

Browne Jacobson announces equalised family policies

26 September 2024

UK and Ireland firm Browne Jacobson has today announced significant enhancements to its paternity, co-parent, and co-adopter leave policies, underlining its commitment to supporting work-home life balance and gender equality in the workplace. This now equalises all the firm's family policies.

As a result of the changes, colleagues at the firm will be entitled to take up to 26 weeks of paternity, co-parent or adoption leave. The first 13 weeks will be fully paid, with the option for an additional 13 weeks at half pay across all policies. The changes come into effect for parents whose children are due to be born or adopted from 1 September 2024 and applies to all colleagues across the firm's UK and Ireland offices.

This marks a substantial increase from the previous two-week allowance for paternity and co-parent leave. In a move to ease leavers back in to work, the firm has also opted to reduce targets for those returning from leave.

Anja Beriro, Procurement Partner at Browne Jacobson and champion of the firm's Gender Equity, and Working Families, Networks, said: "As someone who has experienced the challenges of balancing work and family life, I'm thrilled to see Browne Jacobson take this important step. This policy sends a clear message that our firm values the well-being of all parents and recognises the importance of shared parental responsibilities and the part it plays in gender equity. It's initiatives like these that make me proud to be part of Browne Jacobson and I believe the changes will have a positive impact on our colleagues and their families for years to come. I am extremely grateful to all colleagues who have worked very hard to make this happen."

Caroline Green, Senior Partner at Browne Jacobson, added: "These enhanced policies represent our commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment at Browne Jacobson. They align closely with our values and reflect our commitment to our people - acknowledging their roles as parents are just as crucial as their professional contributions. We're proud to foster an environment where all our employees can thrive personally and professionally and to remove barriers that challenge this."

Shelley Sutton, People Director at Browne Jacobson, commented: "We're pleased to be introducing these expanded and inclusive policies, which we see as a crucial component of our broader strategy to support work-life balance, promote gender equality and social mobility. By offering extended, well-compensated leave, we're acknowledging the important role all parents play in the early stages of their children's lives and supporting our people not only with their physical but mental health."

Suite of initiatives

This enhancement places Browne Jacobson among the leading firms in the legal sector for family leave benefits. The measure forms part of a broader suite of initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive, supportive work environment that recognises the importance of family life. These include:

- **Life leave** – paid time away from work to help manage unplanned life events such as bereavement, end of life care, accidents and injuries, home emergencies and breakdown of care arrangements for a child or dependant.
- **Fertility treatment** – paid time away from work for those undergoing treatment, including those whose partner or surrogate is undergoing treatment.

- **Pregnancy loss** – those affected by early pregnancy loss before 24 weeks are entitled to paid time away from work under our life leave policy, including partners and those with a surrogate.
- **Parental leave** – up to 18 weeks unpaid leave each year, per child (up to the age of 18).
- **Carer's leave** - up to 1 week unpaid leave each year to care for a dependant
- **Flexible working** – opportunity to request formal and informal changes to working arrangements with no restriction on the number of requests.
- **Sabbatical** – opportunity to request a period of unpaid sabbatical leave lasting up to six months.

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