Expectant and New Parents’ Guide

September 2016
Monash University is committed to supporting staff with family responsibilities. We are proud to be able to support new and expectant parents through the most significant events in their lives.

We understand that your transition to parenthood requires planning and preparation and that bringing a new child home leads to a change of priorities.

Whether you are expecting a baby or adopting one, whether you are the birth mother, partner or a spouse, our family friendly policies offer a range of ways to support your family responsibilities.

This resource is designed to explain the benefits available to you and guide you through the relevant policies, procedures and support structures available to expectant and new parents at Monash University.
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### Entitlements for fixed-term and continuing staff

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| 24 months or more | ✓ Leave for a continuous period of 52 weeks comprising 14 weeks' leave at 100% pay (to conclude no later than 14 weeks following the date of delivery)  
✓ 38 weeks' leave at 60% pay | You may request a further period of up to 52 weeks' unpaid parental leave to commence immediately following the conclusion of the initial period of 52 weeks' parental leave, subject to the approval of the University. |
| 12-24 months      | ✓ Leave for a continuous period of 52 weeks comprising 14 weeks' leave at 100% pay (to conclude no later than 14 weeks following the date of delivery)  
✓ Leave at 60% pay at the rate of 3.16 weeks for each completed month of service after the first 12 months, plus unpaid leave for any remainder of the continuous 52-week period. |                                                                                           |
| Less than 12 months | ✓ Leave at 100% pay at the rate of 1.16 weeks for each completed month of service (to conclude no later than 14 weeks following the date of delivery or placement). | Unpaid leave for the remainder of the continuous 52-week period after the birth of your child. |

**Maternity Leave Calculator**

To **estimate** the amount of paid maternity (or adoption) leave you are entitled to, please use the Maternity/Adoption Leave Calculator (excel).

**Access HR**

For an **accurate** assessment of your entitlements, please contact Access HR on (03) 9902 0400.
Your pre-natal leave entitlements

If you or your partner are pregnant, you are entitled to apply for pre-natal leave to attend regular pre-natal visits to the doctor in preparation for the birth of your child.

This entitlement applies to all fixed-term and continuing professional, academic and trades and services staff.

There is no limit on the amount of pre-natal leave, provided the leave is supported by medical certificates or other relevant supplementary evidence.

Pre-natal leave is not deducted from annual or personal leave.

How to apply for pre-natal leave

You can apply for pre-natal leave online through ESS but we request that you give your supervisor at least seven days notice.

More information

Remuneration and Benefits Policy – Type of Leave (Pre-natal and Parental Leave).
How to apply for parental leave

- Discuss your plans with your supervisor.
- Seek advice from Access HR - via email to hr@monash.edu or by phone 03 9902 0400
- Complete your Application for Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave and submit it to your head of unit at least **four weeks** prior to the start of your parental leave.

  Note: Application for maternity leave must be accompanied by a medical certificate confirming your pregnancy and the expected date of delivery.

  Application for Adoption leave must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence that you are an approved applicant for the adoption of a child, that you will be the primary caregiver of that child, and the date of placement.

- Submit the authorised Application form to the HR Operations Centre and (where required), a completed Parental leave return-to-work deed:
  
  by email to hr@monash.edu or by post to Monash HR, Monash University, VIC 3800
60% paid parental leave component

Before you can take advantage of the paid parental leave period at 60% pay, you must enter into a deed with Monash University that specifies that you agree to return to work for a period equivalent to:

a) the period of leave taken at 60% pay (irrespective of your return to work fraction); and/or

b) the period it takes for you to earn salary equivalent in aggregate to the cash value of the return-to-work conversion option benefit received (please refer to page 15 for information about the 'return-to-work conversion options')

This applies to all fixed-term and continuing professional, academic and trades and services staff members.

The Return to Work Deed is a separate form that is completed and submitted at the same time as the Application for Maternity Leave form.

More information

Remuneration and Benefits Policy – Type of Leave (Pre-natal and Parental Leave).
Commencing parental leave

Parental leave commences:

- on the date of placement of the adopted child in the case of adoption leave;
- no earlier than six weeks prior to the expected date of delivery in the case of maternity leave, unless medical evidence recommends otherwise; and
- no earlier than one week prior to the expected date of delivery in the case of spouse/domestic partner birth leave.

Fitness to work

On at least seven days' notice, a supervisor may request medical evidence from a pregnant staff member prior to the commencement of maternity leave to determine their fitness for work and

- If the staff member fails to provide medical evidence; or
- If the provided medical evidence indicates the staff member is unfit for work

is entitled to direct the staff member to commence maternity leave early at any time within six weeks prior to the expected date of delivery.
Parental leave for spouses and domestic partners

The University supports staff whose spouses or domestic partners are the birth or adoptive parents of children through paid leave entitlements and other support mechanisms.

Eligible staff are entitled to:

- Pre-natal leave to attend medical appointments
- 5 days paid and 10 days unpaid leave to assist the birth mother before and after the birth of their child (pro-rata based on employment fraction)
- Up to 52 weeks of unpaid parental leave if you are the primary carer for your child

How to apply

If you wish to apply for spouse/domestic partner birth leave please complete the Application for Leave.
Support for spouses and domestic partners

Supporting your partner during this time and adjusting to this change in your life can be challenging at times.

Monash staff and their immediate family members can access free confidential, professional counselling and support through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an internal and external professional, confidential counselling service available free-of-charge to all Monash staff members. Immediate family members can also access the external service, namely Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC) which is an independent organisation with professional provider accreditation engaged by Monash.

Through the EmployeeAssist® program, you may seek assistance to deal with a broad range of work and life issues regarding relationship difficulties, marriage and family problems, emotional stress, depression, conflict, grief and loss, addictions to name a few.
We are committed to providing you with a healthy and safe environment for work and study. We recognise that if you are pregnant or breast-feeding, precautions in addition to normal safe work procedures and practices may be required.

If you are considering pregnancy, are pregnant or breastfeeding, consider concerns associated with:

- Exposure to chemicals
- Exposure to ionizing and non-ionizing radiation
- Exposure to biological hazards
- Working with animals
- Relevant immunizations you may need
- Manual handling, repetitive lifting or prolonged standing

To minimize any risks to your pregnancy, please notify your supervisor, Safety Officer, Bio-Safety Officer, or Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) as soon as possible about your pregnancy. This will help them as they assess appropriate modifications to your work environment.

You may request that information regarding your pregnancy remain confidential.

More information
OHS Information Sheet – Pregnancy and Work
Protecting unborn and breast-fed children from the effects of maternal exposure to chemicals and biological agents and animals (pdf)

Contact OHS
Phone: (03) 9905 1014
Email: ohshelpline@monash.edu
Occupational Health Nurse Consultants
WHILE ON PARENTAL LEAVE

Maintaining communication and contact

Some people experience a sense of isolation during periods of parental leave, so we encourage you to stay in touch with your supervisor and co-workers. Here are some suggestions about how to maintain contact and stay up-to-date regarding changes at Monash:

1. Ensure that you have been given the choice as to whether you want to be contacted during this time (other than when the University is obliged to contact you by law)
2. Check that your email address is kept on your work unit's email network, so that you receive relevant work based information
3. Ask that information about faculty updates, operational plans or any major procedural or structural changes proposed or taking place in the workplace are forwarded to you
4. Retain professional memberships to maintain your skills and knowledge
5. Drop by for social events, for example, farewells, birthday lunches and Christmas parties
6. You may wish to discuss and agree to other options about maintaining communication and contact during leave with your supervisor
WHILE ON PARENTAL LEAVE

Leave accrual

During the first 26 weeks of your paid and/or unpaid parental leave, annual leave will accrue as normal. After that period, leave will not accrue for the remainder of the period of parental leave.

Seeking extension of parental leave

In certain circumstances, you may be able to seek an extension to your parental leave. Up to 12 months’ unpaid parental leave may be requested.

Requests for an extension of parental leave will be seriously considered but may be refused on reasonable business grounds.

The application process for an extension of parental leave is described in Remuneration and Benefits Policy – Type of Leave (Pre-natal and Parental Leave).

Keeping in touch days

While on unpaid parental leave, you may agree to undertake duties or perform work approved by your supervisor on a ‘keeping in touch day’ where it is for the purpose of facilitating your return to work after parental leave.

Up to 10 ‘keeping in touch days’ may be worked and remuneration for the hours worked will be made where your supervisor advises HR Payroll via email of the days/hours worked.

Please note: Keeping in touch days do not break the continuity of the period of your unpaid parental leave and therefore do not alter the end date of your unpaid parental leave.
The family friendly workplace

We have a number of policies and procedures in place to promote workplace flexibility and to facilitate the successful combination of work and family responsibilities:

- Workforce Management Procedure – Flexible working arrangements
- Workforce Management Procedure - Work Life (Breastfeeding)
- Workforce Management Procedure - Work Life (Children in the Workplace)
- Workforce Management Procedure - Work from Home
- Workforce Management Procedure - Work Life (Job-Share)
- Equal Opportunity Policy
RETURNING TO WORK

Entitlements

1. At the end of a period of parental leave, you are entitled to resume work on the same substantive classification, fraction of employment and salary and with commensurate duties as applied prior to the commencement of your parental leave.

2. If you i) have an ongoing or fixed-term contract, ii) have the responsibility for the care of a child who is of school age or younger and iii) have completed at least 12 months’ continuous service with the University immediately prior to making this request, you may request a reduced working year arrangement, or a reduced fraction for a specified period, or any other flexible working arrangement by completing a Flexible Working Arrangements Request.

Please submit this request to your HR Business Partner at least six weeks prior to your return to work date as it is subject to approval. All requests will be considered but may be refused on reasonable business grounds.

Obligation

1. If you are returning to your substantive role, with no request for a flexible working arrangement, and no changes to your working year arrangement or fraction, you should confirm in writing (via letter or email) your return date with your supervisor at least four weeks before your intended return date.

2. If you have taken paid parental leave at 60% pay or have been paid a return-to-work conversion option benefit, you are obliged to return to work as outlined in the Return-to-work Deed you completed as a condition of payment of leave at 60% pay and/or a return-to-work conversion option.

In addition to fulfilling your return to work obligations as outlined in the Return to Work Deed, you are also responsible for keeping your supervisor up-to-date with any changes in your return to work plan.

“Monash University strives to have workplace flexibility including options to assist staff to balance their work, life and family responsibilities” (Workforce Management Policy)
Return-to-Work Conversion Options

If you intend to return to work before exhausting the 60% pay component of your parental leave entitlement, you can nominate one of the following “Return to Work Conversion Options”:

**Option 1**  Lump sum or fortnightly allowance
**Option 2**  Have child care fees paid in lieu of parental leave at 60% pay
**Option 3**  Increase work fraction (top up your salary) while working part-time

To help you determine which option suits your financial situation best, we have described each of the three options in further details.

**Alternatives to receiving your 60% paid parental leave**

**Option 1 - Lump sum or fortnightly allowance**

You may choose to return to work and receive payment in lieu of the 60% paid parental leave you would otherwise have received.

You may choose to take this payment in one of two forms:

a) a single lump sum payment; or

b) fortnightly payments as if you were still on parental leave and receiving 60% of your ordinary pay for the number of weeks you are entitled to. (This is in addition to the salary that you are earning on your return to work)

**Important note:** Superannuation is not paid on the lump sum or fortnightly payments.

This option is often used by academic staff to progress their research profile.
Option 2 - Have childcare fees paid in lieu of your 60% paid parental leave

You may choose to return to work and have childcare fees paid through salary sacrificing. This is up to the value that you would have received through your 60% paid parental leave entitlement.

If you choose this option:

a) you must use a Monash sponsored childcare facility (see p.21 in this document on childcare); and

b) the end date of your childcare cover must be no later than 52 weeks after you commenced your parental leave

Important note: Staff are not entitled to superannuation paid on the money used for childcare benefits. If you choose this option and the value of the childcare is less than what you would have been entitled to had you not returned to work, the University will not make up the shortfall.
Option 3 - Top up your salary while working part-time

You may choose to return to work on a reduced fraction (subject to the agreement of the University) and top up your salary (up to 100% of pay) with the unexpired portion of your 60% parental leave entitlement, provided that you have already taken at least 26 weeks of paid parental leave and remain on a reduced fraction.

If you choose this option the end date of this must be within 52 weeks of the first day of your parental leave.

Superannuation is paid on the “top up” amount as long as the top up does not exceed your substantive fraction.

Note: Monash University cannot provide financial planning or advice and recommends that you seek an independent financial advice on the options that best suit your situation.
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

We recognise that returning to work after parental leave can be a difficult transition in terms of managing work and family expectations.

To support our staff and their immediate families, we provide access to a range of services through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP is an internal and external professional, confidential counselling service available free of charge to all Monash staff.

Staff may choose to access counselling and support services on or off-campus.

Immediate family members can also access the external service, Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC), which is an independent organisation with professional provider accreditation engaged by Monash.

To find out more, access Wellbeing and Support procedure – Employee Assistance Program

Web: www.monash.edu/health/counselling

Appointments can be made by directly contacting either the University Counselling Services for on-campus appointments, or, for off-campus appointments, contact DTC on 1300 360 364
## Breastfeeding and expressing

We support women who continue to breastfeed on their return from maternity leave.

We provide access to suitable parenting rooms to breastfeed and/or express and store breast milk and reasonable flexibility to take paid lactation breaks.

## Mobile Mother’s Kit

We understand that in some cases, the location of our parenting facilities may not allow you to regularly express breast milk in privacy during working hours.

In discussion with your supervisor, a suitable space can be identified closer to your work area and fitted with items necessary to support you in breastfeeding/expressing.

The “Mobile Mother’s Kit”, available through Monash HR, contains an armchair with a footrest, a mini bar fridge to store breast milk and a lockable cabinet to store items such as breast pumps.

We recommend that you advise your supervisor as early as possible to allow time for suitable arrangements to be made prior to your return to work.

## Parenting facilities

Parenting facilities are available on all Monash campuses to ensure that staff can access private space to express milk, breastfeed babies, feed and/or change their babies and/or young children.

These rooms are lockable from the inside and include:

- Baby change tables;
- Armchair for breastfeeding or expressing
- Microwave for heating food
- Sanitary wipes
- Power point

Most facilities also have running water and a refrigerator.

## More information

Workforce Management Procedure – Work Life (Breastfeeding)

To request the Mobile Mother’s Kit, staff or supervisors should email gender-equity@monash.edu
PARENTING FACILITIES

Caulfield
Building S, Level 2, Room 2.33
Private room, lockable door, armchair, change table, microwave, sanitary wipes, power

Clayton
Campus Centre, Rooms G23a and G23b
Private rooms, lockable door, armchairs, change tables, Access is via G23: pram access, sink and running water, microwave, chairs, sanitary wipes, power

Campus Centre, Room G147B
Private room, lockable door, armchair, change table, power

Mulgrave
Rooms G06 and 112
211 Wellington Road, Mulgrave
Private rooms, lockable door, armchair with foot stool, change table, microwave, fridge, sink with running water, sanitary wipes, power

Parkville
Building 403, Room 210
Private room, lockable door, armchair, change table, microwave, sanitary wipes, power

Peninsula
Building A, Room A1.12
Private room, lockable door, armchair, change table, microwave, fridge, sink and running water, sanitary wipes, power
Childcare at Monash

Finding the right childcare for your child that meets the needs of your family situation can take some time. Make sure you start this process early.

The University’s childcare centres are in high demand, especially for children under the age of two. You are strongly encouraged to place your name on the waiting list in your early pregnancy.

While places may occasionally become available throughout the year, the main intake is in January each year.

You can organise a tour of the facilities and seek further information on the centres’ websites.

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Monash Children’s Centre
Capacity: 110; 7 playrooms
Address: 62 Beddoe Ave, Clayton
Website: www.monashchildrenscentre.org.au

Monash Community Family Cooperative (MCFCO)
Capacity: 108; 9 playrooms
Address: 56 Howleys Road, Notting Hill
Website: www.mcfco.org.au

Monash Caulfield Childcare Centre (MCCC)
Capacity: 50; 3 playrooms
Address: 22-24 Derby Rd, Caulfield East
Website: www.monashcaulfieldchildcare.vpweb.com.au

Windermere Early Learning
Address: 1A Holmes St, Frankston
Website: www.windermere.org.au/windermere-early-learning
Childcare in your local area

You may prefer to find a suitable child care service close to your home. The Australian Government website www.mychild.gov.au offers helpful information about different types of child care and early learning centres.

The mychild.gov.au website is Australia’s online child care portal, which allows you to search a database to find child care centres in your local area. In many cases, you can find the services’ vacancy and fee information.
Both Monash University and the Australian Government provide benefits to parents who use approved childcare services.

**Child Care Benefit**

Where child care services have Australian Government approval, the Child Care Benefit is passed on to families through a reduction in child care fees.

Most long day care, family day care, before and after school care, vacation care, some in-home care and occasional care services offer approved care.

This benefit is based on your income, and is means tested.

Web: www.humanservices.gov.au/

**Child Care Rebate**

The Child Care Rebate is a different payment from the Child Care Benefit. The Child Care Rebate is **not based on your income**.

It is designed to assist parents with out-of-pocket expenses for approved child care.

The rebate covers up to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket costs, up to an annual limit per child ($7,500 - Jul 1, 2016)

To receive Child Care Rebate you must first claim the Child Care Benefit for approved care.

It is strongly recommended that staff members seek independent financial advice.

**Salary packaging childcare fees**

Fees payable for the use of child care services at Monash related child care centres are exempt from Fringe Benefits Tax and may be salary packaged.

**How does it work?**

The University will sacrifice the cost of the child care fees from your gross salary in equal fortnightly amounts and allocate the cost directly to the relevant child care centre. GST will not be applicable.

Please note under a salary sacrifice arrangement you will not be entitled to receive Child Care Benefits or the Child Care Rebate from the Department of Human Services.

Read: Salary Packaging Procedure Salary Packaging Application Child Care Fees.
Supervisors play a critical role in supporting staff who are expecting or adopting a child and staff returning to work from parental leave.

Supervisors are encouraged to foster an inclusive workplace culture. Effective communication is the key to supporting a smooth transition back into the workplace.

The following best practice examples will be useful to staff and supervisors before and after their parental leave to support a good experience for all.

**Prior to parental leave**

- Supervisors can familiarise themselves with parental leave entitlements, including leave for pre-natal appointments.
- Discuss if and how staff would like to be informed of any major developments, updates, and operational plans while on their parental leave.
- Discuss and agree to other options for maintaining communication and contact during their leave. Establish whether the staff member would like to be receiving invitations to various workplace social events such as Christmas parties or farewell lunches.
- Contacting HR early about finding a maternity leave replacement can lessen the impact and provide for a good handover.

**While on parental leave**

- Support staff members who wish to undertake professional development while on parental leave (but never require them to do so while on parental leave).
- Include the staff member on invitations to workplace social events or farewell lunches according to the agreement you made and respect if they are unable to attend.
Returning from parental leave

- Highlight to staff they are entitled to resume work on the same substantive classification, fraction of employment and salary and with commensurate duties as applied prior to the commencement of your parental leave.

- Recognise that adapting to returning to work can be quite challenging. Discuss with the staff member how they would like to be supported during this transition period. Some of these challenges may only emerge after the first few weeks or months so check in with the staff member periodically.

- Ensure that return to work positions are well-considered, designed and communicated with staff, and arrangements are regularly assessed and fine-tuned in line with agreed work unit key performance indicators.

- Encourage discussion regarding flexible working arrangements, including the choice of working days and hours and the option of working from home where possible. Have this conversation early as requests to work flexibly must be submitted at least six weeks prior to the staff member’s return to work date. (Note: all requests must be seriously considered but may be refused on reasonable business grounds).

- Adjust the staff member’s workload in line with any revised fraction or flexible work arrangement.

- Some staff are capable of increasing their return to work hours after a period of time. It is useful to be able to review and adjust working hours from home after a trial return to work period.

- For academic staff: supervisors must ensure that the proportions allocated to the three key areas of academic activity - research, education and service - are discussed and agreed at the time the staff member requests a change in employment fraction or flexible work arrangement. The supervisor and staff member also agree to adjusted research performance expectations to reflect the agreed workload allocation and amended working hours.

- Assist the staff member in maintaining their career momentum over this period by discussing strategies prior to, during and on return from parental leave to avoid ‘career stagnation’. For example: i) a supervisor may support an academic staff member to apply for a grant upon finding out they are pregnant so that people and resources can be put in place to work on the research during their period of parental leave; ii) if feasible, a supervisor may arrange a teaching relief for staff returning to work to help restart their research.
Supporting staff who are breastfeeding

The key elements of support that breastfeeding mothers require on their return to work are:

1. Private space
   A private, comfortable space (that is not a toilet or shower) to breastfeed or express breastmilk is the first key requirement. Dedicated parenting rooms are available on all Monash campuses. Additional parenting rooms can be set up by individual faculties or departments to meet the demand.

2. Time
   Monash provides reasonable flexibility for breastfeeding staff to take paid lactation breaks during work hours. These breaks to breastfeed or to express can be negotiated between the staff member and their supervisor.

3. Support
   We pride ourselves in being a family friendly workplace. In the Workforce Management Procedure – Work Life (Breastfeeding), the University seeks to provide a supportive environment to enable women to continue to breastfeed. Communication is key to building a supportive workplace culture.

HOW YOUR SUPERVISOR CAN HELP?

More information

Workforce Management Procedure – Work Life (Breastfeeding)

To request the Mobile Mother’s Kit, staff or supervisors should email gender-equity@monash.edu
RELEVANT FORMS

- Apply for Maternity Leave
- Apply for Adoption Leave
- Apply for Leave (partners/spouses)
- Extension of Parental Leave Request
- Parental Leave Return to Work Deed
- Flexible Working Arrangement Request
- Working from Home Application Form

www.intranet.monash/hr
CONTACT DETAILS

Access HR
Phone: +61 3 9902 0400
Email: hr@monash.edu
www.intranet.monash/hr/contact-us

Gender Equity
Phone: +61 3 9902 0246
Email: gender-equity@monash.edu
www.monash.edu/gender-equity

Employee Assistance Program
Phone: +61 3 9905 3020
(Counselling appointments – all campuses)
Phone: 1800 360 364
(Off-campus appointments)
www.monash.edu/health/counselling

Occupational Health and Safety
Phone: +61 3 9905 1014
Email: ohshelpline@monash.edu
www.monash.edu/ohs