

# Have your say

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## Women & Equalities Committee survey about Shared Parental Leave: deadline 7 February 2025

The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee is examining the effectiveness of the Government's statutory shared parental leave scheme, take up of which has been extremely low (latest figures show that less than 2% of fathers have taken SPL).

The Committee wants to hear from parents who have used SPL, and those who have considered but decided not to use it. If you are a parent in either category, please complete the survey at this [link](#).

### **This is an important chance for dads to have their say about SPL, and what a better system might look like.**

The survey asks some questions about SPL specifically, and you can then say more about your experience of either taking or not taking it. Below are some ideas for what you could talk about in this 'free text' section:

1. How much leave you took in your baby's first year, why, and how this felt
2. The benefits of fathers taking substantial leave, from your own or others' experience\*. For example, you might talk about:
  - Your mental wellbeing
  - Your ability to bond with and get to know your baby
  - Your ability to develop your parenting skills
  - Your partner's mental health and wellbeing
  - Your work-life balance and attitude to work
  - Your ability to share the caring responsibilities with your partner
  - Your ability as a couple to look after the baby yourselves versus paying for childcare
  - Your partner's ability to return to work, and the timing of this
  - The impact on your longer-term relationship with your child

*\*For reference, we are calling for [6 weeks for dads](#) as a statutory minimum.*

3. If you didn't take SPL, or you took less than you'd have liked, you might talk about:
  - The importance of well-paid leave to enable higher take-up by dads
  - Feeling that taking (more) leave would damage your career

- Not being eligible for SPL (and/or paternity leave)
  - The impacts of not taking (enough) leave: on you, your partner, your relationship with her and/or the baby
4. The background context to your leave-taking, for example:
    - Being the sole or main breadwinner in the family
    - Employer-level challenges, e.g. workplace cultures that don't support men as hands-on fathers; the role of HR and line managers
    - The cost of paid-for childcare
    - Traditional/sexist attitudes
  5. Inequalities in fathers' access to SPL, for example:
    - Shared parental leave being available to fathers only if mothers want to transfer some of their leave
    - 'White collar' and higher-paid fathers having more access to SPL and enhanced paternity/parental leave