

Women's engagement

from the Ministers for Women and Equalities

 HM Government

NEWSFLASH

Government pledges more support for working families

New system of flexible parental leave announced

Earlier this week the Government announced the introduction of a new system of flexible parental leave, in which parents will be able to choose how they share care of their child in the first year after birth. Employed mothers will still be entitled to 52 weeks of maternity leave. However, working parents will be able to opt to share the leave if they want to.

Minister for Women and Equalities and Employment Relations, Jo Swinson, said:

“If we are to deliver sustainable, strong growth we need to get the best out of both men and women in the workforce.

“Current arrangements are old-fashioned, inflexible and gender-biased. People should have the right to choose how they balance their work and family commitments.

“These proposals bring good news for business – not least a more motivated and productive workforce. Employers will be able to recruit and retain staff from a wider pool of talent in turn helping to diversify our economy and drive growth.

“Extending the right to request flexible working will enable all employees to discuss flexible working with their employer, and move the discussion away from why the employee needs to work flexibly, and onto how flexible working will work for the business.”

The Government also announced new proposals to extend the right to request flexible working to **all** employees, to give greater choice and freedom to workers and businesses.

Read the Deputy Prime Minister's speech in full [here](#).

[Read the full press release on the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills website.](#)