Helping to make new parents' lives that little bit easier: BAT pledges new benefits for all new parents worldwide

22 October 2018

British American Tobacco (BAT), which employs more than 55,000 people, is delighted to announce the launch of a new range of benefits available in all of the countries it operates in throughout the world – with the aim of helping its new parents to balance their home and work lives during the demanding and exciting first year of parenthood.

Effective globally from 1 January 2019, the new initiative insists on a minimum of 16 weeks’ fully paid maternity leave for new mothers and adoptive parents and also includes a return to work guarantee, flexible working opportunities and an online advice service offering coaching support for all parents whenever they need it.

Today’s announcement will make a major difference in many of the 180 countries in which the Group operates - offering significantly better terms than existing legal requirements in a number of markets, including its US business Reynolds American Inc., which was acquired by the BAT Group in 2017, where new mothers currently receive on average only six weeks paid leave, in line with U.S legislation.

Some of the other countries who will benefit from the minimum 16 weeks’ fully paid maternity leave element of this new initiative, include: Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, Nigeria, Argentina, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Pakistan. In total, this new benefit will go above and beyond local requirements in 26 countries where BAT directly employs 20,000 people.

Nicandro Durante, CEO at British American Tobacco, said:
“Here at BAT, it’s of such great importance to us that our organisation is made up of as many different types of people as possible – ensuring they are rewarded, appreciated and supported, especially at times when they need it most.

“We want to ensure no-one at BAT has to choose between their career and their family and that’s why this will be available to colleagues all over the world. We are proud to be offering this new range of parental benefits on a global scale and we are looking forward to seeing the changes this will hopefully make to the lives of both our current and future employees.”

The three key pillars to the new package of global parental benefits are:

16 weeks’ minimum pay and a return to work guarantee – wherever you are in the world

Although BAT already goes above and beyond local legislation in many of the countries it operates in, Parents@BAT will ensure all new mothers and adoptive parents will receive a minimum of 16 weeks of paid maternity leave, regardless of location, with BAT supplementing statutory pay where required. A return to work guarantee means that all new mothers who are on maternity leave (or parents who are on adoption leave) for 12 months or less will be able to return to their previous job, or a suitable alternative wherever reasonably practicable.

Flexible work opportunities – recognising the modern world we live in

All new parents and adopters will have the opportunity to request flexible working arrangements
following their return to work during the first year of the child’s birth or arrival. Depending on role and location, this could mean one or more days off per working week, reduced working hours or the flexibility to work from home subject to local business requirements.

**Online parental coaching support – support at a time when new parents need it most**

BAT has created an informative on-line coaching service - ‘Parents@BAT Online’ - to not only help new parents, but also to ensure line managers are fully prepared for career discussions and equipped to support those returning to work. It aims to answer some of the questions new parents didn’t even know they would have – providing tips and advice to help make the transition from maternity or adoption leave that little bit easier.

**Already going above and beyond in many countries across the world**

While Parents@BAT provides minimum guidelines, BAT’s support for new parents already goes far beyond these, and local statutory requirements, in many countries. In the UK, for example, parents on maternity leave receive six months’ full pay and pro-rata bonus, statutory pay for three months and a return to work guarantee.

* You can watch a short video which explains more about Parents@BAT at bat.com/features.

**Notes to Editors**

* This will be effective in all countries worldwide from 1 January 2019.

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