



ADOPTION POLICY

Adopted by Brixton Parish Council – 25th January 2025

Reviewed by Brixton Parish Council – 28th January 2026

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

Next Review – January 2027

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Brixton Parish Council Adoption Leave Policy

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Purpose and Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all current employees, whether full or part-time, temporary or fixed-term. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide managers and staff with clear information about Brixton Parish Council's adoption provisions. This document sets out BPC's policy on adoption leave, pay, and arrangements surrounding returning to work after adoption leave. It also sets out the procedures which BPC and employees need to follow at various stages, before, during and after adoption leave.

Policy

BPC's policy is to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the law on adoption leave and pay rights. To this end its aim is to inform all employees of their adoption rights and to ensure those rights are understood.

Qualifying Criteria

To qualify for adoption leave, you must be newly matched with a child for adoption by an adoption agency. There is no length of service requirement for adoption leave. Adoption leave and pay is not available in circumstances where a child is not newly matched for adoption, for example when a step-parent is adopting a partner's children.

Procedure

Telling Brixton Parish Council that you are Adopting a Child

You must inform the Chair of your intention to take adoption leave within 7 days of being notified by your adoption agency that you have been matched with a child for adoption, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You need to tell the Chair when the child is expected to be placed with you and when you want your adoption leave to start. You can change your mind about the date on which you want your leave to start providing you tell your manager at least 28 days in advance (unless this is not reasonably practicable).

Matching Certificate

You must give the Chair documentary evidence from your adoption agency as evidence of your entitlement to Statutory Adoption Pay. Employers can also ask for this as evidence of entitlement for adoption leave. You should ask your adoption agency for this documentary evidence, which may be provided in the form of a matching certificate which includes basic information on matching and expected placement dates.

Adoption Appointments

The primary adopter is entitled to take paid time off to attend up to 5 pre-adoption appointments. The co-adopter will be entitled to take unpaid time off to attend up to 2 pre-adoption appointments. The time off is capped at six and a half hours' time off work on each occasion. You should give the Chair as much notice as possible of your appointments and, after the first one, should show them the appointment letter/card.

Entitlements

Your entitlements to the following all mirror the rights and entitlements set out in the maternity policy which includes:

- adoption pay and enhanced contractual adoption pay as set out in the maternity policy
- the length of time that you can take as adoption leave
- the entitlement to pay awards
- the arrangements regarding keeping in touch with the council during your adoption leave
- the right to transfer some of your adoption leave, under the Shared Parental leave provisions
- the effect of adoption leave on contractual benefits
- your entitlement to annual leave

Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

You may be entitled to curtail your adoption leave and pay and instead take SPL and pay in conjunction with the co-adopter, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria. SPL enables parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of placement. Its purpose is to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child.

Returning to Work

BPC will assume that you will take your full adoption leave entitlement and intend to return to work doing the same job, with the same hours, unless you notify BPC, in writing, or request otherwise. If you want to return to work before the end of your adoption leave, you will need to notify the Chair, in writing, giving at least eight weeks' notice of your intended return date. If you do not give at least eight weeks' notice, the Chair may delay your return to work by up to a further eight weeks where s/he has good reason.

Requesting a Change to your Pattern of Work

You have the right to request that BPC considers changing your pattern of work (subject to eligibility criteria).