

APRIL
2008

LABOUR - GIVING YOU RIGHTS

Working parents

... a helping hand

A Guide to the rights and benefits for working parents



Find out about Labour's help for working families:

New rights at work

- Time off for dependants
- Parental leave
- Request flexible working
- Maternity leave and pay
- Paid paternity leave
- Adoption leave and pay

Financial benefits

- Tax credits for families
- Help with health costs
- Childcare tax credit
- Maternity Grants
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- School uniform grants

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Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers
www.usdaw.org.uk



USDAW - HELPING YOU CLAIM YOUR RIGHTS

Rights for parents at work

All working parents have rights to help them balance their work with caring for their children. Make sure you and your children don't miss out.

All parents and carers

Time off for dependants

From the first day of your job, you can take reasonable (but unpaid) time off work to help family members who depend on you in an emergency, for example, if a dependant is sick or your childcare arrangements fall through.



Parental leave

Mums and dads can take 13 weeks leave (unpaid) between the birth and their child's 5th birthday (after they have worked for the same employer for a year).

Parents of disabled children can take 18 weeks up to their child's 18th birthday.

Request flexible working

Parents of children under six (under 16 from April 2009) can ask their employer for a change in working hours (after you have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks). Parents of disabled children have this right up to the child's 18th birthday.

Carers of adults also have the right to request flexible working. To qualify as a carer the person to be 'cared' for must either be married to, be the partner or civil partner of the employee, or a near relative of the employee, or fall into neither category but live at the same address as the employee.

You must also have worked for your employer for 26 weeks and the change you want must be connected to the person you provide care for.



New mums

Maternity leave

From the first day of your job you are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave. After working for the same employer for 26 weeks (by the 15th week before your baby is due), you may also be entitled to:

Statutory maternity pay

90% of your earnings for the first six weeks of your maternity leave, then £117.18 per week or 90% of your earnings (whichever is less) for 33 weeks. The remaining 13 weeks are unpaid.

Maternity Grant

£500 for expectant mums or adoptive parents on a low income. You can claim up to three months after your baby is born or adopted. To see if you qualify visit www.dwp.gov.uk and see the SureStart Maternity Grant in 'Benefits and Services' or visit your local Jobcentre Plus office.



New dads

Paid paternity leave

Two weeks of leave during your baby's first eight weeks, paid at £117.18 per week (after working for the same employer for 26 weeks, by the 15th week before your baby is due).

Adoptive parents

Adoption leave

One partner can take 52 weeks' leave when adopting a child, paid at £117.18 per week, for 39 weeks. The remaining 13 weeks are unpaid. They must have worked for the same employer for at least 26 weeks before the week in which an approved adoption match is made.

Adoptive parents are also eligible for paid paternity leave and parental leave (as above).



These rights are the legal minimums. Your union may have negotiated better rights with your employer. Check your staff handbook for details. To help get your rights, contact your union rep or ring the TUC Know Your Rights line on **0870 600 4882**.

Financial support for parents

Child benefit

£18.80 for the eldest child and £12.55 per week for each other child aged up to 16, or up to 20 in full-time education.

Child Benefit Office

Tel: 0845 302 1444.

Tax credits

Top up your income if you have dependent children, if you work 16 hours a week or more and your household income is less than £58,000.

Childcare tax credit

Up to 80% of your childcare costs up to £175 per week for one child, or £300 for two or more children. Your childcare needs to be with a childcare provider registered with your Local Authority.

Call the Helpline on **0845 300 3900** to find out how much you could claim or visit **www.hmrc.gov.uk**

Gross Weekly Income (£)	Annual Income (£)*	Approximate Weekly Tax Credits		
		1 child (£)	2 children (£)	3 children (£)
100	5,200	119	159	199
125	6,500	118	158	198
150	7,800	108	148	189
175	9,100	113	153	193
200	10,400	103	143	183
250	13,000	84	124	164
300	15,600	64	104	144
400	20,800	25	65	105
500	26,000	10	26	66

These figures are a guideline only as individual circumstances vary.

**Income is total household income, disregarding child maintenance payments and child benefit.*

Help with health costs

Free prescriptions, dental treatment, eye tests and vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses if you receive tax credits and your household income is less than £15,050 a year. Call NHS Direct to find out more: **0845 46 47.**

Child Trust Fund

£250-£500 cash sum from the Government for every child born after 31 August 2002, for the child to access when they reach 18.

To find out more, call the helpline on **0845 302 1470** or visit **www.childtrustfund.gov.uk**

Education Maintenance Allowance

Up to £30 a week for 16 and 17 year-olds who do at least 12 hours a week of guided study.

You can claim if your household income is below £30,810 a year. Phone **080 810 16219** or visit **www.direct.gov.uk**

School uniforms

Education authorities give grants for school uniforms to low income families. Each authority determines their own rules for eligibility.

This is not an exhaustive list. For further details of all benefits, visit the Department of Work and Pensions website at **www.dwp.gov.uk** or your local Jobcentre Plus.

For more information on rights at work, see Usdaw's leaflet 'Your rights at work' or visit **www.usdaw.org.uk**

Make sure you get your rights – join a union

The best way to make sure that your employer respects your rights at work is to join a trade union. **Your employer cannot prevent you from joining a trade union, or from carrying out trade union activities.**

Trade unions such as Usdaw can offer you lots of help and advice on getting all your rights at work, as well as free expert legal services if you have an accident or injury at work, or if you suffer from a work-related illness.

Staff represented by a trade union are more likely to have better wages and conditions than those who aren't.

Join Usdaw today

Usdaw represents over 359,000 members, many in the retail sector. We have helped thousands of our members to claim tax credits and to improve their wages and conditions at work.

The best way to protect and improve your rights at work is to join Usdaw. At only £2.06† a week (full-time rate) or £1.30† a week (part-time rate), it's probably the best investment you'll ever make.

To join Usdaw, telephone **0845 6060640*** or visit **www.usdaw.org.uk/join**

The Labour Party

To help Labour carry on the good work, you can join the Labour Party
Call 08705 900 200 or visit www.labour.org.uk



**To join or find out more about Usdaw, call 0845 6060640*
or visit our website at www.usdaw.org.uk**

† Rates correct 30 June 2008

* Calls charged at local rates