
Statistical briefing on **fathers' leave**
and pay
February 2015

Estimates of eligibility and take up of leave by fathers

Shared Parental Leave

- The Government estimates that 285,000 fathers will be eligible. These estimates were based on LFS Q3 2011.
- According to LFS Q3 2011, there were 490,000 employed fathers with a child who was under 1 year old. This means about 2 in 5 of these fathers wouldn't be eligible for SPL.
- The requirement to have a partner who is in paid work is likely to be the main reason for disqualifying fathers from SPL. Around 2 in 5 mothers of young children are not in employment.
- Government estimates take up for SPL at a minimum 2 per cent and maximum 8 per cent of eligible fathers. This means between 5,700 and 22,800 fathers taking SPL each year out of the 490,000 employed fathers with a child under one.
- Based on the estimated take up and the number of male employees, at maximum, 0.2 per cent of male employees will be taking SPL each year. This compares to about 3.5 per cent of female employees who take maternity leave, i.e. women will be 18 times more likely than men to be taking an extended period of leave after childbirth.

Source: Labour Force Survey Q3 2011 and Shared parental leave and pay administration consultation – impact assessment (BIS, February 2013)

Paternity leave and pay

- Self-employed fathers, agency workers and employees with less than 6 months' service by the 15th week before the baby is due do not qualify for statutory paternity leave and statutory paternity pay. This means about one in four fathers in paid work do not qualify (about 146,400) and at least one

in eleven employee fathers (at least 44,300)¹ do not qualify. This calculation is based on the following figures from LFS Q3 2014:

- 92,800 fathers with a child aged under 1 are self-employed (16 per cent of those in paid work)
- 9,300 fathers with a child under 1 are agency workers
- 44,300 employee fathers with a child under one have less than 6 months' service in their current job
- 475,600 fathers with a child aged under 1 are employees
- 579,200 fathers with a child aged under 1 were in paid work (93 per cent)

Source: Labour Force Survey Q3 2014

Statutory paternity pay

- Current rate is £138.18 a week. This is a quarter of male full-time median weekly earnings (£557.80). The majority of employed fathers with young children (over 90 per cent) work full-time.
- Statutory paternity pay is just over half the amount a worker on a 40-hour week would get if they were paid the National Minimum Wage (£260 a week).
- If SPP had continued to be uprated by the September RPI, rather than CPI in 2011 and 2012 and then 1 per cent a year after that, by April 2015 it would be worth £149.41 a week – nearly £10 a week more than the £139.56 a week it is going to be.

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (April 2014)

Employer top ups for paternity leave

- Three-quarters of fathers took some paternity leave but only half took the full two-week entitlement to paternity leave.
- Of those fathers who took some paternity leave, two in five were fully paid for the two weeks or more they were on paternity leave because their employer topped up the statutory payment.

¹ Because the requirement is to have 6 months' service by the 15th week before the baby is due, a father actually needs to have about 9.5 months' service by the time the baby is born and he wants to take paternity leave. Therefore, our estimates based on fathers with at least 6 months' service in their current job is likely to be an under-estimation of the number of fathers who lose out due to lack of service.

- High income fathers were the most likely to receive fully paid paternity leave. Half of fathers in the highest income group received two weeks or more at full pay, compared to one in five in the lowest income group.
- Only a quarter of the lowest paid fathers took at least two weeks' paternity leave, compared to a half in the highest income group.
- Two thirds of fathers who didn't take their full entitlement to paternity leave said they couldn't afford to. The next most common reason, given by 15 per cent, was that they were too busy at work.

Source: DWP/BIS Maternity and Paternity Rights and Women Returners Survey 2009/10

Take up of Additional Paternity Leave

- In 2011/12, the first year of APL, just 0.8 per cent of fathers took APL. In 2012/13, 1.4 per cent of fathers took APL.
- In the past two years, just 1 per cent of employers have had a father who has taken APL and only 0.15 per cent of employers have had a father who has taken the full 26 weeks available to them. This compares to 37 per cent of employers with male employees who have had babies in the past two years.

Source: Fourth Work-Life Balance Survey (BIS 2014) and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-27838255>