

Guidance for parental leave



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General planning for pre and post-parental leave

Prior to leaving:

- Begin by gathering information on the company's parental leave policies.
 - There must be a mutual understanding between the employer and the employee on the legal requirements for parental leave.
- Reach out to colleagues with parental leave experience for practice advise.
- After gathering information on the company's parental leave obligations, make a detailed plan.

During leave/upon return

- If agreed prior to going on leave, follow communication plan and stay connected.
- If a new person takes over the manager role, make sure that the handover includes all the necessary information for employees on parental leave.
 - Ensure that new managers arrange a meeting to present themselves to those on parental leave.

- Discuss professional development plans.
 - Plan inductions, organise return to the office, consider changes to work arrangements (full-time, flexible, part-time).

Return/post return

- Upon return to the workplace, be sure discuss any changes to work arrangements (if applicable).
- Be sure to discuss any concerns with the transition back into the workplace.
- Consider gathering feedback from the employee (or manager) to better understand the positives and negatives from the parental leave planning process.

Questions for consideration:

- How long will the employee be on parental leave?
- What are some concerns about being on parental leave?
 - How can these be addressed?
- Would the employee under question be able to connect with a colleague that can share their experience?
- Does the company offer any additional support for those planning to go on parental leave?
 - Are there any networking support groups available for those going on parental leave?
 - Does the company have any childcare support options?
- Will a communication plan with the designated manager while on parental leave be necessary?
 - Who will you be maintaining contact with?
 - How often will you be meeting?
 - Which medium will you be using?
- Will the employee's job priorities change?
 - This is important to reach a mutual understanding of the necessary support during leave.
- How will the employee's responsibilities be taken care of?
- Will career advancement plans remain the same or change upon return?
 - As an employer, do NOT assume a reduction in hours and/or responsibilities.
 - Encourage the discussion of career advancement plans between the employer and the employee.

- Will there be any changes to the employees working patterns?
 - What are the employee's preferences?
- Should there be any changes to work arrangements?
 - Discuss these during the regular catch-up meetings.
 - If applicable, how will new work arrangements be implemented?
- Are there any necessary adjustments to working patterns that should be discussed?
 - What are they?
 - Are these temporary?
- Are there any obstacles to a smooth transition?
- Did the employee gain any new skills or experience while away?
- Should there be a review of the employee's career development plans?