



WORKING DADS EMPLOYER AWARDS

Parenting Policies Case Study

Why is it important for QBE to support working dads?

Offering extended Paternity Leave has wide-reaching benefits for co-parents themselves, their children, and employers. We hope it will help remove barriers to career progression, challenge traditional gender roles and level the playing field for women and men at home and at work.

We are proud to have made positive enhancements to our parenting policies and benefits to ensure we support our people during important life moments. Equalising our Paternity Leave reflects our values to better support working families, attract and retain top talent, close the gender pay gap and promote equality in the workplace.

What does QBE offer in terms of parenting policies?

We modernised our approach to paternity leave at the beginning

“These changes are amazing and will make such a difference especially to mental health of both mothers and fathers, well done QBE”

QBE Employee



of 2023 to mirror other parenting policies and enable partners and co-parents to take up to 52 weeks of leave with 26 weeks at full pay. Regardless of gender, sexual orientation or how you become a parent, you are entitled to the same leave and support.

To introduce the enhancements, we held a people leader briefing featuring our senior leaders with external speakers. This focused on the culture change we need to be part of to make the new policy a success and was supported by a briefing deck and employee case study.

What were the biggest challenges to overcome and how did you overcome them?

The equalisation of paternity leave is a significant step for us, but we know launching a new policy is just one part of this. Creating the right culture to sit behind this is just as important.

We are encouraging our leaders to help us celebrate and normalise fathers taking extended leave and are supporting them to work through the knock-on impact this has.

Reflecting on challenges, we are addressing resourcing and encouraging creative thinking amongst managers in how they backfill roles, review workloads, redistribute work, and what priorities exist across the team to enable people to take this leave. This all aids in normalising and celebrating fathers taking leave.

What information was gathered to persuade your leadership team this was the right thing to do?

We spent time benchmarking our family-friendly policies and looked



QBE is an international insurer and reinsurer offering a diverse portfolio of commercial, personal and specialty products, as well as risk management solutions. We employ a team of circa 13,000 people, in 28 countries around the world. We are passionate about building a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

across the market to identify emerging trends and insights. We listened to our people through regular pulse surveys and our inclusion forum, which brings together our employee networks and people and culture forums on a quarterly basis to drive progress against our inclusion plans.

It is all about doing the right thing for our people and providing support in the moments that matter. We further validated our proposals with external research to ensure a full picture and gain an important understanding of an outside in perspective. We reviewed research on the benefits of enhanced Paternity Leave and used Paternity Leave metrics from the previous years to model out the financial impact of our proposals and build a business case for our Executive team to sign off.

“I’m personally feeling quite emotional imagining the difference this could have made to us when we started our family 10 years ago – when attitudes were very different”

QBE Employee

How have you embedded these changes?

To launch our new policy, we held a live event for people leaders. We explained why we'd decided to enhance our parental policy, how we could make it a success, and what this meant for our culture.

After our dedicated people leader event, we shared a launch email with the wider organisation featuring a video case study of a new father discussing the positive impact of the new policy on him and his family. We refreshed our intranet page with supporting resources and FAQs for employees and line managers.

We also reached out to all expectant fathers and their managers on a 1-1 basis to explain the enhancements. With such a bold change we were also keen to promote this more broadly externally on our social media channels.

To further embed the policy, we plan to implement a communications campaign featuring real-life case studies of partners and co-parents and their experience of extended leave. Alongside this we intend to share insights from line managers on how they supported and covered the extended leave.

"It is hard to articulate fully the importance I place on spending time with my children and supporting my wife as our family grows. Time I will never see again, shared in a way that was not possible when I started my career. My employer knows that by giving me the chance to be a good dad to my children and husband to my wife I will be a productive employee to them. I don't think I could have the work/life balance that I have now with any other company in my industry and I will be forever grateful for this time, focused as much on parenting as career progression."

Simon Pearce,
Programme Manager



What has been the impact of the new policy?

Over the first 6 months of the policy we have 39 fathers taking extended leave with 66% of those taking the full offering.

Our enhanced Paternity leave policy has been incredibly well received by employees and prospective candidates. For example, one employee proactively reached out to us to say "I think the enhanced parental leave is incredible and the biggest step towards gender equality that any company could take. I am really proud of our organisation for sticking their head above the parapet."

Another said, "Just in case you wanted feedback for the Executive Management Board, this is absolutely fantastic news – at my stage of life, it's almost as important as total comp!"

Upon hearing about our extended Paternity leave policy one candidate said "very impressive to hear, I am looking for longevity in my next career move so it is great to know that I can join a company that already has the benefits in place to support me when I am ready to start a family".

In this competitive marketplace for talent, having market-leading policies will further differentiate us as an employer of choice.

We will be monitoring key people metrics (retention, attraction and progression) to track the broader impact of this policy enhancements.

What have you learnt through this process?

The key learning was understanding the downstream impact of making these policies operational – it

What's your advice to other organisations interested in doing more to support working dads?

We would recommend understanding not only your marketplace but thinking beyond your industry to appreciate what bold organisations are doing in this space. You do not need to engage with an expensive third party to do a full benchmark; there is a lot of information out there to help you see what other organisations are doing. Also, small businesses can consider enhancing one week of paternity leave and then work toward enhancing another. Any change in the number of weeks enhanced can make a difference to families. Lastly, we really valued listening to our people and wanted to act on their feedback. Work alongside the recruitment team to understand what candidates are looking for and how you can differentiate your organisation to stand out and attract top talent.

is far reaching and required a dedicated project team to rewrite policies, update our people system, processes, FAQs and letter templates. Bringing everyone along in the journey is essential to making these changes a success.

What about next steps?

Our future focus will be on continuing to embed this policy, normalising and celebrating extended Paternity leave. We'll seek feedback along the way and find out what more we can do to support working parents.

Following our enhancements in the UK, we are also reviewing our offering in other countries.

Information accurate as of 2023.

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