



Pregnancy and Parental Leave & Benefits

FAQ

Congratulations on welcoming a new addition to your family!
PARO is here to help you navigate this process and make the most of the leave time and benefits you are entitled to during this exciting time.

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This FAQ has been prepared for your convenience. While every effort has been made to ensure that information in the FAQ is correct, the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement and any other applicable law prevails over any information in this FAQ. Any resident considering a leave is encouraged to **contact the PARO office** to ensure that they obtain information relevant to their specific situation.

HOW MUCH TIME CAN I TAKE OFF?

If you're pregnant, you are eligible for **both** Pregnancy and Parental leave. Your parental leave may begin immediately following the completion of your pregnancy leave.

Pregnancy leave is 17 weeks and applies only to a birth parent or surrogate.

Parental leave applies to all new parents. The Employment Standards Act defines "parent" as birth parent, adopting parent, or person in a relationship with a parent of a child and plans to treat the child as their own.

There are two options available for parental leave, standard or extended.

Standard parental leave can be taken for a maximum of:

- 35 weeks for a birth parent who also takes pregnancy leave
- OR
- 37 weeks for all new parents who do not take pregnancy leave (e.g. non-birth parents and adoptive parents).

Extended parental leave can be taken for a maximum of:

- 61 weeks for a birth parent who also takes pregnancy leave
- OR
- 63 weeks for all new parents who do not take pregnancy leave (e.g., non-birth parents and adoptive parents).

WILL I GET PAID DURING MY LEAVE?

As a PARO member, your income while on leave is provided in two parts:

- 1) Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits provided by the Government when eligible.
- 2) A Supplemental Income Top Up Payment on your EI, paid by the hospital for part of the leave.

Employment Insurance

Eligible employees on pregnancy and/or parental leave are entitled to government provided benefits (Employment Insurance) payable during the time the employee is on leave.

Standard parental benefits can be paid for a maximum of 35 weeks. The weekly benefit is 55% of the resident's average weekly insurable earnings to a maximum amount determined by Service Canada.* In 2022, the maximum weekly amount is \$638.

When the second parent (non-birth parent) takes a minimum of five weeks of parental leave, the parental benefit increases by up to five weeks for a total of 40 weeks.

Extended parental benefits can be paid for a maximum of 61 weeks. The benefit rate is 33% of the resident's average weekly insurable earnings to a maximum amount determined by Service Canada.* In 2022, the maximum weekly amount is \$383.

When the second parent (non-birth parent) takes a minimum of five weeks of parental leave, the parental benefit increases by up to eight weeks for a total of 69 weeks.

If you or your partner previously received CERB benefits, it may impact how EI is paid to you. Contact Service Canada directly to learn more.

**We encourage that you contact [Service Canada](#) to determine your maximum benefit amount.*

To see examples of how your leave time and payments may be used, visit [Service Canada's Website](#).

Supplemental Income Top Up

Article 15.7 of the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement provides a supplemental income top-up to residents who are on a pregnancy or parental leave **and** are receiving EI.

If you take both pregnancy and parental leave, you are eligible for a maximum of 27 weeks of top up payments (15 weeks pregnancy leave top-up + 12 weeks parental leave top-up). After your 27 weeks of combined EI and top up payments are completed, you will continue receiving EI payments for the remainder of your leave.

If you are only taking parental leave, the top-up will be provided for a maximum of 12 weeks. After your 12 weeks of EI and top up payments are completed, you will continue receiving EI payments for the remainder of your leave.

If you are on pregnancy and/or **standard** parental leave, the top-up will be equal to the difference between 84% of your regular weekly earnings and the sum of your weekly EI benefits plus any other earnings.

If you take the **extended** parental leave, the top-up will be limited to the difference between the standard leave amount and 84% of your regular weekly earnings.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I QUALIFY FOR EI?

To qualify for Employment Insurance, you are required to have accumulated 600 insurable hours* in the last fifty-two (52) weeks since your last claim.

Attachment 11 "Employment Insurance Hours of Work," of the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement provides that you are entitled to be credited with your **actual** hours worked, rather than any hours recorded for payroll or other administrative purposes. This means that call, weekend rounding, and overnight shifts all count towards your total number of hours.

*Until **September 22nd, 2022** you will need 420 insured hours in the 52 weeks prior to your start your claim to qualify for EI. This is a temporary change to Government requirements in order to provide additional support during COVID-19. As of September 23rd, 2022, the standard 600 insured hours requirement will be reinstated.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT ELIGIBLE FOR EI? CAN I STILL TAKE A LEAVE?

You must be in receipt of EI in order to qualify for the supplemental top up. However, even if you do not qualify for EI, you are entitled to *the same amount of time off* under the Employment Standards Act. This is because the leave time is a provincial entitlement that is separate from the EI payments (federal entitlement).

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY PARTNER AND I BOTH WANT TO TAKE A LEAVE?

Because the entitlement to time off is separate from the entitlement to EI, each parent is individually entitled to the full complement of time off.

However, parental leave EI benefits are shared per family. Ultimately, you and your partner will be able to decide how the benefit is used.

If a family shares EI benefits, additional weeks will be added to your total allotment.

- If both parents share a **standard** parental leave, EI benefits will be increased to 40 weeks per family. Note that one parent cannot receive 35 weeks of benefits.
- If both parents share an **extended** parental leave, EI benefits will be increased to 69 weeks per family. Note that one parent cannot receive 61 weeks of benefits.

Example of sharing **standard** parental leave benefits: one parent takes 25 weeks of the benefit and the other takes 15 weeks, or one parent takes 35 weeks of benefits.

Example of sharing **extended** parental leave benefits: one parent takes 41 weeks of the benefit and the other takes 28 weeks, or one parent takes 61 weeks of benefits.

When EI benefits are shared between parents, a single one-week waiting period may apply. If the birth parent served the one-week waiting period during their pregnancy leave, neither parent would need to serve the waiting period for parental benefits.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR EI BENEFITS?

Applications for EI can be [made online](#). You will need the following documentation:

- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Record of Employment (ROE) which is provided by your payroll centre
- Personal identification such as a driver's license, birth certificate, passport
- Your complete bank information
- The expected or actual date of birth of your child, if you are claiming pregnancy benefits
- To claim parental leave benefits, you will need your newborn's date of birth, or date of placement in the case of an adoption. For the latter, you will also need to provide the name and full address of the agency handling the adoption.

For a complete list of required documents, please [visit Service Canada's website](#)

WHEN WILL MY PAYMENTS START?

The Service Canada website states that "if we have all the required information and if you qualify for benefits, your payment will be issued usually within 28 days from the date of filing your claim. If you do not qualify, Service Canada will notify you of the decision made on your claim." You must serve a one-week unpaid waiting period before your Employment Insurance and the top-up will be paid.

DOES MY EXTENDED HEALTHCARE COVERAGE (E.G., DENTAL) CONTINUE DURING PREGNANCY AND/OR PARENTAL LEAVE?

As per [Article 14.1](#) of the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement, all employee benefits continue while on leave.

AM I REQUIRED TO BE ON CALL WHILE PREGNANT?

Residents may not be scheduled or required to participate in on-call duties after 27 weeks' gestation unless otherwise agreed to by the resident.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I REQUIRE A WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATION DURING MY PREGNANCY?

Not every pregnancy goes exactly as planned. If your physician has advised you will need workplace accommodations due to your medical circumstances, you should speak to your program as soon as possible. Your program may request documentation from your physician that attests to the need for accommodation. Neither you nor your physician need to disclose any medical details about your condition, only the nature of the accommodation(s) needed.

Depending on your circumstances, accommodations may include relief of call duties before 27 weeks, modified duties or hours of work. Accommodation plans are always developed on a case by case basis, based on the individual medical needs of the resident.

If your physician has advised you to seek an accommodation, we encourage you to contact your local wellness office for assistance.

HOW MUCH NOTICE SHOULD I GIVE MY PROGRAM?

Residents must give a minimum of four (4) weeks written notice of their intended timing of their pregnancy and/or parental leave in order to ensure that professional and patient care responsibilities are met. We generally advise residents that the earlier your program is informed of your leave, the smoother it will be for all parties involved.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY UNUSED VACATION DAYS WHEN I TAKE A LEAVE?

Normally, unused vacation may not be carried over into the following appointment year. However, if you are on a pregnancy or parental leave that spans two appointment years, any vacation time you had not yet taken prior to going on leave, as well as any time you accumulated during your leave (see below) can be carried over to the new appointment year. This time is typically taken at the end of your leave, immediately before your return to work. It may also be taken later, at a time mutually agreed upon between you and your program and/or preceptor.

HOW DOES VACATION ACCUMULATION WORK WHEN I'M ON LEAVE?

While on pregnancy/parental leave, you will continue to accumulate vacation as set out in [Article 11.5](#) of the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement:

- Residents who take pregnancy and **standard** parental leave (birth parents) accumulate vacation for the entire length of their leave or up to 52 weeks.
- Residents who take pregnancy leave and **extended** parental leave will accumulate 100% of their vacation entitlement (4 weeks) for the first 52 weeks and a pro-rated amount of vacation for the next 26 weeks.
- Residents who take **standard** parental leave (e.g. non-birth parents, adoptive parents) will accumulate vacation for up to 37 weeks.
- Residents who take an **extended** parental leave will accumulate 100% of their vacation for the first 37 weeks and a pro-rated amount of vacation for the next 26 weeks.

WILL I ACCUMULATE PROFESSIONAL DAYS DURING A LEAVE?

You do not accumulate professional leave days while on leave and unused professional leave days expire at the end of each appointment year. However, you will be entitled to seven (7) days of professional leave in the next appointment year.

WILL I HAVE TO MAKE UP THE TIME I MISSED WHILE ON LEAVE?

Depending on the length of the leave, residents will generally need to make up time missed in order to complete the educational and training requirements outlined by individual programs. Both the RCPSC and CFPC permit individual universities to grant waivers of training (up to a maximum length) to residents who will have achieved the required level of competence by the end of their final year of training.

The decision to grant a waiver of training is at the discretion of the specific program director, so we advise you to speak with your program director about the possibility of being granted a waiver of training.

If you are required to undertake additional services at the end of your program to make up for time missed while on pregnancy or parental leave, you will receive a pro-rated amount of vacation and professional days based on the length of the additional training.

WHAT IF I REQUIRE SPECIFIC RESOURCES OR ACCOMMODATIONS UPON MY RETURN TO WORK?

Upon your return to work from leave, you may be entitled to accommodations to assist you and your family. For example, the hospital must make accommodations so that you may breastfeed/chestfeed or express milk for your child. This might include ensuring that you are provided with a private and protected space, as well as a secure fridge to store milk safely.

Effective July 1, 2022, your Extended Health Care benefits will include coverage for lactation pumps.

You may be eligible to receive other accommodations as a family caregiver.

If you think you might require an accommodation, please [connect with the PARO office directly](#) so we can provide you with guidance based on your individual needs.

	LENGTH OF LEAVE	LENGTH OF BENEFIT PAYMENTS (EI AND TOP-UP)*	EARLIEST BENEFIT START	LATEST BENEFIT START	ELIGIBILITY
Pregnancy Leave	17 weeks	15 weeks EI benefits + top up*	The leave may begin 17 weeks before the due date. Payments may begin 12 weeks before the due date	The leave may begin the day the baby is born. Payments can end 17 weeks after the date of birth	Birth parent or surrogate
Standard Parental Leave	35 weeks per family; 37 weeks if you did not take pregnancy leave	12 weeks of top up per resident* 35 weeks EI benefits per family. When the second parent (non-birth parent) takes a minimum of five weeks of parental leave, the parental benefit increases by up to five weeks (40 weeks total)	The week of your child's date of birth or the week your child is placed with you for the purpose of adoption.	Within 52 weeks (12 months) of your child's birth or placement for the purpose of adoption	New parents
Extended Parental Leave	61 weeks; 63 weeks if you did not take pregnancy leave	12 weeks of top up per resident* 61 weeks EI benefits per family. When the second parent (non-birth parent) takes a minimum of five weeks of parental leave, the parental benefit increases by up to eight weeks (69 weeks total)	The week of your child's date of birth or the week your child is placed with you for the purpose of adoption.	Within 78 weeks (18 months) of your child's birth or placement for the purpose of adoption	New parents

*You must be receiving EI to qualify for the top up