

Shared parental leave: The perspective from employers January 2016 ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

[Case studies/video](#) ^[2]

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Introduction

Shared Parental Leave is a new right for parents with children born or adopted after 5 April 2015. It allows parents to combine work and care in the first year with their child in a different way. Working Families successfully campaigned for the introduction of shared parental leave because we think it gives parents more choice about balancing care and work – and means more fathers will have a realistic opportunity to take a longer period of paid time off to spend with their new child.

To assess how the policy is working, we surveyed employers who represent a wide range of sectors and include small and medium sized enterprises as well as large businesses. We found that shared parental leave has a lot of support amongst employers and that many organisations are taking steps towards making it a success. Some of the concerns around the policy, such as staff taking discontinuous periods of leave haven't materialised, but concerns about complexity and cultural barriers remain.

It's still early days for shared parental leave: between 0.5 and 2 per cent of eligible fathers have made use of the new provision so far, but seven out of ten employers (71%) expect take-up to increase in the future.

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[2] <https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/shared-parental-leave-videos/>

[3] <https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Working-Families-SPL-briefing-paper-January-2016.pdf>

[4] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/17/04/half-fathers-would-use-shared-parental-leave>

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