[](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjZopPzqdLiAhURbBoKHexiC1kQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https%3A%2F%2Funison-scotland.org%2F&psig=AOvVaw1SiqtfZKLX0dVUO5Vn1sAo&ust=1559823594638852)

**SEPA UNISON Branch**

20th December 2021

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Strathallan House  
Castle Business Park  
Stirling  
FK9 4TZ

Dear Stuart,

**2021 Pay Claim on behalf of UNISON Trade Union members of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency**

**Introduction**

This claim is submitted on behalf of members of the SEPA UNISON branch to cover Terms & Conditions at the Scottish Environment Protection Agency from 01 April 2021 for one year.

The pay claim is set in the context of the increasing pressures faced by our members. Particularly the significant contribution that they make towards making SEPA a world-class, 21st century environment protection agency, fit for the challenges of tomorrow and considering their efforts after SEPA suffered a cyber-attack in December 2020. We believe that this contribution must be recognised with an appropriate increase in remuneration.

In line with previous years members across all grades seek recovery from the years of pay restraint.

Members have also identified low-cost improvements that they wish to see introduced.

**Summary of Pay Claim**

We are seeking:

* 4% pay increase for all staff reflecting an element of pay restoration.
* Continue to link increases in allowance with cost-of-living increases/annual percentage pay award, so that it rises each year.

Additionally our members have identified a number of benefits they would like to see improved/ introduced:

* An additional health and well being hour.
* Better training and development.
* Better paid maternity and paternity leave arrangements (Appendix A)
* Pilot a reduced working hours week with no reduction in pay
* Continuation of the annual leave purchase scheme

We look forward to discussing this with you in more detail at our forthcoming meetings.

**Kind Regards**

Zia Hussain

Branch Secretary

SEPA UNISON

[**http://www.sepaunison.org/**](http://www.sepaunison.org/)

**Appendix A**

**Paternity, Maternity and Adoption Benefits**

For maternity leave, SEPA offers 6 weeks @ 90% pay, 20 weeks @60% pay then 13 weeks Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) then 13 weeks unpaid.

For paternity leave, SEPA offers 1 week @ 90% pay and one week unpaid.

Below is a table of some other bodies maternity and paternity benefits. In addition to this, similar benefits should be afforded to those on adoption leave. Please note this data was collected a while ago so may not be fully up to date.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Who** | **Benefits** | **Date Information Collected** |
| Nature Scot | Maternity = 26 weeks full pay, 13 x SMP, 13 weeks unpaid Paternity = 8 weeks at full pay. In addition they pay for childcare required to attend meetings | Jan 2018 – See enclosed policy |
| Scottish Government Main Bargaining Unit (SGM)\* | Maternity = 27 weeks full pay plus 12 weeks statutory pay then unpaid leave thereafter. Paternity = Unable to get info | Jan 2017 – FOI [Maternity leave policy: FOI release - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-17-02956/) |

\* SGM comprises: Scottish Government Core Directorates Agencies Non Ministerial Departments (NMDs) and NDPBs Economy Accountancy in Bankruptcy National Records of Scotland Constitution and External Affairs Disclosure Scotland Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator Scottish Exchequer Education Scotland Scottish Housing Regulator Health & Social Care Scottish Public Pensions Agency Revenue Scotland Education, Communities & Justice Student Awards Agency for Scotland Food Standards Scotland Organisational Development & Operations Transport Scotland Scottish Fiscal Commission Permanent Secretary Community Justice Scotland Scottish Land Commission

In addition to the above, I understand all these bodies (inc SEPA) offer :

* paid time off for antenatal care
* ‘keeping in touch’ days
* accrual of annual leave during maternity leave
* option to request a flexible working pattern on return to work
* option to request a career break following maternity leave

Some bodies such as Nature Scot offer additional benefits such as paid childcare if a member of staff has extended time away during the day to attend a meeting or they have to travel for work.

Another issue that SEPA could address when re-opening offices is facilities to enable staff who are breastfeeding a private place to express breastmilk and a fridge to store it. This has a huge impact on the ability of staff to continue breastfeeding when away from their child. The long term benefits of breastfeeding are well documented and it is recognised good practice for employers to facilitate this.