

## **Changes to Paternity Leave**

Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 now allow fathers of babies born on or after 3 April 2011 (or adoptive parents who are notified of being matched with a child for adoption on or after 3 April) additional paternity rights. Under the new Regulations mothers can opt to transfer up to 6 months of maternity leave to the father. The father will still be entitled to the standard two weeks paternity leave. In order to transfer maternity leave to the father, the leave must be taken by the father no earlier than 20 weeks after the birth of the child, it must end no later than 12 months from the birth, and it must be taken in one continuous block.

In the event that the mother has returned to work prior to her statutory maternity pay entitlement ceasing, then the father, subject to certain qualifying criteria, will be entitled to additional statutory paternity pay, which will be at the same rate as statutory maternity pay, for the period during which the mother would have been paid statutory maternity pay, had she not returned to work.

From 3 April 2011 Statutory Maternity, Paternity and Adoption pay and Maternity Allowance increased from £124.88 to £128.73 per week.

The standard weekly rate of Statutory Sick Pay has also increased from £79.15 to £81.60, but the weekly earnings threshold has risen from £97 to £102.

If you require further information about paternity leave then contact employment law solicitor Roger Cheves at [roger.cheves@sleeblackwell.co.uk](mailto:roger.cheves@sleeblackwell.co.uk)