

Royal Northern College of Music
Neonatal Care Leave
Policy & Procedure
Department: Human Resources
Document owner: Head of Human Resources
Approval Committee: HR Committee
Introduced: June 2025
Period of Approval: 3 years
Review Date: June 2028

RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the entitlement to Neonatal Care Leave (NCL) and pay for parents of children born on or after 6 April 2025.

For the purposes of this policy, neonatal care is:

- Medical care received in a hospital
- Medical care received in any other place, providing:
 - The child was an inpatient in hospital and needs continuing care after leaving the hospital;
 - The care is under the direction of a Consultant;
 - The care involves ongoing monitoring and visits from healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital where the child was an inpatient.
- Palliative or end of life care.

The care must last for at least 7 consecutive days (not counting the day on which the neonatal care starts) and start within 28 days of the baby's birth or placement.

The RNCM recognises the emotional difficulties which arise from premature births and situations where a newborn is immediately hospitalised after birth. The [Employee Assistance Programme](#) is available for confidential support for all staff.

2. Eligibility

This policy applies to all RNCM employees, regardless of length of service, whose baby receives at least 7 consecutive days of neonatal care following their birth ((i.e. days 2-8 are the qualifying period for NCL, and an employee is able to start NCL from day 9)).

The employee must be the parent of a baby receiving neonatal care or the partner of the parent and must have, or expect to have, responsibility for the child's upbringing.

3. Leave entitlement and pay

Employees whose baby receives at least 7 consecutive days of neonatal care within 28 days of their birth or placement will be entitled to Neonatal Care leave equivalent to the number of days of neonatal care received, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

NCL cannot be claimed twice by the same employee in respect of multiple births where the babies are receiving care at the same time - the maximum amount of leave remains at 12 weeks.

Employees will receive full pay during Neonatal Care Leave. For employees who are eligible to receive Statutory Neonatal Care Pay (the employee must have been employed for at least 26 weeks up to the end of the 'qualifying week'), payment will include Statutory and Occupational Neonatal Care Pay.

4. When leave can be taken

Neonatal Care Leave is classified as either 'Tier 1' or 'Tier 2', based on when it is taken, as follows:

- **Tier 1 (during neonatal care):** this is the period which begins when the child starts receiving neonatal care and ends on the seventh day after the child stops receiving neonatal care (i.e. one week after discharge).

An employee can take tier 1 leave in continuous or non-continuous blocks of at least one week at a time (but only after the first seven days of neonatal care). Any remaining entitlement to NCL may be taken in the tier 2 period.

Tier 2 (after neonatal care ends): this is the period after the tier 1 period ends during which the employee is entitled to NCL, i.e. up to 68 weeks after the child's birth. It must be taken in one continuous block.

If the mother or Primary Adopter is not already on Maternity or Adoption leave when the baby is born, it will begin automatically a day after the birth. Any period of Neonatal Care Leave will then be added to the end of the Maternity or Adoption leave.

Neonatal Care Leave can be taken either immediately upon the start of neonatal care by the father, mother's partner or Secondary Adopter, if they have not already commenced their Paternity/Partner's or Shared Parental leave; or it can be added to the end of an existing period of Parental leave, such as Paternity or Shared Parental Leave.

Neonatal Care Leave must be taken within 68 weeks of the child's birth or placement.

A summary and worked example can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

5. Notification

Tier 1: Requirements during this period reflect the fact that leave will often be needed due to unforeseen and emergency circumstances.

During the tier 1 period, notice should be given to the employee's line manager verbally or in writing by the time the employee is due to start work on the first day of each week of leave, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Tier 2: In this period, employees must give:

- 15 days' notice of one week's leave
- 28 days' notice of two or more weeks' leave.

Formal notification should be provided using the Neonatal Care Leave Request Form ([Appendix 2](#)), this can be completed retrospectively in relation to Tier 1 leave.

RELATED POLICIES

- [Maternity Leave](#)
- [Paternity and Partner Leave](#)
- [Adoption Leave](#)
- [Shared Parental leave](#)
- [Flexible Working](#)
- [Leave of Absence](#)

Appendix 1

Summary table and example

Tier	When	How leave taken	Notice	Example
Tier 1 - during neonatal care	The period which begins when the child starts receiving neonatal care and ends on the seventh day after the child stops receiving neonatal care (i.e. one week after discharge).	An employee can take tier 1 leave in continuous or non-continuous blocks of at least one week at a time (but only in arrears after the first seven days of neonatal care). <i>Other forms of statutory parental leave may be in place during the first 7 days (e.g. maternity / paternity / adoption leave)</i>	Notice should be given by the time the employee is due to start work on the first day of each week of leave, or as soon as reasonably practicable.	Baby is born early and is in neonatal care for 3 weeks in total from birth. Partner takes 2 weeks of <i>paternity leave</i> straight after the birth. Partner then takes 1 week of <i>neonatal care leave</i> when their paternity leave ends. Partner has 2 more weeks <i>neonatal care leave</i> accrued to take at a later time.
Tier 2 - after neonatal care ends	The period after the tier 1 period ends during which the employee is entitled to NCL, i.e. up to 68 weeks after the child's birth.	It must be taken in one continuous block.	15 days' notice of one week's leave 28 days' notice of two or more weeks' leave.	Baby is now at home after 3 weeks in total in neonatal care. Partner gives notice to take the remaining 2 weeks of neonatal care in 1 month's time (28 days) to continue the baby's at home care.

ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

POLICY APPROVAL/REVIEW PROCESS

Release: Final
Author: Paul Hynes
Document Number: 1

AMENDMENTS SINCE DRAFT

ISSUE No	PAGE	DETAILS	DATE	ISSUED BY
1		First draft	27/05/2025	Paul Hynes
1		Final – ready for publication	19/06/2025	Paul Hynes

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name/Committee	Date	Version
JNCC	28/05/2025	1
Human Resources Committee	27/05/2025	1