



17 September 2019

**To: Each Member of the Directorate and Leadership Team  
Each Assistant National Director HR  
Each Hospital Group CEO  
Each Hospital Group Director of HR  
Each Chief Officer CHO  
Each CHO HR Manager  
Each CEO Section 38 Agencies  
Each HR Manager Section 38 Agencies  
Each Employee Relations Manager  
Each Group Director of Nursing & Midwifery  
Each Group Director of Midwifery**

**Re: Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2019**

Dear Colleagues

I refer to **HSE HR Circular 17/2019** in relation to the revised parental leave entitlements [click here](#) and wish to advise that the *additional 4 weeks* under the phasing-in arrangements came into effect from 1 September 2019.

Under the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2019 the maximum amount of parental leave that employees may take for each eligible child is being increased from 18 weeks to 26 weeks. This increase is being phased in over a two-year period as follows:

- From 1 September 2019, employees may take up to 22 working weeks.
- From 1 September 2020, employees will be eligible to avail of up to 26 working weeks.

The manner in which parental leave may be taken is subject to Section 7 of the Parental Leave Acts 1998 to 2019. In accordance with Section 7, parental leave may consist of:

- (a) One continuous period of leave (equal to the current entitlement of 22 weeks)

(aa) Two separate periods, each consisting of not less than 6 weeks, and not exceeding 22 weeks in total<sup>1</sup>

(b) *Subject to the agreement of the employer*, a number of periods, each of which comprises:

- (i) one or more days on which, but for the leave, the employee would be working in the employment concerned,
- (ii) one or more hours during which, but for the leave, the employee would be working in the employment concerned, or
- (iii) any combination of periods broken into working days and/or working hours.

The Act contains a new provision in relation to the manner in which parental leave may be taken. It states:

*“(ba) where an employee has taken leave pursuant to paragraph (a), (aa) or (b), periods each consisting of not less than 1 week.”*

In accordance with this new provision, an employee who has taken parental leave under any one of the three pre-existing arrangements outlined above may take their unused parental leave entitlement in blocks of a week or more.

## Queries

Queries from individual employees or managers regarding their parental leave entitlements should be referred to their local HR / Employee Relations Department.

Queries from HR Departments on the contents of this memorandum may be referred to Anna Killilea ([anna.killilea@hse.ie](mailto:anna.killilea@hse.ie)) or Aoife O’Riordan ([aoife.oriordan@hse.ie](mailto:aoife.oriordan@hse.ie)) at HSE Corporate Employee Relations, HR Directorate, 63-64 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.  
Tel: 01 6626966.

Yours sincerely



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**Anna Killilea**  
**Senior Executive**

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<sup>1</sup> An employee is not entitled to take the second of these two separate periods until at least 10 weeks have elapsed since the end of the first period, unless the employer agrees to a shorter period.