

Family Leave Policy V1.0

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This policy replaces:

- Maternity Policy V6.3, Adoption Leave Policy and Procedure V4.4,
- Shared Parental Leave Policy V1.4,
- Paternity Leave Policy and Procedure V5.3, and
- the family leave provisions previously contained within Family Friendly & Flexible Working Policy V5.1.

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Introduction

Purpose

BrisDoc is committed to supporting co-owners during pregnancy, adoption, and family-related life events, recognising the importance of balancing family responsibilities with meaningful work.

This policy sets out BrisDoc's approach to maternity, adoption, shared parental, paternity/partner, parental bereavement, unpaid parental, carers and dependants, and fertility treatment leave.

It ensures that co-owners are treated fairly and consistently, in line with UK employment law and BrisDoc's values of care, respect, and fairness.

Scope

This policy applies to all BrisDoc employees (referred to as co-owners). It does not apply to casual workers or self-employed contractors, who are not entitled to statutory or occupational family leave pay but remain protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

All co-owners are eligible for statutory family-related rights as set out in UK law. Occupational enhancements apply to those who meet the qualifying service criteria described in this policy.

Support Available

Support is available from:

Line Manager: day-to-day coordination, planning leave, and supporting return.

People Team: pay calculations, statutory notifications, and policy guidance.

Occupational Health: risk assessment and wellbeing support during pregnancy and return.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): confidential emotional support.

Policy Statement

BrisDoc supports co-owners through pregnancy and family leave, ensuring compliance with all relevant UK legislation.

No co-owner will be treated less favourably, dismissed, or subjected to detriment because of pregnancy, maternity, adoption, parental, or family-related leave. Dismissal related to pregnancy or maternity is automatically unfair under UK employment law, and managers must seek advice from the People Team before taking any action that could affect a pregnant co-owner or employee on family leave.

We encourage early and open discussion with line managers and the People Team to plan leave, maintain communication, and facilitate a smooth transition back to work.

A summary of pay and leave entitlements is provided in Appendix A. Each section of this policy outlines eligibility, pay, and notice requirements in more detail.

This policy is informed by current UK legislation and guidance, including the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010, and ACAS and GOV.UK best practice.

Eligibility, notice requirements, and pay arrangements vary by leave type. Co-owners should refer to the relevant section for full details.

Principles

- Co-owners will be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- All statutory family-related leave rights will be honoured in full.
- BrisDoc provides occupational enhancements that go beyond statutory minimums.
- Pay and benefits during leave are detailed within each section.
- Health, wellbeing, and safe working conditions will be prioritised throughout pregnancy and family leave.
- Communication will be agreed in advance to maintain appropriate contact during leave.
- Return-to-work discussions will support flexible, sustainable reintegration.

Roles and Responsibilities

Co-owners

Notify their manager and People Team in writing of intended leave dates and provide relevant documentation (e.g. MATB1 or matching certificate).

Maintain communication as agreed during leave.

Provide appropriate notice for return to work or changes to leave plans.

Line Managers

Support and plan with co-owners to ensure smooth service delivery.

Undertake pregnancy risk assessments.

Maintain agreed contact during leave.

Liaise with the People Team for guidance and compliance.

Managers should approach all family leave and bereavement situations with trust, compassion, sensitivity, and discretion; avoid seeking unnecessary personal details; and seek advice from the People Team where needed to ensure a fair, consistent, and person-centred approach.

People Team

Ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.

Confirm leave and pay entitlements in writing.

Maintain accurate records.

Provide advice on pay, pension, and occupational entitlements.

The table below outlines the key actions for co-owners, line managers, and the People Team before, during, and after family leave.

Stage	Co-owner Responsibility	Manager Responsibility	People Team Responsibility
Before leave	Notify of pregnancy/adoption, submit forms	Conduct risk assessment, plan cover	Confirm entitlements, issue letter
During leave	Maintain agreed contact, provide updates	Keep co-owner informed	Administer pay and records
On return	Give 8 weeks' notice if early return	Plan reintegration and support	Process payroll and benefits

Key Definitions

Maternity Leave: up to 52 weeks' leave for a birthing parent.

Adoption Leave: up to 52 weeks' leave for an adopting or parental order parent.

Paternity/Partner Leave: up to 2 weeks' leave for a partner or secondary parent.

Shared Parental Leave: flexible leave enabling parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay.

Parental Bereavement Leave: BrisDoc's paid bereavement leave provision of up to two weeks at full contractual pay from day one of employment, following the death of a child at any age, stillbirth, or pregnancy loss, with statutory rights applying in the circumstances set out later in this policy.

Ordinary Parental Leave: unpaid leave to care for a child up to age 18.

Dependants Leave: short-notice leave to deal with emergencies involving dependants.

Fertility Treatment Leave: reasonable paid time off for IVF or similar medical appointments.

Core Family Leave

Maternity & Pregnancy Leave

BrisDoc understands that pregnancy and preparing for a new baby can be both exciting and demanding. The following section outlines how we support co-owners through each stage — from early notification and risk assessment to pay, leave, and returning to work.

Eligibility

All pregnant co-owners are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave regardless of length of service. By law, the birthing parent must take a minimum of two weeks' compulsory maternity leave immediately after the birth (four weeks for factory workers). During this compulsory maternity leave period the co-owner must not work.

If a baby is born earlier than expected, maternity leave and pay will start automatically from the day after the birth.

For the purposes of maternity leave entitlement, the pregnancy must continue to the point where maternity leave has begun or the baby is born. If a pregnancy ends before 24 weeks (miscarriage), statutory maternity leave and maternity pay do not apply. In these circumstances absence will be supported through Parental Bereavement Leave provisions or other compassionate support available under this policy.

Notification

Co-owners must notify BrisDoc by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth, providing:

- the expected week of childbirth (via MATB1 form), and
- intended start date of maternity leave.

The MATB1 certificate should be submitted to the People Team via the line manager, who will confirm receipt in writing.

Pay and Entitlement

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) – up to 39 weeks:

- 6 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings, followed by
- 33 weeks at the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

Statutory rates are reviewed annually by the UK Government and will apply automatically from the effective date each year.

Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) – BrisDoc's enhancement

Eligible co-owners with at least 12 months' continuous service at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth may receive Occupational Maternity Pay in addition to Statutory Maternity Pay.

The level of occupational pay depends on length of continuous service:

Service Length	Pay Entitlement
Less than 12 months	Statutory Maternity Pay only (subject to eligibility)
12–24 months	6 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP) + 2 weeks half pay plus SMP
24–36 months	8 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP) + 6 weeks half pay plus SMP
36+ months	8 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP) + 18 weeks half pay plus SMP

After the occupational pay period ends, Statutory Maternity Pay will continue for the remainder of the statutory 39-week pay period where the co-owner remains eligible.

For a detailed explanation of how Statutory and Occupational Maternity Pay are calculated, including how average weekly earnings (AWE) are determined, please see Appendix B.

To receive Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP), co-owners must have 12 months' continuous service at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth. If a co-owner does not return to

work for the minimum three-month period, BrisDoc reserves the right to reclaim the occupational pay element (excluding any statutory maternity pay already received).

Pregnancy-related sickness

Any sickness absence that occurs during pregnancy will be recorded separately from other sickness absence and will not be counted for the purposes of any absence management triggers as described in BrisDoc's Sickness & Wellbeing Policy. Pregnancy-related absence will not be used as a basis for disciplinary action, capability procedures, or any form of detriment.

Normal contractual and statutory sick pay provisions continue to apply to pregnancy-related sickness absence in accordance with BrisDoc's Sickness & Wellbeing Policy.

If a co-owner is absent due to a pregnancy-related illness during the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth, maternity leave and Statutory Maternity Pay will normally start automatically from the day after the first day of absence, in line with UK statutory regulations.

Antenatal Appointments

A pregnant co-owner is entitled to paid time off to attend reasonable antenatal appointments recommended by a registered medical practitioner, midwife, or nurse. This also includes medically recommended postnatal or baby health appointments immediately following birth where attendance during working hours is necessary.

Partners of pregnant co-owners, or adopters, may take paid time off to attend up to two such appointments (maximum six and a half hours per appointment). Evidence of the appointment may be requested.

Health & Safety Assessments

Once notified of pregnancy, the line manager will:

- complete a pregnancy risk assessment and review it regularly;
- agree any temporary adjustments such as changes to duties, rest breaks, working pattern, or equipment; and
- consider suitable alternative work where adjustments cannot remove the risk; and where suitable alternative work is not available, suspend the co-owner on full pay for as long as necessary to protect their health and safety.

If suitable adjustments cannot be made, the co-owner may be suspended on full pay for health and safety reasons.

Adoption & Surrogacy

BrisDoc recognises that adoption and surrogacy are significant life events and is committed to supporting co-owners in creating or expanding their families. The provisions below apply equally to single adopters, couples adopting jointly, and intended parents through surrogacy.

Eligibility

Available to co-owners:

- adopting within the UK or overseas or

- are intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement and intend to apply for a parental order.

Pay and Entitlement

Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP): up to 39 weeks:

- 6 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings, followed by
- 33 weeks at the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP): as per BrisDoc's scheme:

Service Length	Pay Entitlement
Less than 26 weeks' service	No statutory or occupational adoption pay
26 weeks - 12 months service	Statutory Adoption Pay only (subject to eligibility)
12 - 24 months	6 weeks full + 2 weeks half pay
24 - 36 months	8 weeks full + 6 weeks half pay
36+ months	8 weeks full + 18 weeks half pay

If a co-owner does not return to work for the minimum three-month period, BrisDoc reserves the right to reclaim the occupational pay element (excluding any statutory adoption pay already received).

Statutory rates are reviewed annually by the UK Government and will apply automatically from the effective date each year.

Adoption Appointments

Co-owners adopting a child are entitled to time off to attend adoption appointments arranged by, or at the request of, an adoption agency.

- The primary adopter may take paid time off for up to 5 appointments
- The secondary adopter may take paid time off for up to 2 appointments

Managers should ensure that appointments are supported and that time off is recorded appropriately.

Co-owners must confirm which adopter is designated as the primary adopter for the purposes of adoption leave and appointments. BrisDoc will rely on this declaration and will not determine or verify which adopter is primary or secondary.

Surrogacy

Intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement may take adoption leave where they intend to apply for a parental order following the birth of the child.

The intended parent taking adoption leave will be eligible for adoption leave and pay in line with this section

The other intended parent may be eligible for paternity/partner leave or Shared Parental Leave

The surrogate (the person carrying the pregnancy) is entitled to maternity leave and maternity pay in accordance with the Maternity & Pregnancy Leave section of this policy.

Further information

For information on keeping in touch, annual leave accrual, redundancy protection, and return to work arrangements, please see Section: During and After Family Leave.

Paternity / Partner Leave

Eligibility

Available to all co-owners from day one of employment. There is no qualifying service requirement for Statutory Paternity Leave from 6 April 2026 onward.

Co-owners retain the right to take Paternity Leave even if they have already taken Shared Parental Leave. The previous restriction preventing Paternity Leave after Shared Parental Leave is removed for births and placements from 6 April 2026

Pay and Entitlement

- Up to 2 weeks' leave, which may be taken in two separate one-week blocks within 52 weeks of the birth or placement.
- Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) is payable for up to 2 weeks.
- BrisDoc provides Occupational Paternity Pay of up to 2 weeks at full pay for those with at least 12 months' service. Further time off may be unpaid or arranged flexibly by agreement.

Although Paternity Leave becomes a day-one right from 6 April 2026, Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) continues to require 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth, and the usual earnings threshold.

Statutory rates are reviewed annually by the UK Government and will apply automatically from the effective date each year.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

Shared Parental Leave allows parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay. To take Shared Parental Leave, the birthing or adopting parent must end ('curtail') their maternity or adoption leave early so that the remaining leave can be shared with their partner.

Both parents must meet statutory eligibility requirements and give at least 8 weeks' written notice using the BrisDoc Shared Parental Leave form.

Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) is payable for up to 37 weeks at the statutory rate.

Occupational enhancements mirror BrisDoc's existing maternity/adoption pay where applicable.

Other Family Leave

BrisDoc recognises that co-owners may experience a range of family circumstances requiring time away from work beyond maternity, adoption, paternity, or shared parental leave. The following provisions outline additional statutory and organisational leave available to support co-owners during bereavement, caring responsibilities, or family health matters.

Parental Bereavement Leave

BrisDoc recognises that bereavement affects individuals and families in different ways and is committed to supporting co-owners with compassion and dignity.

BrisDoc provides up to two weeks' Parental Bereavement Leave at full contractual pay for all co-owners from day one of employment, regardless of length of service. This is a BrisDoc entitlement and exceeds current statutory provisions.

Managers should apply this section with compassion, sensitivity, discretion, and trust.

This entitlement applies in the following circumstances:

Loss of a child

BrisDoc provides Parental Bereavement Leave following the death of a child at any age, including adult children. This leave may be taken as one two-week block or two separate one-week blocks, or as required to support co-owners in the way that best meets their needs.

Pregnancy Loss

BrisDoc recognises that pregnancy loss at any stage can be a deeply distressing experience. Co-owners experiencing miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, or other pregnancy loss before 24 weeks may take up to two weeks' paid pregnancy loss leave from day one of employment.

If a pregnancy ends before 24 weeks' gestation, statutory maternity leave and statutory maternity pay do not apply.

Pregnancy loss covered under this section will not be recorded as sickness absence. It will be recorded as Parental Bereavement Leave (Paid).

Termination of Pregnancy

BrisDoc recognises that the end of a pregnancy through termination may also have a significant physical and emotional impact. Co-owners will be supported sensitively and in confidence, and appropriate leave will be agreed based on individual circumstances. This may include pregnancy loss leave and, where clinically appropriate, sickness absence or other forms of leave, depending on the individual circumstances.

General Support and Protection

BrisDoc will ensure that all co-owners experiencing pregnancy loss or termination of pregnancy are treated with dignity, sensitivity, and respect. No co-owner will be subject to any detriment related to pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness.

Statutory rights (for clarity)

The statutory right to Parental Bereavement Leave currently applies following:

- the death of a child under 18, or
- a stillbirth from 24 weeks' gestation.

BrisDoc's enhanced bereavement entitlement operates independently of statutory rights and provides co-owners with a more generous level of support.

This leave may be taken in addition to other family leave entitlements where applicable.

Notice and arrangements

Co-owners should notify their line manager or the People Team as soon as they are able. We recognise that circumstances vary greatly, and minimal notice will be accepted where appropriate. The People Team will provide advice, support, confirmation of entitlements in writing, and ensure the absence is recorded in line with this policy.

Stillbirth or Neonatal Death

In the event of a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, or the death of a baby shortly after birth, the co-owner remains entitled to the full maternity leave and pay provisions outlined in this policy. Parental bereavement leave may also be taken following maternity leave if requested.

Further information

For information on keeping in touch, annual leave accrual, redundancy protection, and return to work arrangements, please see: [During and After Family Leave](#).

Neonatal Care Leave

Where a baby enters neonatal care within the first 28 days of birth and spends at least seven continuous days in eligible neonatal care, the parent may be entitled to Neonatal Care Leave in addition to other family leave. Neonatal care includes hospital care, certain consultant-supervised medical care after discharge, and palliative or end of life care, in line with the statutory definition.

Eligible parents may take up to 12 weeks of Neonatal Care Leave. This leave must be taken within the first 68 weeks following the child's birth.

Statutory Neonatal Care Pay may be available for eligible co-owners who meet the relevant service and earnings requirements set by UK legislation.

Neonatal Care Leave is in addition to other family leave. Where the co-owner is on maternity or adoption leave, Neonatal Care Leave must be taken after that statutory leave ends. Where

permitted by the statutory rules, Tier 1 Neonatal Care Leave may be taken around pre-booked paternity or shared parental leave.

This leave is intended to support parents whose babies require specialist hospital care after birth and is separate from maternity, paternity, adoption, or shared parental leave.

For the purposes of this policy, neonatal leave is divided into two phases (Tier 1 and Tier 2) based on when the leave is taken in relation to the period of neonatal care.

Notice Requirements:

Tier 1 leave (taken while the baby is in neonatal care or within 7 days after care ends): may be taken in non-consecutive blocks of at least one week. Notice must be given before the first day of absence or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Tier 2 leave (taken at any later point within 68 weeks of birth): must be taken in a single continuous block. Notice is 15 days for one week of leave, or 28 days for two or more consecutive weeks.

Fertility Treatment Leave

Reasonable paid time off will be provided for appointments directly connected to fertility treatment. Normally, up to six paid appointments will be supported in any 12-month period. Time off beyond this may be unpaid or arranged flexibly by agreement. Supporting documentation may be requested where appropriate.

Ordinary Parental Leave

Ordinary Parental Leave is a statutory right that allows parents to take time off to care for a child up to the age of 18. From 6 April 2026 this becomes a day-one right with no minimum service requirement.

Eligible co-owners may take up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave per child, normally limited to a maximum of four weeks in any leave year for each child unless otherwise agreed. Co-owners may be asked to confirm how much parental leave has previously been taken for the child with another employer(s).

Leave is usually taken in blocks of one week unless the child has a disability, where leave may be taken in individual days. For the purposes of parental leave, a "week" is equal to the co-owner's normal contracted working pattern over seven days.

Further information on statutory parental leave can be found on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/parental-leave>

Time off for Dependants (Emergency Leave)

Co-owners have the right to reasonable unpaid time off to deal with emergencies involving a dependant. Managers may approve paid Special Leave in appropriate circumstances in accordance with BrisDoc's Special Leave provisions.

A dependant is someone who reasonably relies on the co-owner for care or assistance. This includes:

- a spouse, partner, or civil partner;
- a child;
- a parent;
- a person who lives in the same household (other than as a lodger, tenant, or employee); or
- someone who reasonably relies on the co-owner in an emergency for care or assistance.

Carer's Leave

For the purposes of Carer's Leave, a carer is a co-owner who provides or arranges care for a dependant with a long-term care need. A long-term care need is defined as:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that requires, or is likely to require, care for at least three months
- a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- a person aged 65 or over.

Under the Carer's Leave Act 2023, co-owners are entitled to take up to one week (five working days) of unpaid leave in any 12-month period to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long-term care need.

Requests for Carer's Leave should normally be made in advance where possible. BrisDoc will seek to accommodate requests wherever practicable. In exceptional circumstances where the requested dates would unduly disrupt the operation of the service, the leave may be postponed. In such cases, the co-owner will be offered alternative dates within one month of the original request.

Where appropriate, managers may also consider the use of paid Special Leave in accordance with the Special Leave provisions of this policy.

Carer's Leave is separate from the right to reasonable unpaid time off to deal with unforeseen emergencies involving dependants under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Compassionate & Bereavement Leave (Special Leave)

BrisDoc recognises that co-owners may need time away from work to deal with the serious illness or death of someone close to them.

Co-owners are entitled to up to 5 days' paid Special Leave (pro-rata) per year. This may be used for compassionate or bereavement leave, depending on individual circumstances.

This may include, for example:

- supporting a close relative or dependant during serious illness
- dealing with urgent or unexpected situations involving a dependant
- time off following a bereavement, including planning or attending a funeral

Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death of a close relative or someone significant to the co-owner, a reasonable period of paid bereavement leave will be provided. The amount of leave will depend on the circumstances, including:

- the relationship to the deceased
- the co-owner's role in arrangements
- travel or other practical considerations

This leave is intended to support co-owners immediately following a bereavement, including time to decide and attend a funeral.

Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave may be granted where a co-owner needs time off due to:

- the serious illness of a close relative or dependant
- a significant personal or family emergency

The amount of leave will be determined based on individual circumstances.

Additional Support

Where further time off is required, this may be supported through:

- additional compassionate leave (paid or unpaid)
- annual leave
- unpaid leave
- temporary flexible working arrangements
- sickness absence, where appropriate

Managerial Approach

Managers should apply this with judgement, considering individual circumstances, and ensure decisions are made sensitively and consistently. Advice should be sought from the People Team where needed.

Interaction of Different Leave Types

Different types of leave are designed to support co-owners in different circumstances. Where circumstances change (for example, where a period of serious illness is followed by bereavement), the appropriate leave type will be determined based on the current situation.

Entitlement to one type of leave does not automatically remove entitlement to another where the qualifying event has changed.

Managers should apply this with judgement and seek advice from the People Team where required to ensure a fair and consistent approach.

Managers should not retrospectively reclassify leave unless agreed with the co-owner and the People Team.

Examples

The examples below illustrate how different types of leave may apply as circumstances change. They do not override the need for managerial judgement in individual circumstances.

Scenario 1: Illness followed by bereavement

A co-owner takes compassionate leave (as part of Special Leave) to support a seriously ill parent. The parent subsequently passes away.

The co-owner is entitled to bereavement leave (as part of Special Leave) following the death. Previous compassionate leave does not prevent access to bereavement leave, although the total paid Special Leave entitlement (normally up to 5 days per year) should be considered.

Scenario 2: Bereavement followed by ongoing impact

A co-owner takes bereavement leave (Special Leave) following the death of a close relative but remains unwell and unable to return to work.

Where appropriate, this may transition to sickness absence, supported through the Sickness & Wellbeing Policy.

Scenario 3: Multiple leave types during a family situation

A co-owner uses annual leave to spend time with a family member, followed by a period of compassionate leave (Special Leave) when the situation worsens.

If the situation continues or changes, further time off should be considered based on the circumstances at that time. This may include additional Special Leave (paid or unpaid), annual leave, or other appropriate leave. Previous leave does not prevent access to another type of leave where the situation has changed.

During and After Family Leave

Keeping in Touch and Communication

Co-owners and line managers should agree how often and how they will keep in touch during leave. During maternity or adoption leave, co-owners may work up to 10 Keeping in Touch (KIT) days without bringing their leave to an end.

During Shared Parental Leave, co-owners may work up to 20 Shared Parental Leave In Touch (SPLIT) days without ending their leave entitlement.

Payment for these days will be based on normal daily pay and agreed in advance.

Annual Leave and Bank Holidays

Annual leave and bank holidays continue to accrue during paid and unpaid family leave. Annual leave cannot be taken during maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, but may be taken immediately before or after family leave by agreement with the line manager.

Where family leave prevents a co-owner from taking their annual leave within the relevant leave year, they will be allowed to carry forward the accrued leave into the next leave year. The co-owner, line manager and People Team should discuss how this leave will be used before family leave begins and again before the co-owner returns to work.

Normally, carried-forward leave should be taken within 15 months of returning to work, unless a different arrangement is agreed. Annual leave requests remain subject to normal approval arrangements. Where a request to use carried-forward leave is refused because of service needs, the manager must ensure that an alternative opportunity is made available within the agreed carry-forward period.

Return to Work

Co-owners returning from Ordinary Maternity Leave (the first 26 weeks) have the right to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions.

Co-owners returning from Additional Maternity Leave (after 26 weeks) also have the right to return to the same job unless this is not reasonably practicable, in which case a suitable and appropriate alternative role on no less favourable terms will be offered.

Where a co-owner wishes to return earlier than planned, at least 8 weeks' written notice must be given to the People Team.

A return-to-work discussion will take place on or before the first day back to support reintegration and wellbeing.

Redundancy Protection

Under the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023, co-owners who are pregnant or on maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave have priority for any suitable alternative vacancies in a redundancy situation. This protection extends from the point pregnancy is notified and continues until 18 months after the birth or placement.

Document Management

Data and Confidentiality

All information about pregnancy, adoption, or family leave will be treated as confidential and processed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Information about pregnancy, family planning, or fertility treatment is classed as special category data under UK GDPR and will be handled only by authorised members of the People Team.

Monitoring and Review

The People Team will review the operation of this policy every two years or sooner if legislation changes, reporting any proposed amendments to the People Board and Combined Board for approval.

Version Control

Summary of Change	Reason for Change
Consolidation of family leave policies into a single, unified framework covering maternity, adoption, paternity/partner, shared parental, and wider family-related leave.	Improves accessibility, consistency, and reduces duplication across policies.
Expanded scope to include additional leave types and provisions, including parental bereavement, neonatal care leave, fertility treatment leave, carers leave, and enhanced redundancy protection.	Ensures a comprehensive and consistent approach aligned to current organisational practice and employee needs.
Updated to reflect recent UK employment legislation, including changes introduced through UK employment legislation.	Ensures legal compliance and future alignment with statutory requirements.
Introduction of clearer structure, simplified language, and summary guidance (including quick reference information and improved definitions).	Enhances usability for managers and co-owners and supports consistent application.
Clarification and standardisation of key entitlements and processes, including occupational pay, annual leave accrual, maintaining contact, and return to work arrangements.	Improves transparency, fairness, and operational consistency.

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Leave & Pay

This table provides a summary of entitlements. Full details, eligibility criteria, and conditions (including notice requirements and any repayment provisions) are set out in the main policy.

Table 1 – Quick view

Leave Type	Paid?	BrisDoc Enhancement	Max Leave
Maternity	Yes	Enhanced pay based on service	52 weeks
Adoption	Yes	Enhanced pay based on service	52 weeks
Shared Parental	Yes	Mirrors maternity/adoption	50 weeks (shared)
Paternity	Yes	2 weeks full pay (after 12 months)	2 weeks
Parental Bereavement	Yes	2 weeks full contractual pay (day one)	2 weeks
Includes pregnancy loss at any stage and child loss at any age, from day one of employment.			
Neonatal	Yes (if eligible)	Statutory only	12 weeks
Parental Leave	No	Unpaid	18 weeks
Dependants	No	Unpaid	Short-term
Fertility	Yes	Up to 6 paid appointments	As required

Table 2 – Maternity & Adoption Pay Detail

Service	Maternity Pay	Adoption Pay
<12 months	SMP only	SAP only
12–24 months	6 weeks full + 2 weeks half pay + SMP	Same
24–36 months	8 weeks full + 6 weeks half pay + SMP	Same
36+ months	8 weeks full + 18 weeks half pay + SMP	Same

Statutory pay is subject to service and earnings thresholds set by UK legislation. Occupational enhancements apply from 12 months' continuous service (see main policy for full details).

Occupational pay is subject to a requirement to return to work for a minimum of three months; otherwise, BrisDoc may reclaim the occupational element.

Appendix B: How Maternity Pay is Calculated

1. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

SMP is paid for up to 39 weeks, subject to eligibility.

Eligibility:

To qualify, you must:

- Have worked continuously for BrisDoc for at least 26 weeks up to and including the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth (the “qualifying week”); and
- Have average earnings at least equal to the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance as set by HMRC.

How it’s calculated:

- SMP is based on your Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) over the eight weeks (or two pay periods) ending with the qualifying week.
- AWE includes all taxable pay — for example, basic pay, overtime, enhancements, on-call pay, and regular allowances — received during that eight-week period.

SMP is then paid as:

- First 6 weeks: 90% of your AWE (no upper limit).
- Next 33 weeks: The lower of 90% of AWE or the statutory flat rate (currently £184.03 per week from April 2025).

If your pay fluctuates, SMP is still based on the average over that qualifying period — later changes to hours or pay don’t affect the calculation once it’s set.

2. Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP)

BrisDoc’s occupational pay supplements SMP for eligible co-owners who have 12 months’ continuous service at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth.

OMP is calculated using the same AWE figure as SMP to ensure consistency.

BrisDoc OMP structure (based on service length):

The level of occupational maternity pay depends on the co-owner’s length of continuous service at the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth.

12–24 months service

- 6 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP)
- 2 weeks half pay plus SMP

24–36 months service

- 8 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP)
- 6 weeks half pay plus SMP

36 months service or more

- 8 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP)
- 18 weeks half pay plus SMP

All occupational payments include Statutory Maternity Pay where applicable.

3. Example

This example shows a co-owner with 36 months continuous service, giving the maximum occupational maternity pay entitlement of 8 weeks full pay followed by 18 weeks half pay plus SMP.

The co-owner earns £650 per week on average in the 8 weeks before the qualifying week.

Period	Calculation	Weekly Pay
Weeks 1–8	Full pay (inclusive of SMP)	£650
Weeks 9-26	Half pay (£325) + SMP (£184.03), capped at £650	£509.03
Weeks 27-39	SMP only	£184.03
Weeks 40–52	Unpaid	£0

4. Other notes

- AWE is calculated before tax and National Insurance.
- One-off bonuses or pay awards in that 8-week window are included.
- Statutory enhancements (e.g. Real Living Wage uplift) after the qualifying week don't change the AWE figure.
- If you move from fixed to variable hours during pregnancy, the AWE calculation automatically averages this out.
- Similar principles apply to Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Paternity Pay, each using AWE over the same 8-week reference period.

5. Where to get help

If you're unsure how your AWE or pay has been calculated, please contact the People Team or Payroll for an explanation. They can provide a personalised calculation breakdown.

Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

This EQIA ensures that BrisDoc's *Maternity, Paternity & Family Leave Policy* upholds our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and promotes inclusive and equitable practice and proactively considers how co-owners from different backgrounds and with different protected characteristics may be impacted. It also reflects on intersectionality and the compounding effects that may arise from overlapping characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact Identified?	Actions Taken / Considerations
Age	Younger co-owners more likely to take maternity, parental or SPL; older co-owners may require carers leave.	Policy applies equally regardless of age; training for managers emphasises consistency.
Disability	Pregnancy complications or fertility treatment may overlap with disability.	Reasonable adjustments and Access to Work referrals embedded.
Sex / Gender	Women more likely to use maternity/adoption leave; men/partners less likely to take SPL.	Encourage shared parental uptake via manager comms and check-ins.
Gender Reassignment	Trans men or non-binary co-owners may be pregnant or adoptive parents.	Language throughout is gender-neutral and inclusive.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Directly protected group; key focus of policy.	Dedicated risk assessment and separate sickness recording.
Race / Ethnicity	Cultural expectations around leave or caring roles.	Promote awareness in management training.
Religion / Belief	Some religious practices may affect timing of leave.	Flexibility around religious observance and family roles.
Sexual Orientation	Same-sex couples equally eligible for all leave.	Inclusive terminology used throughout.

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact Identified?	Actions Taken / Considerations
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Minimal impact; all rights based on parental role not marital status.	Neutral language retained.

Intersectionality

BrisDoc recognises that some co-owners may experience overlapping barriers due to intersecting identities (e.g. a disabled parent, a younger co-owner from an ethnic minority background, etc.). This policy is designed to be flexible, person-centred, and considerate of complex needs.

We are committed to an inclusive approach to supporting our co-owners that respects overlapping factors. This means we will:

- Avoid one-size-fits-all assumptions
- Consider how protected characteristics may affect the individual co-owner
- Ensure that no co-owner is disadvantaged due to intersecting inequalities

BrisDoc commits to handling all maternity and paternity matters with sensitivity, considering each individual's circumstances, and offering support in a way that is equitable, fair, and respectful.

Monitoring and Review

- Equality considerations will be reviewed as part of future policy reviews and updates.
- Any feedback or concerns raised by co-owners will be reviewed by the People Team and inform improvements to practice.
- Co-owners are encouraged to raise concerns with their line manager or confidentially with the People Team at workforcesupport@brisdac.org