

# Press release: New leave allowance for bereaved parents will be one of the most generous in the world

- New laws will give employed parents two weeks' paid leave if they lose a child under 18
- The bill goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of workplace right for employees
- Businesses will be able to claim back parental bereavement pay from the Government

Employees who have suffered the death of a child will benefit from significant new paid leave allowances [under proposed laws published today](#) (13 October).

While the Government expects employers to be compassionate and flexible at such a difficult time, there is currently no legal requirement for employers to provide paid time off for grieving parents.

But under proposed new laws, for the first time employed parents who lose a child under the age of 18 will have the right to two weeks' paid leave to allow them time to grieve. This will honour the manifesto commitment to introduce a new entitlement for parental bereavement leave.

The Parental Bereavement (Pay and Leave) Bill, introduced by Kevin Hollinrake MP and supported by the Government, will give a day-one right to parental bereavement leave and employees with a minimum of 26 weeks' continuous service will be eligible for statutory parental bereavement pay.

Kevin Hollinrake MP, bill sponsor, said:

Sadly I have had constituents who have gone through this dreadful experience and while some parents prefer to carry on working, others need time off.

This new law will give employed parents a legal right to two weeks' paid leave, giving them that all-important time and space away from work to grieve at such a desperately sad time.

Margot James, Business Minister, said:

We want parents to feel properly supported by their employer when they go through the deeply distressing ordeal of losing a child.

That's why Government is backing this bill which goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of

workplace right for employees.

Francine Bates, CEO of The Lullaby Trust said:

We warmly welcome this new law giving paid leave to bereaved parents. Losing a child is one of the most devastating experiences that a parent can go through and it is vitally important that they are supported by their employer and not made to return to work before they are ready.

We know many bereaved parents who have campaigned tirelessly for paid compassionate leave after the death of a child and are very pleased to see that the UK is now leading the way in supporting parents who need time away from work to grieve for their child.

Debbie Kerslake, Chief Executive of Cruse Bereavement Care, said:

Cruse Bereavement Care welcomes legislation introducing parental bereavement leave recognising that the death of a child is devastating.

It is vital that at such a distressing time those who are bereaved can take time away from work.

Small employers will be able to recover all statutory parental bereavement pay while larger employers will be able to reclaim almost all of it.

Details of the proposed new law were published today in Parliament ahead of the bill's second reading on 20 October, with the ambition of it becoming law in 2020.

#### **Notes to editors**

1. Currently under the Employment Rights Act, employees have a day-one right to take a "reasonable" amount of unpaid time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant, including making arrangements following the death of a dependant. What is "reasonable" depends on the circumstances but in practice the length of time off will be agreed between the employer and their employee
2. In the unlikely event that employee and employer can't agree what is "reasonable", this can be resolved through Acas or an employment tribunal
3. Acas has also published good practice guidance for employers on managing bereavement in the workplace.
4. We estimate the annual cost of statutory payments under this proposal to be between £1.3m and £2m