

Employment E-Brief 3

START DATES FOR THE NEW MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE RIGHTS ANNOUNCED

Maternity Leave and Pay

Subject to Parliamentary approval:

- Women who have an expected week of childbirth (EWC) on or after 6 April 2003, will be entitled to the new maternity leave and pay provisions.
- From 6 April 2003 all women receiving the standard rate of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) will receive the new rate of £100 a week or 90% of average earnings if this is less.
- If the EWC falls on or after 6 April 2003 and the child is born prematurely, the mother will still be entitled to the new maternity leave rights.
- Women who have started their SMP period before 6 April 2003 will receive SMP or Maternity Allowance at the standard rate of £75 a week up to 5 April 2003.
- As at present, SMP under the new scheme will be paid at 90% of average weekly earnings for the first 6 weeks, followed by the standard rate for the remaining weeks.

Paternity Leave and Pay

Subject to Parliamentary approval:

- Employees whose partner has an EWC on or after 6 April 2003 will be entitled to the new paternity leave and pay provisions.
- Any paternity pay period which starts on or after 6 April 2003 will be paid at the same standard rate as SMP.
- If the EWC falls on or after 6 April 2003, and the child is born prematurely, employees will still be entitled to take paternity leave and pay.
- Any paternity pay period which starts before 6 April 2003 will be paid for the full period at £75 a week (the same standard rate as SMP from April 2002).

This update is for guidance purposes only and should not be regarded as a substitute for taking specific legal advice from your usual Metcalfes' contact.

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