

Shearman & Sterling Enacts New Parental Leave Policies



Summary: *Shearman & Sterling has made big improvements to their parental leave policies in the United States.*

Generous parental leave policies are all the rage right now in every industry. While tech companies and other businesses were quick to catch on to the demand for better parental leaves for employees, law firms have taken a little longer to join the movement.

The latest firm to improve their parental leave policy is Shearman & Sterling. The improvement will be available for their U.S. lawyers and staffers, effective as of September 1. The new policy will provide additional time off for working parents of either sex after the birth, adoption or fostering of a new child.

The U.S. lawyer that is the primary caregiver can receive up to 20 weeks of paid leave, up from 18 weeks of maternity leave. A staffer that is the primary caregiver of a new addition in their family can receive up to 14 weeks of paid leave, up from six weeks of leave for salaried staffers and no leave for hourly staffers. For those acting as the secondary caregivers, they will receive eight weeks of paid “new child care leave.” This is up from four weeks of paid leave for parents of either gender.

Shearman & Sterling senior partner Creighton Condon, who was elected the leader of the firm in 2012, said in a statement that “Our enhanced parental leave policy allows us to further support our people at key stages of their life by increasing the length of paid leave and by providing greater support throughout.”

He stressed that they will work to ensure their employees utilize the new policies, noting that social stigma to be the hardest worker in the law firm prevents most attorneys from wanting to take time off, even when they have a new baby. He said, “The next important step is to continue to enable our people to use this new policy to the fullest extent.”

The summer was a big one for other law firms announcing their new policies. Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe improved their secondary caregiver leave for their lawyers and staffers. Morrison & Foerster updated the London policy by doubling their paid maternity leave time to 26 weeks. They also tripled their paternity leave in the U.K. to six weeks.

Shearman & Sterling has around 850 lawyers working from 20 offices around the world. Their lawyers come from approximately 80 countries, speaking over 60 languages. The firm prides itself on excellence, integrity, teamwork, diversity, energy, and helping their clients with the best of their abilities and resources.

This policy only relates to their U.S. lawyers and staffers but the trend for better parental leave has been expanding to other countries. Sometime in the future, Shearman & Sterling may expand their policies, along with a many other big law firms.

Do you think attorneys will take advantage of these improved policies or is the work ethic culture in law firms unchangeable? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about new paternity leave policy announcements, read these articles:

- [Parental Leave Policies Are Getting Boosts at Top Law Firms](#)
- [Winston & Strawn Offers New Mothers and Fathers 20 Weeks Paid Leave](#)
- [Lowenstein Sander Adopts New Parental Leave Policies](#)

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