

# Childbirth & Parental Leave Guidelines

## Continuing Academic Staff

Academic staff members hired on tenure-track or continuing appointments whose employment is governed by one of the four Board-AASUA Agreements (Faculty, Administrative and Professional Officers, Librarians, and Faculty Service Officers) may be provided with Childbirth Leave and/or Parental Leave as per Article 24 therein.

Questions regarding your leave may be directed to: [employment.services@ualberta.ca](mailto:employment.services@ualberta.ca)

Questions regarding Employment Insurance (EI) eligibility should be directed to Service Canada.

### Resources:

- Academic staff agreements: [www.hrs.ualberta.ca/agreements](http://www.hrs.ualberta.ca/agreements)
- Service Canada Employment Insurance: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/benefits/maternityparental.shtml>

Birth mothers are eligible to apply for 15 weeks of childbirth leave. Top-up payments are dependent on receipt of EI benefits, the waiting period for EI, and the availability of medical leave. Birth mothers are eligible for a further 10 weeks of parental leave with top-up benefits, along with leave without pay for a total of 52 weeks

A male staff member or an adoptive parent who is the primary caregiver is eligible to apply for 10 weeks of parental leave with top-up benefits (contingent upon receiving EI parental leave benefits), along with leave without pay for a total of 37 weeks

### What is “top-up”?

The University will top up the difference between what EI pays (2015 maximum of \$524 per week) and 95% of salary. Base salary and market supplement, if applicable, are included in this calculation. If Employment Insurance (EI) establishes a waiting period (typically two weeks), 95% of salary will be paid for this period.

Applications for EI Maternity and Parental Benefits may be submitted online or in person to Service Canada. Records of Employment (ROE) are sent to Service Canada electronically by the University's Payroll Operations unit.

### How are my Benefits and Pension affected?

Employer-paid benefits coverage will continue during the childbirth and parental leave top-up periods. Pension contributions will be made by both the employee and the employer based on the full-time salary rate. You continue to accrue vacation during the top-up period.

### Are my Benefits covered during leave without pay?

Under the current Academic benefits plan, a staff member taking an unpaid leave of absence (leave without pay) as an extension of childbirth and/or parental leave will be eligible for the continuation of employer-paid health-related benefits for up to six months. Participation in optional benefits and/or pension is at the discretion of and cost to the employee.

### How do I apply for a leave?

You must submit a request for leave, in writing, to your supervisor (eg. Chair/Director), who forwards the request to the next administrative level (e.g. Dean/Vice-President/Provost). The leave request is then sent to Employment Services, Human Resource Services, 2-60 University Terrace. Employment Services will provide written confirmation of the leave and further details regarding the leave process. It is appreciated if the staff member's formal request for leave is initiated at least three months prior to the anticipated leave start date, or as soon as possible in the case of an adoption.

### What if I am currently on probation?

If you are currently on probation, your supervisor must confirm, in writing, whether or not an extended probationary period is recommended. The applicable extensions are:

- Faculty / FSO: extended by an additional one year
- Librarian/ APO: extended by the length of the leave

### What is “return-to-service”?

A staff member granted parental leave must sign an agreement to return to the service of the University for six months after such a leave or, alternatively, to reimburse the University for all top-up payments made to or on behalf of the staff member on parental leave.