

General election 2024

What are the main parties saying about paternity and parental leave for fathers?

This table draws on information from the Manifestos of the eight parties fielding more than 50 prospective Parliamentary candidates in the 2024 General Election. For a full list of parties standing, refer to this [Wikipedia page](#).

Does the manifesto commit to...?

Party (number of candidates)	Lengthen paternity leave	Improve paternity leave pay	Widen eligibility to paternity leave and pay	Provide parental leave reserved for fathers	Provide paid parental leave reserved for fathers	Make other relevant changes
Conservatives (635)	No	No	No	No	No	No
Labour (631)	No	No	Introduce a Day 1 right to parental leave, within the first 100 days of being in Government ¹	No	No	Review the parental leave system ² , so it best supports working families, within its first year in government It also says it will 'take action on the gender pay gap'.

¹ We assume the term 'parental leave' is being used here as a catch-all term to refer to a Day 1 right to maternity, paternity and shared parental leaves, although this is not specified.

² As in footnote 1 above, we assume 'parental leave' is being used as a catch-all term, rather than specifically to refer to shared parental leave or unpaid parental leave.

Party (number of candidates)	Lengthen paternity leave	Improve paternity leave pay	Widen eligibility to paternity leave and pay	Provide parental leave reserved for fathers	Provide paid parental leave reserved for fathers	Make other relevant changes
Liberal Democrats (630)	No	Yes - increase pay for paternity leave to 90% of earnings, with a cap for high earners	Yes - make all parental pay and leave Day 1 rights, including for adoptive parents and kinship carers, and extend these rights to self-employed parents	Yes - introduce an extra use-it-or-lose-it month ³ for fathers and partners, paid at 90% of earnings, with a cap for high earners	Yes ⁴	<p>Increase statutory maternity⁵ and shared parental pay to £350 a week</p> <p>Require large employers to publish their parental leave and pay policies</p> <p>Introduce a 'toddler top-up' to child benefit for 1-year-olds.</p> <p>In the longer term, when the public finances allow, its ambition is to give all families (including self-employed parents, adoptive parents and kinship carers):</p> <p>Six weeks of use-it-or-lose-it leave for each parent, paid at 90% of earnings⁶</p> <p>46 weeks of parental leave to share between them as they choose, paid at double the current statutory rate⁷</p> <p>Introduce paid neonatal care leave</p>

³ We assume this is a month of Parental leave earmarked for fathers, rather than additional Paternity leave.

⁴ See column 5.

⁵ This refers to the 33 weeks of Statutory Maternity leave currently paid at £183.04 per week, and any Shared Parental leave mothers choose to transfer to their partners.

⁶ Eligible employed mothers already receive 6 weeks' maternity leave paid at 90% of average earnings. It is unclear whether the Party intends to offer mothers a further 6 weeks' leave use-it-or-lose-it parental or maternity leave in addition to this; and also whether, in referring to '6 weeks for each parent', this would be in addition to the month of use-it-or-lose-it leave referred to in column 5.

⁷ It is unclear whether this 46 weeks of parental leave is intended to be a shortened version of the current shared parental leave system (in reality an option for mothers to transfer up to 50 weeks' maternity leave to their partner), or a new offer.

Party (number of candidates)	Lengthen paternity leave	Improve paternity leave pay	Widen eligibility to paternity leave and pay	Provide parental leave reserved for fathers	Provide paid parental leave reserved for fathers	Make other relevant changes
Reform UK (609)	No	No	No	No	No	'Front-load the child benefit system for children aged 1-4, which would give parents the choice to spend more time with their children' ⁸
Green Party (574)	No	No	Yes - legislate for workers to have full employment rights ⁹ from Day 1 of their employment And bring 'platform workers' ¹⁰ under a single legal status of 'worker', with full and equal rights from the first day of employment	No	No	Support reduced working hours and moving towards a four-day working week
Workers Party of Britain (152)	No	No	No	No	No	'Extend the period in which at least one parent in a household can spend free time caring for children under seven without material loss'.

⁸ This commitment appears in the 'Critical reforms for the first 100 days' section of the chapter on children and families. Under the heading 'Choice for Stay-at-Home Mums or Dads', it is preceded by the assertion that "The majority of mothers would choose to stay at home more if they could".

⁹ We assume this includes paternity leave and pay rights, although this is not specified.

¹⁰ This refers to 'gig economy' workers, for example people working for Uber or Deliveroo.

Party (number of candidates)	Lengthen paternity leave	Improve paternity leave pay	Widen eligibility to paternity leave and pay	Provide parental leave reserved for fathers	Provide paid parental leave reserved for fathers	Make other relevant changes
Social Democratic Party (122)	No	No	No	No	No	<p>All parents of dependent children under school age would be able to elect to work from home three days a week for at least two years, unless the nature of their work makes this impracticable.</p> <p>When making staff redundancies, parents supporting children under 16 would be accorded the same protection as groups presently protected under anti-discrimination legislation</p>
Scottish National Party (57)	No	No	Yes – (if policy on employment rights was a devolved issue) scrap zero hours contracts and create a single status of ‘worker’ for all but the genuinely self-employed	Yes – states the UK Government should increase shared parental leave from 52 to 64 weeks, with the additional 12 weeks to be the minimum taken by the father on a ‘use it or lose it’ basis	It is unclear whether the 12 week’s additional leave for fathers would be paid (and if so, at what rate), or unpaid	States the UK government should increase paid maternity leave to one year, with the pay set at 100% of average weekly earnings for the first 12 weeks, then 90% of pay or £150.00, whichever is lower, for 40 weeks