



Access to parental leave this summer

publication date: Jul 1, 2015

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Four million extra parents have access to **parental leave** this summer, following new rules introduced in April this year. Parents with at least one year's service with their current employer qualify for **18 weeks' unpaid parental leave per child**, which can be taken any time up until the child's 18th birthday. Previously only parents with children under five were eligible for this **EU-derived right**.

The **TUC** believes that an additional four million **working parents** will be included in this workplace advantage, compared to the three million who had access when it just applied to pre-school children and disabled children.

Unpaid parental leave needs to be taken in weekly blocks, unless the employer agrees to a shorter period, and must be requested 21 days in advance. With schools breaking up for the summer holidays in the next couple of weeks, **parents** who might want to use this **unpaid time off work** should let their employers know as soon as possible.

This **statutory entitlement** could be a welcome asset for parents who struggle to find suitable and affordable **holiday care schemes** for their children during **school holidays**.

A recent report on sufficiency of childcare places identified **holiday childcare** as one of the most significant shortages, with 39 local authorities in England and Wales saying they have insufficient places for children in their area. Last summer, one in three working parents reported that they couldn't find affordable **holiday childcare** and one in eight said they had given up work to look after their children.

So if you think you would like to take **unpaid parental leave** during the summer **school holidays**, talk to your employer now.

The **TUC's** guides to leave and pay for **working parents** are available [here](#).

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