to the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR staff.

If the Chain of Command has to defer or recall a service person from ShPL, the leave should be granted as soon as it is reasonably practical. The ShPL subsequently granted should be completed within 18 months of the birth or placement for the adoption of a child.

What Pay are Service Personnel Eligible for whilst on Shared Parental Leave?

Shared Parental Pay Policy (ShPP)



ShPP is more complex than leave and depends on a number of factors including how long the service person has been serving, commitment type and intentions on returning to work at the end of the leave period. The information below is based on straight forward circumstances. If a service person has a more complex situation or requires further clarification [JSP 760 – Leave Regulations](#) should be referred to as well as having a discussion with relevant HR Centre's or Unit HR staff.

There are 2 types of pay available to a service person if they are eligible for ShPL.

Statutory Shared Parental Pay (Statutory ShPP):

- Statutory ShPP is payable for up to 39 weeks minus the number of weeks that Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) has been received for.
- Statutory ShPP is paid at 90% of the service persons average weekly earnings or the statutory pay rate set by the government, whichever is the lower. The weekly rate of Statutory ShPP is published [Here](#).
- Any balance after SMP/SAP which is then converted into Statutory ShPP can be claimed up to the child's first birthday or within one year of adoption when taken with ShPL.

Please note – The first 2 weeks of adoption or maternity leave, and the corresponding statutory pay (SMP or SAP) are compulsory. Therefore, the maximum number of weeks for ShPP is 37.

Occupational Shared Parental Pay (Occupational ShPP):

- Occupational ShPP is available for service personnel who have completed one year of continuous service by the 15th week before the beginning of the week in which the baby is due. They must also state their intention to complete their Return of Service following their ShPL.
- Occupational ShPP is the RAF pay which is offered for up to 26 weeks of ShPL. Occupational ShPP tops up your Statutory ShPP to your normal pay rate.

In terms of money received, what is seen in the money paid into the bank is the same, but it is made up of Statutory ShPP and Occupational ShPP.

- Occupational ShPP can be claimed at any time before the child's first birthday or within a year of adoption providing the service person is also receiving Statutory ShPP for the ShPL period.
- If both parents are serving, they can choose who accesses the Occupational ShPP. They will have up to 26 weeks to share between them, taking into consideration any maternity or adoption leave and pay already taken.

Unpaid ShPL:

Weeks 39-52 inclusive are unpaid. However, ShPL and ShPP is flexible. These weeks can be taken at any point during the ShPL period, up to the child's first birthday or within a year of adoption.

Eligibility for Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)



In addition to meeting the eligibility for ShPL, personnel claiming ShPP must also ensure they satisfy some further criteria. Advice should always be sought from relevant HR Centre's or Unit HR staff if clarification is needed:

- The mother of the child or the person taking adoption leave must be entitled to Statutory Maternity pay (SMP), Statutory Adoption pay (SAP) or Maternity Allowance (MA).
- The mother of the child or the person taking adoption leave must have curtailed their Maternity, Adoption or Maternity Allowance pay period.
- The service person claiming ShPP must have an intention to care for the child during the weeks that ShPP is received. They must also make sure they give the proper notification for ShPL.
- The service person's average weekly earnings for the 8 weeks leading up to and including the 15th week before the EWC or matching adoption date are not less than the lower earnings limit. Current rates can be found [Here](#).
- The service person must remain in continuous service until the first week of ShPP has started.

- Volunteer Reserves (VR's) need to have had average weekly earnings and qualifying Bounty payments. VR's should contact their HR staff in the first instance to confirm eligibility.

Please note – if a service person is on a Career Intermission (CI) when undertaking Maternity/ Adoption leave, or if the other parent is non-domicile, it is recommended that advice is sought from the relevant HR Centre's, Unit HR staff or the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website to check entitlement to any Statutory ShPP or ShPL.

If a service person or their Line Manager are unsure about any aspect of Shared Parental Leave or Pay, the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR staff should be contacted for advice.

How are Terms of Service affected?



It should be noted that, unlike the Armed Forces' Occupational Maternity Leave Scheme, which allows Servicewomen to choose to leave the Service prematurely on the grounds of pregnancy, there is no right to leave the Service prematurely on the grounds of taking ShPL.

Paid leave

During paid periods of ShPL, a service person's normal terms and conditions of service apply, and leave is reckonable service for purposes of pay increments, seniority, promotion, pension, annual leave and public holidays. It doesn't matter if it is occupational or statutory pay you are in receipt of.

Unpaid leave

If any of a service person's ShPL is unpaid, then this is classed as reckonable service for pay increments, seniority, promotion, annual leave and public holidays but **NOT pension**. Applications to extend service to take account of this can be completed and e-mailed to the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR. This will be staffed to Career Management by HR staff. Applications for Extensions of Service are also a check sheet action for HR staff and service personnel should therefore be contacted by their HR Centre or Unit HR in regard to this when they return to work.

Return of Service

If a service person is paid Occupational ShPP during ShPL, they are expected to complete a Return of Service of one week for every week of Occupational pay received. If this is not completed, they will have to pay back the occupational pay element.

What happens to annual appraisals?



As a period of ShPL can mean that a service person is out of the work environment for a significant amount of time, an appraisal report may be provided before commencing ShPL. This will be done by either deferring or bringing forward the annual report; this is to ensure that any reporting gaps are kept to a minimum and that any promotion board will have the most recent possible report to consider. For further information refer to [JSP 757](#).

Service personnel should discuss their appraisal requirements with the HR Clerk administering their ShPL, who will liaise with the appraisal team and LM's. This is part of the administration process for ShPL and HR staff will ensure the necessary action is taken.

If a service person is selected for promotion whilst on ShPL, they will not be overlooked for assignment to a suitable appointment in the new rank on the grounds of ShPL absence. Career Manager's will contact personnel to discuss the options.

Annual Leave Allowance



Annual Leave continues to accrue when a service person is on ShPL. Personnel may want to consider factoring in using some up at the end of ShPL leave.

What plans should a Service Person put in place before going on ShPL?

Keeping In Touch (KIT) Plan



The Service is allowed to have reasonable contact with service personnel whilst on ShPL. It is the service person's responsibility to put in place a Keeping in Touch Plan (KIT) with their LM before going on leave. Time should be scheduled to discuss how service personnel would like their LM to keep in touch with them, and the person going on ShPL with them.

Personnel should also discuss any opportunities for using ShPL KIT days. It is ok if a service person doesn't know what they want to do with them right away, but LM's may not know what they are, so cover them in the discussion as they may be aware of things coming up. ShPL KIT days can also be used as an opportunity get a date in the diary that falls towards the end of ShPL to discuss returning to work.

Please note – There is a planner at the end of this booklet for writing a plan down. Personnel going on ShPL should keep a copy and give a copy to their LM.

Shared Parental Leave Keeping In Touch (KIT) Days



ShPL KIT days are designed to enable a service person to keep up to date with new developments in the workplace and undertake training without ending ShPL.

A service person can agree to return to duty for up to 20 days during ShPL and these days are in addition to the 10 KIT days already available to those on Maternity or Adoption leave.

ShPL KIT days are reckonable service and, if a service person is not in receipt of Occupational ShPP, they will be paid a full day's pay, even if they are only keeping in touch for part of a day. Duty travel may also be claimed. ShPL KIT days do not have to be a full day's work, uniform does not need to be worn and they do not have to be taken at a service person's workplace.

Examples of ShPL KIT days include;

- Office briefings.
- Service briefings such as Armed Forces Pension Society.
- Branch/Trade conferences.
- Meetings with career managers or line managers.
- Courses.
- Discussing a return-to-work plan with your line manager.

- Representative sport.
- Conducting personal service-related admin.
- Researching new posts/units prior to assignment.
- Attend work for a few hours while child has a trial day at nursery or school.

How to Claim a Shared Parental Leave KIT Day



Claims should be submitted using [JPAR003](#). Personnel can either use one for each day or claim for them all on one form. Personnel just need to write the detail of the ShPL KIT Day on the form, get it signed by their CoC or the organiser of the event and email to the relevant HR Centre or Unit HR.

Did you know Service personnel can get Parental Leave?



This is a government provision so available to all parents. It allows service parents additional leave to care for a child by, for example, spending more time with the child during the early years, to settle a child into new childcare arrangements or to accompany a child during a stay in hospital. Parental Leave allows each parent of each child to take 18 weeks unpaid leave. Parental Leave can be taken up to the child's 18th birthday. Parental Leave is unpaid and, therefore, is non-reckonable service.

Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Paternity Leave



Separate leaflets have been produced outlining the Armed Forces Paternity, Maternity and Adoption Leave entitlements and are available on MyRAF or the [RAF Health and Wellbeing SharePoint site](#) under Parenting.

Childcare considerations



Service parents are responsible for making arrangements for childcare and meeting the costs involved. Waiting lists can be very long for nursery places so parents should start thinking about places before the start of ShPL. The RAF Families Federation has excellent information about [childcare and early years education](#) as well as tax free childcare for those eligible.

Changes in circumstances

Family circumstances can change, and this can have an effect on the entitlement to ShPL and ShPP. Any changes to personal circumstances such as pregnancy loss, child bereavement or cancellation of an adoption placement should be referred to the HR Centre or Unit HR for further advice.

I am returning to work from ShPL– what do I need to do?

Flexible working arrangements



Flexible working arrangements allow an individual to have a degree of freedom when attempting to balance their work and personal life. While flexible working is not a right, all service personnel are entitled to request a flexible working arrangement so they may better balance the demands of personal life and their Service commitments.

Flexible working does not just mean variable start and finish times; there are a number of options available. The booklet [Flexible Working and You](#) outlines everything you need to know.

Registering a child on JPA



New parents should register the birth or placement of their child on JPA at the earliest opportunity. This is likely to be on return to work. Ideally the [HR Hub](#) should be used where a request online to add a child to JPA and upload any supporting documents can be actioned. Alternatively [JPAN005](#) can be submitted manually. The completed form and a scanned copy of the child's birth or adoption certificate should be e-mailed to the HR Centre or Unit HR.

Did you know – the [HR Hub](#) is accessible via your personal devices through Defence Gateway, making it easy to upload any supporting documentation.

Don't forget – if the other Parent is serving, they will also need to add the child to their JPA as well.

Update your Will



New parents may wish to update/write their will. In uncomplicated circumstances the basic service Will form can be completed. As these need to be completed in hard copy and kept at the Wills Library in Glasgow, your HR Centre or Unit HR will need to provide you with the forms (will and envelope). Once completed the original needs to be returned to your HR staff for logging and onward post.

Details of a Private Will can be submitted via a Will Declaration on the [HR Hub](#). If the [HR Hub](#) is unavailable you should e-mail your HR Centre or Unit HR to let them know where it is held so they can update JPA.

Change of Personal Status (PStat) Category



You may be required to change your PStat if there has been a change in your personal circumstances such as:

- You marry or enter a civil partnership before/ during ShPL.
- You are not married or in civil partnership but have full parental responsibility following the birth or placement of your child.
- You have a child and provide voluntary financial support, but do not have full parental responsibility.
- You have a child and provide financial support through a court order/child support agency arrangement.

If both Parents are serving and are unsure of what Personal Status Category they should be, please seek advice from the HR Centre or Unit HR before completing an update request via the [HR Hub](#) or before completing the JPA Form [JPAN001](#).

Service Families Accommodation (SFA)



Service personnel who are Married/Registered in a civil partnership and your Personal Status Category (PStat) reflects this on JPA are will be able to apply at any point.

Single service personnel will be entitled to SFA prior to the birth or once approved for adoption. At 6 months pregnant an application can be submitted to apply to change a PStat via the HR Centre or Unit HR, enabling an application to be made for SFA.

Housing applications are made using the [e1132 form](#) (*for security reasons it does not work on the internet*). More information is available through Pinnacle at www.pinnacleservicefamilies.co.uk.

If unable to access MODNet at all whilst on ShPL Pinnacle can be contacted at HomeServices@pinnacleservicefamilies.co.uk who will be able to assist.

HR Centre Contact Details

The Subject line of your email must be formatted like this
YYYYMMDD-App Title-Surname-Service Number-Station-O/OS/OSP

Air-HRCentre1-Ops-GMB@mod.gov.uk Benson, Brize Norton, Halton, High Wycombe, Northolt, Odiham, Boscombe Down, St Mawgan, 78 Sqn Swanwick
Air-HRCentre2-GMB@mod.gov.uk Waddington, Cranwell, Scampton, Henlow, Coningsby, Wittering, Aldergrove, 39 Sqn (USA), Syerston
Air-HRCentre3-GMB@mod.gov.uk Honington, Marham, Holbeach, Neatishead
Air-HRCentre4-GMB@mod.gov.uk Cosford, Shawbury, Stafford, St Athan, Valley
Air-HRCentre5-GMB@mod.gov.uk Boulmer, Fylingdales, Leeming, Linton-on-Ouse, Spadeadam
Air-HRCentre6-GMB@mod.gov.uk Lossiemouth

Keeping In Touch Plan

This form is intended to be used to agree a KIT Plan during Shared Parental leave.

Note for line managers – This plan should be passed on to your replacement if you are assigned out during a service person's Shared Parental leave.

Service Person's Details

Name	
Service No	

Address(es) during leave	Address 1	Address 2
Landline		
E-mail		
Mobile		

During Shared Parental Leave I would like to be contacted:				
	Phone	E-mail	Text	Notes
2 Weekly				
Monthly				
Other				<i>Please specify</i>

KIT Day Plan

	Date	Place/Event	JPA Form R003 Auth and sent to HR Centre or Unit HR		Date	Place/Event	JPA Form R003 Auth and sent to HR Centre or Unit HR
1				11			
2				12			
3				13			
4				14			
5				15			
6				16			
7				17			
8				18			
9				19			
10				20			

Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) and Pay (ShPP) Planner

Before completing the ShPL and ShPP form, you **must** establish whether you are eligible for statutory and/or occupational pay. You can then use this planner to record both yours and your partner's maternity/adoption leave and ShPL and how you will share the statutory pay entitlement.

Completing the planner

Once you have entered the starting date of the maternity/adoption leave, you should follow these three steps to ensure you correctly complete the planner.

Step 1 – Leave

Column A & D – This is where you work out who is taking what leave. When added together they cannot exceed 52 weeks.

- Maternity leave can start 11 weeks before birth.
- Adoption leave can start 2 weeks before placement (or on the day, or 4 weeks after for overseas).
- Adoption leave can start on the day of birth or the day after for parents through surrogacy.
- ShPL can be taken any time after the birth/adoption of the child up to the child's first birthday or one year after placement.
- The two weeks of maternity/adoption leave after the birth/adoption of the child are compulsory.
- Paternity leave and annual leave are not included in the calculation, but you can annotate them if you intend to take them.

1 > Start by entering how many weeks maternity/adoption leave that you have chosen to take into column A. To make it easier to calculate pay later you should use the following terms:

OML Ordinary Maternity Leave (week 1 – 26 inclusive)
AML Additional Maternity Leave (week 27 – 52 inclusive)

OAL Ordinary Adoption Leave (week 1 – 26 inclusive)
AAL Additional Adoption Leave (week 27 – 52 inclusive)

2 > Then decide how to share the remaining weeks as ShPL between you. Annotate the weeks you want to take as Shared Parental Leave as ShPL.

Step 2 – Statutory Pay

3 > **Column B** – Enter the number of weeks of statutory pay that will be claimed during maternity or adoption leave. Use the following terms:

SMP Statutory Maternity Pay
SAP Statutory Adoption Pay

Remember – statutory pay is paid for 39 weeks from the first week of maternity or adoption leave. Anything left over from the 39 weeks can be shared as statutory shared parental pay (SShPP).

4 > **Column C** – record how you will allocate the remaining statutory shared parental pay (SShPP) against the ShPL weeks that you have recorded in columns A and D.

Step 3 – Occupational Pay

In this section we are only concerned with serving personnel and how their occupational pay is allocated.

- If you are serving and the other person is not, then when it comes to Armed Forces occupational pay only the service person can claim it. The other parent may get additional pay from their employer but that is claimed on the booking form for their employer not this form.
- If you and your partner are both serving members of the Armed Forces, you will receive no more than 26 weeks occupational pay between you.

Remember – Occupational pay can only be claimed if statutory pay is also claimed that week. As there is less occupational pay weeks than statutory pay weeks some weeks are paid only at the statutory rate.

5 > Column C – Enter the number of weeks of occupational pay that will be claimed during maternity or adoption leave. Use the following terms:

OMP Occupational Maternity Pay

OAP Occupational Adoption Pay

6 > Column C&F – Record how you will allocate the remaining occupational pay against the ShPL weeks that you have recorded in columns A and D.

Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) and Pay (ShPP) Planner

Name			Rank			Service Number		
Start date of maternity/adoption leave								
Wk No	Mother Primary adopter				Father, partner Secondary adopter			
	Leave	Pay		Leave	Pay			
	A	B Statutory	C Occuptional	D	E Statutory	F Occuptional		
Weeks taken before birth/adoption								
11								
10								
9								
8								
7								
6								
5								
4								
3								
2								
1								
Weeks taken after birth/adoption								
1	Compulsory OML/OAL	SMP/SAP		Possible Paternity Leave				
2	Compulsory OML/OAL	SMP/SAP		Possible Paternity Leave				
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								

	Leave	Pay		Leave	Pay	
	A	B Statutory	C Occuptional	D	E Statutory	F Occuptional
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
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32						
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43						
44						
45						
46						
47						
48						
49						
50						
51						
52						
Check	A + D (no more than 52)		B + E (no more than 39)		C + F (no more than 26)	
	=		=		=	