

SPI Formation for Licensed Ministry Parental Leave Policy



ATHROFA PADARN SANT
ST PADARN'S INSTITUTE

Document Control Table

Document Title:	Formation for Licensed Ministry Parental Leave Policy		
Author(s) (name, job title and organisation):	Kathryn Delderfield, Director of Operations, SPI		
Version Number:	2		
Document Status:	Approved		
Date Approved:	4 August 2025		
Approved By:	St Padarn's Executive Board (Final version approved by Chair's Action)		
Effective Date:	With immediate effect		
Review Date:	January 2028		
Superseded Version:	1		
Related Documents:			
Document History			
Version	Date	Author	Notes on Revisions
2	June 2025	Kathryn Delderfield	Minor amendments to terminology and titles

St Padarn's Institute Formation for Licensed Ministry Parental Leave Policy

1. Contents of Policy

1. Contents of Policy
2. Introduction
3. Giving Notice of Pregnancy
4. Maternity Leave
5. Grants during Maternity Leave
 - 5.1 Full-Time Candidates
 - 5.2 Part-Time Candidates
 - 5.3 Returning to Training
 - 5.4 Length of Training
 - 5.5 Contact During Maternity Leave
 - 5.6 Stillbirth and Miscarriage
6. Paternity Leave
7. Shared Parental Leave
 - 7.1 Where both partners are Candidates
 - 7.2 Where a Candidate's employed partner gives birth
8. Adoption Leave
9. Surrogacy

2. Introduction

While candidates for ministry are not employed, and therefore do not have employment rights, St Padarn's has a moral responsibility to ensure that there are fair, non-discriminatory practices in place for their initial training. St Padarn's wants to ensure it

has good quality candidates of all ages, so it endeavours to ensure there is provision in place for those planning on becoming parents, in order to remove a potential barrier to training. This policy describes the practices for those who become a parent while in initial training. The financial provision differs to clergy or staff provision as candidates receive a grant rather than a stipend/salary.

3. Giving Notice of Pregnancy

Candidates who are pregnant are encouraged to let their personal tutor know as soon as possible. Maternity provision does not alter depending on circumstances. However, certain arrangements that need to be put in place in order to ensure a candidate can complete their training will be dependent on factors such as how much maternity leave is taken, at what point in the year, and the academic programme a candidate is on.

Early communication means that arrangements for a maternity risk assessment can be undertaken at an early stage. Candidates are also encouraged to let their DDO know as soon as possible as maternity leave may affect length of training and licensing date and will allow the diocese to be able to support the candidate appropriately.

A pregnant candidate will need to provide a maternity certificate (**MAT B1**) to their personal tutor. This can be obtained from a GP or midwife **after the 20th week of pregnancy**.

4. Maternity Leave

Candidates who are pregnant will be able to take time off for pregnancy related medical appointments.

Candidates who give birth may take up to **52 weeks** maternity leave.

A candidate can choose to begin their maternity leave **from the 11th week** prior to the due date. If the baby is born earlier than this then maternity leave will begin on the date of the birth of the child.

A candidate should inform their personal tutor of when they intend to take maternity leave **at least 15 weeks before** the due date. A candidate can change their mind after this date, **giving 28 days' notice**.

Pregnant candidates may choose to continue training until as close to the expected week of childbirth as they wish provided, they are capable of taking a full part. If it is felt that the candidate's health or that of the unborn baby is suffering as a result of their continuing to work, then St Padarn's may require the candidate to provide confirmation from their doctor that they are fit to continue to take part in training.

If the baby is born prematurely, a candidate should let their personal tutor know as soon as is reasonably practicable and, provide a certificate **MATB2** form which can be obtained from the GP or midwife.

While the above is framed in terms of your choices and obligations, we would encourage you to talk these things through openly with your personal tutor so that we help you think through the different options and support you in your decision making.

In the event that a candidate does not wish to return to training then the candidate should talk to their personal tutor. The personal tutor will refer the matter to the Dean for Initial Ministerial Training, who will also consult with the relevant DDO.

Most candidates will be studying an accredited programme as part of their training (such as Theology for Life). A candidate who is pregnant is likely to need to apply for an interruption of studies from their academic work. The processes for this depend on the programme and so the personal tutor will work with the candidate and the Registrar = to facilitate the relevant Interruption of Studies processes. The candidate will need to follow the correct process for applying for an interruption of studies.

5. Grants during Maternity Leave

5.1 Full-Time Candidates

The Church in Wales makes financial provision for maternity in the form of grants.

Candidates who fall pregnant will **continue** to receive a training and housing grant for **39 weeks**. On the occasion of the birth of the child the grant will be reassessed to include the child grant. The grant will **stop after 39 weeks** of maternity leave. If you

wish you can take a further **13 weeks** of maternity leave to bring it up to 52 weeks, although this will be **unpaid**.

Any costs for the academic component of training will continue to be met by St Padarn's, providing the candidate goes through the proper processes for interruption of studies.

5.2 Part-Time Candidates

The purpose of the part-time grant is to cover incidental costs of training, and so no grant is paid during maternity leave.

Any costs for the academic component of training will continue to be met by St Padarn's, providing the candidate goes through the proper processes for interruption of studies.

5.3 Returning to Training

No candidate can return to training during the first two weeks after giving birth.

Two weeks before the return from maternity leave the candidate will be invited to meet with their personal tutor to talk through the transition back into training.

If a candidate decides to return to training before the end of their maternity leave, they must put in a request in writing **at least 28 days before** their expected return date to their personal tutor. The tutor will consult with the Dean to discuss whether this is advisable, before deciding. All decisions will be communicated directly to the candidate and in cases where it is not feasible for the candidate to return to training on their preferred date, explanations as to why they cannot return to their training on their chosen date will be fully explained.

5.4 Length of Training

The type of training a candidate is undertaking is not affected by maternity. However, the FLM programme needs to be completed before a candidate is licensed for ministry and so the date of licensing may be affected. A candidate should know before they make a final decision about length of maternity leave what impact this will have on their length of training. Discussions on the implications of maternity leave between relevant St Padarn's staff and the candidate's diocese should take place as soon as possible after the candidate has informed St Padarn's that they are pregnant. Their Bishop will need to authorise any subsequent change to length of training.

5.5 Contact during Maternity Leave

It can be helpful for a candidate to be able to keep in touch during their maternity leave. If a candidate thinks it would be beneficial to them, they should discuss with the Dean for Initial Ministerial Training about attending occasional days of training. Candidates should feel free to contact their personal tutor occasionally to keep in touch during their leave.

5.6 Stillbirth and Miscarriage

It is sincerely hoped that all will go well with the pregnancy, but occasionally a pregnancy will sadly end in stillbirth or miscarriage. If this should happen candidates are encouraged to contact their personal tutor at the earliest opportunity so that St Padarn's are able to give the candidate pastoral support.

Candidates whose partner sadly suffered a stillbirth or miscarriage are also strongly encouraged to talk to their personal tutor so St Padarn's can give pastoral support.

6. Paternity Leave

A candidate whose partner gives birth can take **2 weeks paternity leave**. Leave must be taken **within 8 weeks** of the birth of the child. It is likely that the impact of this 2-week period on training progress will be manageable unless an assignment deadline falls in that period. Candidates should notify their personal tutor of the expected due **date 4 weeks beforehand**. Paternity leave must be taken in one go. Once the baby is born the candidate should notify their personal tutor when they would like to take paternity leave as soon as possible.

7. Shared Parental Leave

7.1 Where both partners are Candidates

The candidate giving birth must take the **two weeks after the birth** of the baby as **leave**. There are a couple of alternatives for Shared Parental Leave where both parents are candidates:

- The candidates can choose which partner takes the whole of the remainder of the maternity leave. The candidates should notify The Dean for Initial Ministerial Training as soon as possible, and the Dean and their DDO will discuss implications and arrangements with whichever partner takes the maternity leave.
- The candidates may be able to take a proportion of the maternity leave each, either concurrently or consecutively. For example, they may each wish to take part of the leave together, or each take a period of time one after another. It is important to note that the **39 weeks** of leave eligible for grants to be paid is in **total across both partners**, it is not 39 weeks each. The need to ensure that both partners are able to complete all aspects of their training may affect how flexible these arrangements can be. Candidates wishing to explore the possibility of shared parental leave should speak to the Dean for Initial Ministerial Training at the earliest possible opportunity so an assessment can be made on the impact of their training.

7.2 Where a candidate's employed partner gives birth

The legislation for shared parental leave applies only if both parents are employed. Therefore, it does not apply where one parent is a candidate. If a candidate whose employed partner gives birth wants to take parental leave this will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The candidate should discuss this with their personal tutor at the earliest opportunity.

8. Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is broadly similar to other parental leave. Where there are two parents, one parent assumes the role of primary adopter. If a candidate assumes the role of primary adopter, they may **start** adoption leave when they have **been matched** with a child/children **or 14 days before** the fostering to adopt placement starts. It is recognised that the nature of adoption means that it is often not possible to give much notice to begin adoption leave. In order to help prepare for their leave, the candidate may find it helpful to talk to their personal tutor when they get to the point where a match or a placement is likely to be imminent.

Once the primary adopter begins adoption leave, their leave follows the same principles as maternity leave, including grants.

Where the candidate is not the primary adopter, they are eligible for paternity leave (regardless of the sex of the parent, leave for the parent who is not the primary carer is still termed 'paternity'). The entitlement is **2 weeks leave, in the 8 weeks** after they have been matched with a child/children **or 14 days before** the fostering to adopt placement starts.

Where both partners are candidates, one will assume the role of primary adopter and be entitled to adoption leave and the other will be entitled to paternity leave.

Candidates who adopt are entitled to Shared Parental Leave.

9. Surrogacy

If candidates are having a baby through surrogacy, then they will be treated the same as adoptive parents, with leave entitlement beginning at the point they become responsible for the child's/children's upbringing.

Any candidate exploring whether to become a surrogate during their training period should explore this at the earliest opportunity with their Bishop.

These arrangements can be complex, and candidates are encouraged to speak either with their personal tutor or the Director of Operations.