

Press release: New leave allowance for bereaved parents will be one of the most generous in the world

- New laws will give employed parents two weeks' paid leave if they lose a child under 18
- The bill goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of workplace right for employees
- Businesses will be able to claim back parental bereavement pay from the Government

Employees who have suffered the death of a child will benefit from significant new paid leave allowances [under proposed laws published today](#) (13 October).

While the Government expects employers to be compassionate and flexible at such a difficult time, there is currently no legal requirement for employers to provide paid time off for grieving parents.

But under proposed new laws, for the first time employed parents who lose a child under the age of 18 will have the right to two weeks' paid leave to allow them time to grieve. This will honour the manifesto commitment to introduce a new entitlement for parental bereavement leave.

The Parental Bereavement (Pay and Leave) Bill, introduced by Kevin Hollinrake MP and supported by the Government, will give a day-one right to parental bereavement leave and employees with a minimum of 26 weeks' continuous service will be eligible for statutory parental bereavement pay.

Kevin Hollinrake MP, bill sponsor, said:

Sadly I have had constituents who have gone through this dreadful experience and while some parents prefer to carry on working, others need time off.

This new law will give employed parents a legal right to two weeks' paid leave, giving them that all-important time and space away from work to grieve at such a desperately sad time.

Margot James, Business Minister, said:

We want parents to feel properly supported by their employer when they go through the deeply distressing ordeal of losing a child.

That's why Government is backing this bill which goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of

workplace right for employees.

Francine Bates, CEO of The Lullaby Trust said:

We warmly welcome this new law giving paid leave to bereaved parents. Losing a child is one of the most devastating experiences that a parent can go through and it is vitally important that they are supported by their employer and not made to return to work before they are ready.

We know many bereaved parents who have campaigned tirelessly for paid compassionate leave after the death of a child and are very pleased to see that the UK is now leading the way in supporting parents who need time away from work to grieve for their child.

Debbie Kerslake, Chief Executive of Cruse Bereavement Care, said:

Cruse Bereavement Care welcomes legislation introducing parental bereavement leave recognising that the death of a child is devastating.

It is vital that at such a distressing time those who are bereaved can take time away from work.

Small employers will be able to recover all statutory parental bereavement pay while larger employers will be able to reclaim almost all of it.

Details of the proposed new law were published today in Parliament ahead of the bill's second reading on 20 October, with the ambition of it becoming law in 2020.

Notes to editors

1. Currently under the Employment Rights Act, employees have a day-one right to take a "reasonable" amount of unpaid time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant, including making arrangements following the death of a dependant. What is "reasonable" depends on the circumstances but in practice the length of time off will be agreed between the employer and their employee
2. In the unlikely event that employee and employer can't agree what is "reasonable", this can be resolved through Acas or an employment tribunal
3. Acas has also published good practice guidance for employers on managing bereavement in the workplace.
4. We estimate the annual cost of statutory payments under this proposal to be between £1.3m and £2m

Press release: New charity investigation: Jole Rider Friends

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a new statutory inquiry into Jole Rider Friends, registered charity number 1112914. The investigation was opened on 5 September 2017.

The charity's objects are to advance education, in particular by providing or assisting in the provision of facilities and equipment at educational establishments in Africa.

The trustees have failed to submit their charity's annual accounts on time for the last two financial years; the charity is currently 257 days overdue in submitting their 2016 accounts. The charity's 2015 accounts contained an independent examiner's report which highlighted concerns surrounding potentially unauthorised payments and the charity's stock control.

The Commission has therefore opened a statutory inquiry to address significant regulatory concerns with regard to the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees.

The Commission stresses that opening an inquiry is not in itself a finding of wrongdoing. The purpose of an inquiry is to examine issues in detail and investigate and establish the facts so that the regulator can ascertain whether there has been misconduct or mismanagement; establish the extent of the risk to the charity's property, beneficiaries or work; and decide what action needs to be taken to resolve the serious concerns, if necessary using its investigative, protective and remedial powers to do so.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

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Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).

3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
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News story: Medicine and vaccine manufacturing centres: apply for funding

Innovate UK is seeking proposals from UK organisations to set up national centres that will help businesses to develop, commercialise and manufacture new vaccines and medicines.

Up to £66 million in capital funding is available to build and establish a national vaccines development and manufacturing centre. A further £13 million is available towards the setting up of a national medicines manufacturing and innovation centre.

The funding is under the government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to develop first-of-a-kind technologies for the manufacture of medicines.

Vaccines development and manufacturing centre

The UK has strong expertise in researching new vaccines. However, there are gaps in our ability to develop, commercialise and manufacture new vaccines.

Establishing a new national centre will bridge that gap and ensure that the UK is best set up for infectious disease outbreaks. It will also be able to provide expertise and advice to those working in the sector.

It will be an independent, physical centre based in one location, and will have pilot and medium-scale manufacturing capacity. Other centres of national and international importance will link in.

Competition information

- this competition is open, and the registration deadline is at midday on 15 November 2017
- up to £66 million is available in capital funding to establish the centre
- the project can be led by a business, a research and technology organisation, or a not-for-profit company with experience in vaccine development and manufacture. It must include partners from academia and industry
- the project is expected to last up to 4 years

- businesses could attract up to 50% of their total project costs

Medicines manufacturing and innovation centre

While the UK has a strong medicines manufacturing sector, with more than 1,300 companies producing £26 billion in exports in 2015, its relative impact has declined in recent years.

The medicines manufacturing and innovation centre aims to reverse that decline by delivering radical improvements in productivity through new small-molecule drug products. The centre will be a focal point for innovation in fine-chemical or pharmaceutical manufacturing and will be able to prove the viability of production methods to relevant standards.

By working with partners across research and manufacturing it will act as a hub around which small and large businesses can base themselves.

Competition information

- this competition is open, and the deadline for registration is midday 1 November 2017
- up to £13 million is available towards the total costs of establishing the centre
- projects must be led by a UK-based research and technology organisation or not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. You must have experience in manufacturing processes producing small-molecule pharmaceuticals or fine chemicals
- projects must include partners from academia and industry
- the project is expected to last up to 4 years

Press release: UK leads the way to build back better after Hurricanes

The UK government is to set up a private sector Task Force to help long-term reconstruction in countries and territories hit by last month's Caribbean hurricanes, International Development Secretary Priti Patel will announce today (Friday, October 13).

It will mobilise private sector support to rebuild critical infrastructure such as roads and power supplies essential to get economies up and running again, and better withstand future natural disasters.

The team of top business leaders, either CEOs or Chairs with experience in the Caribbean, will sit on the Task Force.

Ms Patel will announce the Task Force at a meeting to discuss the response to

the hurricanes and how to enhance global crisis preparedness and response, hosted by the World Bank in Washington D.C.

The Task Force will look at ways in which support from the private sector, both financial and technical, in industries such as construction, insurance, banking and tourism, can be used to help reconstruction on the three UK Overseas Territories worst hit by last month's Hurricane Irma: British Virgin Islands, Anguilla and Turks and Caicos.

Ms Patel will convene a meeting in London in November to discuss how best to maximise the contribution of the private sector.

The UK government has already committed over £62 million towards the immediate relief effort, and has delivered or procured nearly 180 tonnes of aid for the region.

It also established a UK Joint Task Force, led by DFID's Chris Austin, in the immediate aftermath of the hurricanes to deal with the humanitarian crisis on the ground and the initial relief effort as well as to carry out assessments to identify both short and longer term needs.

The focus of the private sector Task Force announced today will specifically be the long-term reconstruction on the affected islands.

Ms Patel will say at the World Bank hosted event:

No small island can reasonably be expected to recover and rebuild from a catastrophic disaster that undermines their entire economy without international support.

They need businesses to step up. The private sector is key to reviving the region's economies and must play a central role in the reconstruction of these islands, helping them to build back better.

Ms Patel, who visited British Virgin Islands and Anguilla last month, will say the longer-term reconstruction involves "working with the affected islands to build back better and more resilient hospitals, schools and other public services like water and power on which people survive."

She will add:

we need to reduce the future potential impact on public services and livelihoods of any future disasters. Investing in preparedness makes good financial sense: each pound saves two pounds of aid.

Ms Patel will also confirm today that the UK-led Centre for Global Disaster Protection in London will offer all the hurricane-hit countries and territories support and advice on disaster risk financing and insurance to ensure they are better prepared to cope with any future hurricanes. The

Centre will also offer advice on building more resilient infrastructure.

DFID will work with experts to ensure new buildings and systems are more resilient, efficient and use more renewable energy options.

This will include more than 12 major climate resilient infrastructure projects, at least 50 strengthened health facilities, and geothermal energy development where the potential exists.

These projects were already planned before the hurricanes and will now be able to quickly mobilise to build resilience. They include £25 million set aside for Dominica and £14 million for Antigua and Barbuda.

Ms Patel's words on building back better come amid wider calls from her for reform of the international system.

She will say:

"The international system needs to explore new ways to prevent, prepare for and respond to crises in the future."

The UK is also today publishing its Humanitarian Reform Policy, which reaffirms its leadership in responding to global emergencies and reforming the international humanitarian system.

Notes to Editors

- The UK government has already committed £62 million towards the immediate relief effort in the region, and is doubling any UK public donations to the British Red Cross Hurricanes appeal up to £3 million.
- So far nearly 180 tonnes of UK aid has arrived or been procured in the region, including food, water, shelter kits, solar lanterns and building materials. The UK government has also helped reinstall airport runways and powers lines in the islands, and provided shelter, food and water.
- Private sector insurance (for businesses, some homes and property) is already likely to provide considerable support for reconstruction – with pay outs estimated by leading catastrophe modellers Risk Management Solutions to be up to £27.4 billion (\$36 billion) for the region, of which £4.6 billion (\$6 billion) is for the UK Overseas Territories, including £3 billion (\$4billion) for the British Virgin Islands.
- The Prime Minister announced the London-based Centre for Global Disaster Protection at the G20 Summit earlier this year. It aims to save lives and help countries get back on their feet quickly after a disaster strikes, working with governments to strengthen plans and help them to use tools like insurance to access quick and reliable finance in emergencies.
- The Centre will also work with the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and private sector partners to consider options to step up the risk financing available to the Caribbean. The UK, alongside the World Bank and other donors, helped to establish CCRIF a decade ago. It has paid out over £91.2million (\$120million) since then, including £38 million (\$50 million) to islands affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

- The UK has a long-standing development partnership with the Caribbean. It already has programming in place to support the construction of disaster-resilient infrastructure. This includes £300 million from UKCIF (UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund) to build more than 12 climate resilient infrastructure projects, including roads and ports, and a £38 million Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) programme to help at least 50 health clinics to better withstand natural disasters. This is all UK aid money. From the UKCIF fund, £25 million can now be set aside for Dominica and £14 million for Antigua and Barbuda to help reconstruction after the hurricanes.
 - The UK has also confirmed its core contributions to United Nations Humanitarian Agencies, including CERF, OCHA, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and M&E. This constitutes total contributions of £684 million. Almost a third of this funding will be dependent on improved results and progress on reform priorities, as the International Development Secretary announced at the United Nations General Assembly in September.
 - Footage and photos: [click here](#) for new content from Dominica
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[Press release: Move to end bogus holiday sickness claims](#)

- Practice costs travel industry millions and risks pushing up prices for law-abiding holidaymakers

Travel industry bosses and others are today being invited to submit evidence to help drive the government's crackdown on the holiday sickness claims culture.

The call for evidence being launched today (13 October 2017) will give Ministers a greater insight into the reported rise in suspected false insurance claims for gastric illnesses like food poisoning being brought by British holidaymakers.

It is the latest stage of the government's crackdown on a problem which is damaging Britain's reputation overseas and which could drive up holiday costs for hard-working families.

The upsurge in holiday sickness claims in this country – partly fuelled by touts operating in European resorts – could be as high as 500% since 2013, according to travel industry estimates. This is not seen in other European countries, and has raised questions over the scale of bogus claims.

The call for evidence will ask the industry and others to submit a wide range of information, from the volumes of claims to the amount of damages awarded. This will be used to help Ministers identify next steps to tackle false claims.

Justice Minister Dominic Raab said:

Bogus claims against tour operators risk driving up the price of summer holidays abroad for hard-working families who have earned a break. We're taking action to deter these claims, and protect holiday-makers from being ripped off.

The call for evidence, which will remain open for four weeks, follows government action over the summer aimed at reducing cash incentives to bring spurious claims against package holiday tour operators.

Tour operators often settle holiday sickness claims out of court, rather than challenge them because – due to the fact these spurious claims are arising abroad – legal costs are not controlled, so costs for tour operators can be out of all proportion to the damages claimed.

Ministers have put forward proposals which would mean tour operators would pay a prescribed sum depending on the value of the claim, making defence costs predictable and helping to deter bogus claims.

These proposals will be considered by the Civil Procedure Rule Committee, which is responsible for setting rules on legal costs. We aim to bring the new rules into force early next year.

Notes to editors

1. The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) reports a 500% increase from around 5,000 claims in 2013 to around 35,000 claims in 2016. This is despite the fact that travel industry data on the global trend for reported incidence of illness in resorts has actually declined in recent years.
2. ABTA has also found that while the average value of a gastric illness claim is about £2,100, the average cost of defending a claim is almost £3,800. The projected total cost of claims to the industry in 2016 (including damages paid) was estimated by ABTA to be over £240 million. We will look into these figures as part of the call for evidence.
3. For more information call the Ministry of Justice press office on 020 3545 8953.