



Department of Trade & Industry  
*Rheynn Dellal as Jeadys*

## **SUMMARY OF NEW RIGHTS FOR WORKING PARENTS**

**These rights arise out of the Employment Act 2006 and regulations made under that Act.**

### **a) Maternity Leave**

**Coming into force for women whose expected week of childbirth is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007.**

- All female employees will be entitled to take unpaid Ordinary Maternity Leave of 26 weeks. (Maternity Allowance, a DHSS benefit is available at a flat rate).
- Employers will not be obliged to pay women who are on maternity leave.
- Additional Maternity Leave of 26 weeks will be available for women with 26 weeks qualifying service at beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth.

### **b) Paternity Leave**

**Coming into force when the expected week of childbirth is on or after 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007 (there is an exception where babies are due before this date but are born later than this date.)**

- Introduction of 1 or 2 weeks' unpaid paternity leave within the first 8 weeks of the baby's birth
- Employees should have 26 weeks qualifying service ending with the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth.
- Paternity Allowance is available from the DHSS to qualifying employees.

### **c) Adoptive Leave**

**Coming into force where the child is matched or placed for adoption on or after 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007.**

- Adoptive leave equivalent to maternity and paternity leave is available to people who newly adopt a child.
- A couple who are adopting may choose who will take the longer "maternity" equivalent leave.

### **d) Right to request to work flexible hours**

**Coming into force 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007.**

Introduction of a right for employees with 26 weeks' qualifying service. :-

- parents of children under 6 years old;
- parents of disabled children under 18 years old; and/or
- those who have defined caring responsibilities

to request to vary their hours in order to accommodate their caring responsibilities. Employers may justify a refusal to adjust hours.

### **e) Parental Leave**

**Coming into force 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

Introduction of a right for parents of disabled children under 18 years old to take up to a maximum of 18 weeks' unpaid leave before their child is 18.

The employees should have one year's qualifying service

### **f) Health and Safety**

**Coming into force 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

New, expectant or breastfeeding mothers who cannot work due to health and safety reasons, and cannot be found alternative work, to be suspended on full pay until they are able to return to work.

*Updated May 2007*