Department for Business & Trade

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Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
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20 January 2025

Dear Liam,

NEONATAL CARE LEAVE AND PAY

I am writing to you to confirm that the government has today laid regulations to implement a Neonatal Care Leave and Pay entitlement. The regulations, subject to parliamentary approval, will come into force on 6 April 2025.

The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act passed in 2023, and I am grateful to the work of my predecessors, colleagues and stakeholders who have long worked on this issue. From 6 April, our regulations implementing the Act will allow parents to take additional time off work when their child has received or is receiving neonatal care. This will provide them with much needed support, ensuring they are no longer in the impossible position of having to choose between keeping their job and spending time with their baby.

Neonatal Care Leave will apply to parents of babies who are admitted into neonatal care up to the age of 28 days, and who have a continuous stay of seven full days or more. Eligible parents will be able to take a minimum of 1 week and a maximum of 12 weeks of paid leave, in line with how long their baby is in neonatal care, on top of their other parental entitlements such as Maternity and Paternity Leave.

Neonatal Care Leave will be a ‘day one’ right, so it will be available to an employee from their first day in a new job. Statutory Neonatal Care Pay, like other family-related pay rights, will be available to those employees who meet continuity of service and minimum earnings tests.

The regulations laid today, which are subject to the affirmative resolution procedure, implement the main leave and pay provisions of the new entitlement.

Further negative regulations will address administration of the new pay entitlement, the entitlement of mariners and persons abroad and consequential amendments to secondary legislation. These will be laid in due course.

I look forward to your support in putting into effect this important support for working parents.

Yours ever,



JUSTIN MADDERS MP
Minister for Employment Rights, Competition and Markets
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