



Communications

Date: January 15th 2013

Government sets out proposed changes to adoption leave and pay.

The Government has announced proposed changes to the adoption system which aim to increase the number of adoptions. The following proposals will affect prospective adoptive parents who are in employment:

- Providing them with time off work to meet the children they are due to adopt before they move in with the family. The proposal is that primary adopters will be able to take paid leave for up to five appointments while their adopting partner will be eligible to take unpaid leave for two appointments (in line with a proposed new right for birth fathers to accompany their partner to two ante-natal appointments).
- Increasing paid leave for those adopting a child, so as to bring statutory adoption pay and leave in line with the statutory maternity and paternity leave and pay offered to biological parents. This means the requirement for an employee to have 26 weeks' continuous service to qualify for statutory adoption leave will be removed and the Government will increase the first six weeks of statutory adoption pay to 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings to mirror statutory maternity pay provisions.

In addition, the Government is considering encouraging Adoption Activity Days to allow adopters a more active role in the adoption process, with the chance to make a connection with a child in advance and play a greater role in finding the right match. It is not clear whether the right to time off will extend to cover these days.

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