



**MATERNITY, ADOPTION & PARENTAL LEAVE INFORMATION
FOR SUPPORT STAFF EMPLOYEES**



Updated March 2023

Congratulations on the exciting news! The Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave Information Handbook will provide you with information regarding your leave entitlements. For further inquiry, please reach out to the Human Resources Department.

WHAT ARTICLE IN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT DO I REFERENCE?

For WVMEA members, the Collective Agreement details the requirements for Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leave in Article 616.

WHAT ARE MY ENTITLEMENTS UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT?

The *Employment Standards Act* describes the amount of time that can be taken away from the workplace. Part 6 of the *Employment Standards Act*, outlines the information regarding pregnancy and parental leave. Further details and information can be found in the [BC Employment Standards Act](#).

A pregnant employee is entitled to up to 17 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave, which must begin no earlier than 13 weeks before the expected birth date, and no later than the actual birth date.

For Parental Leave:

A birth mother who takes the 17 weeks of pregnancy leave can take up to an additional 61 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave.

A birth father can take up to 62 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave.

An adopting parent can take up to 62 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave.

EXTENSION TO LEAVES

There are limited extensions to the leaves. The specific language for the extensions can be found in the *Employment Standards Act* under Part 6 (Leaves and Jury Duty) of the *Act*.

For employees who adopt a child who is of school-attending age, the Board will consider additional leaves of absence without pay to cover after school hours to facilitate the transition of the new child into the employee's life.

The process for requesting or approving such a leave of absence shall be as per the collective agreement.

HOW MUCH NOTICE IS REQUIRED TO ACCESS LEAVE?

A request for Maternity Leave shall be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources. The Board appreciates as much notice as possible so that we can arrange suitable replacement resources for the absence. At a minimum, four (4) weeks' notice must be provided to the Board. You will be required to produce a doctor's note confirming the due date of the baby.

When a pregnant employee gives birth prior to requesting Maternity Leave or before commencing Maternity Leave, the Leave will be deemed to start on the date of the birth of the child.

A request for Parental Leave shall be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources and must be requested no later than four (4) weeks prior to the start of the leave. If you are only requesting parental leave, you will be required to produce confirmation of the date of birth of the baby.

In the case of adoption of a child, the Employee will provide as much notice as possible regarding the date of the adoption and the commencement of the leave. At a minimum, four (4) weeks' notice must be provided to the Board.

HOW DO I GET EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE WHILE I AM OFF?

Employment Insurance (EI) provides Maternity and Parental Benefits to individuals who are pregnant, have recently given birth, are adopting a child, or are caring for a newborn.

It is the individual employee's responsibility to make application for Employment Insurance benefits. The application can be made either in person at your local Service Canada office (check online for a location) or online at www.servicecanada.ca.

The payroll department will complete a Record of Employment and file it electronically to Service Canada. You do not need to have a copy to apply for benefits.

The Service Canada website provides detailed information about the types of personal and employment information you need to qualify and apply for benefits.

Once you have applied for Employment Insurance, there is a one week, unpaid, waiting period for benefits to begin. You will receive an access code which will allow you to view your claim information online. You will be able to see your Record of Employment as well as the payments made to you.

Any information regarding Employment Insurance benefits should be directed to a Service Canada representative.

Once you have received your first EI payment, provide a screen shot of your weekly EI claim statement, showing your gross (*not net*) claim amount to payroll@wvschools.ca.

HOW MUCH CAN I EXPECT TO RECEIVE UNDER EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE?

The basic rate for calculating maternity and standard parental Employment Insurance benefits is 55% of your average insurable weekly earnings, up to a maximum amount, or 33% for extended parental benefits, up to a maximum amount.

In 2023, the maximum insurable earnings are \$61,500. For maternity and standard parental benefits, the maximum weekly amount is \$650 and for extended parental benefits, the maximum is \$390 per week.

HOW LONG WILL THE EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS CONTINUE?

EI Maternity benefits can be paid for a maximum period of 15 weeks.

EI Standard Parental benefits can be paid for a maximum period of 35 weeks (or 61 weeks under the extended parental leave option).

DOES THE SCHOOL BOARD TOP UP ANY OF THE EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS?

Yes, the School Board will top up the salary of those employees eligible for EI Maternity benefits.

WEEK 1 – You will automatically receive your hourly rate x hours per week x 95%

Once you have received your first EI payment, provide a screen shot of your weekly EI claim statement, showing your gross (*not net*) claim amount to payroll@wvschools.ca . Payroll cannot process any further EI top up amounts without this information.

WEEKS 2-6 - Hourly rate x hours per week x 95% less the amount paid by EI

For ten (10) month employees, any top up payments can only be processed on bi-weekly pay periods that fall between September and June. During July and August, you are entitled to a top up for the Employment Insurance benefits, however your top up will not be paid until the first bi-weekly pay period in September.

For twelve (12) month employees, top-up payments will be processed on any bi-weekly pay period throughout the year.

There is no top up for the Employment Insurance Parental benefits.

DO I CONTINUE TO ACCRUE SICK LEAVE OR VACATION?

You will continue to accrue vacation and sick leave entitlements based on your percent employed at the start of your leave.

DO MY BENEFITS CONTINUE DURING MY MATERNITY / PARENTAL LEAVE?

During your leave, Dental and Extended Health, Group Life and AD&D insurance coverage will be maintained in the same manner as it was prior to maternity or parental leave of absence.

Where there was a cost share arrangement for the Dental benefits, or you have purchased optional insurance coverages, these benefits will continue if you pre-pay, in advance, your entire portion of the premiums, for the entire leave period.

If requested, the Board will prepare a statement of the benefits costs the employee will have to pay during the leave.

Pension contributions cease during the period of the leave. However, the pensionable time can be repurchased within five (5) years of the end of the leave in accordance with the rules of the Municipal Pension Plan.

HOW DO I GET MY NEW BABY ON TO MY MEDICAL BENEFITS?

This link has information regarding Birth Registration, SIN Application and MSP Enrollment.
[Birth Registration - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](http://gov.bc.ca)

To enroll your baby on our Dental and Extended Health plans, send an email to the payroll department at payroll@wvschools.ca to request the form.

NOTE – you must enroll your child for these benefits within 30 days of the date of birth. For adoptive parents please enroll your child within 30 days of placement.

Late enrollments may have coverage restrictions.

WHEN DO I NOTIFY THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MY RETURN TO WORK?

An employee on leave shall notify their manager or administrator at least one month before they intend to return to work. The Board will choose a return date that allows for adequate arrangements to be made for the return of the employee.

If an employee fails to contact the Board within fifty-two (52) weeks from the date of the commencement of the leave, the employee will be deemed to have resigned their employment with the Board and will be processed accordingly.

On resuming employment, the employee shall be reinstated to their previous position or a position comparable to the one they left.

Please ensure you provide Human Resources with a personal email address that we can reach you at during your leave.