
Resident Wellbeing Committee

Maternity and Parental Leave Checklist

Whom should you contact when you are considering taking a maternity and/or parental leave?

Program Director (PD)

- It is up to you when you tell your PD that you are pregnant or that you are planning to take a maternity and/or parental leave. If you are pregnant, we recommend you tell your PD at least at the same time as when you start telling other people, as your program really should hear it from you. The earlier you tell them, the earlier they can help you with rotation planning, reduced call schedules and/or medical leaves as necessary.

Postgraduate Medical Education (PME)

- If you are a resident, contact Kaylea Salamon at 780.492.9553 or pgres@ualberta.ca
- If you are a fellow, contact Marie Goudreau at 780.492.9730 or pgfellow@ualberta.ca
- They will take care of the PME aspect of your leave as well as start the process with Alberta Health Services.
- Please be sure to give at least 3 months' notice for this process.

Alberta Health Services (AHS)

- PME will send a letter to AHS informing them of your planned parental leave. If applicable, a Record of Employment (ROE) will be sent to Service Canada.
- Before you start your maternity leave, AHS will send you a maternity benefit package. If you do not receive this package one month before the start of your maternity leave, call the AHS HR Contact Centre at 1.877.511.4455.
- You **need to update your contact information in e-People** and to check your account regularly. There is important documentation that will be sent to you by regular mail or via your e-People account.
- You **need to know** your AHS email address. If you ask AHS to correspond with you by email, they will only use your AHS email address.
- After the baby is born, mothers must call the AHS HR Contact Centre at 1.877.511.4455 to report the actual date of delivery, as there are specific aspects to your benefits that are unique to the mother and must be coordinated with AHS.
- For any other AHS related questions, please contact Jane Papp in the Academic Medicine Medical Affairs Office (780.735.0712 or Jane.Papp@ahs.ca)
- Other than the situations listed above, you should contact Jane Papp instead of the AHS HR Contact Centre.

Employment Insurance (EI)

- You must contact Service Canada to apply for Employment Insurance, phone 1.800.208.7218 or visit: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/benefits/maternalparental.shtml>
- You need to have accumulated 600 insured work hours to be eligible. Please remember this only includes regular duty hours and that on call work is not included in this calculation.
- According to their website:
 - *You should apply for EI as soon as possible after you stop working.*
 - *If you delay applying for benefits later than four weeks after your last day of work, you risk losing benefits.*
 - *You can apply for EI maternity benefits before you give birth (as soon as during the 8th week before your due date or before the actual week you give birth).*
 - *You cannot receive EI maternity benefits more than 17 weeks after the week you were expected to give birth, or the week you actually gave birth, whichever is later.*
 - *The date you submit your application is very important, since it affects the amount of maternity benefits you are entitled to receive.*

Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA)

- You should contact the CMPA to cancel your membership for the period of time that you are not working.
- Call 1.800.267.6522 between 0830 and 1630 EST or visit www.cmpa-acpm.ca

Points to remember from the current (2017-2018) Resident Physician Agreement:

Maternity Leave (see article 11.03)

- You must have worked as a resident for at least 8 weeks before you become eligible for maternity leave pay and benefits. Once eligible, you can receive up to a maximum of 17 weeks of maternity leave. Such leave may commence up to 8 weeks prior to the predicted date of birth.

- The resident will receive up to 17 weeks of sufficient pay to match 90% of their salary (regardless of EI eligibility). If eligible for EI, this “top up” will be reduced by the EI benefits received during the period so that the total income will be 90% of their salary. Remember, this “top up” will be paid out at the end of your maternity leave (17 weeks) in one lump sum. Keep this in mind when making financial decisions during your maternity leave.
- If a resident physician has a valid health related reason for being absent from work in excess of the 17 weeks of maternity leave, she is eligible for paid sick leave. If a resident physician goes on sick leave prior to the birth of the child, the sick leave ends and the maternity leave starts the day the child is born.
- Keep in mind that if you take maternity leave in your final year, your benefits terminate at the end of the appointment year, unless your training is extended and you have to return after your maternity leave in order to complete your program.

Parental Leave (see article 11.04)

- Partners of birth mothers and parents of adopted children can take up to 2 weeks leave of absence with full pay and benefits. They are then able to take unpaid parental leave to a maximum of 52 weeks total. Although not addressed in the current agreement, effective January 1, 2018, the new Employment Standards legislation in Alberta extended the total leave to 62 weeks. If you would like to take advantage of a longer leave, please discuss this with your program and the PME office.
- The Agreement allows birth mothers to take up to 52 weeks total leave (17 weeks maternity, 35 weeks of unpaid parental leave). Again, effective January 1, 2018, the new Employment Standards legislation in Alberta extended the total leave time to 78 weeks (17 weeks maternity, 61 weeks of unpaid parental leave). If you would like to take advantage of a longer leave, please discuss this with your program and the PME office.
- It is important to remember that parents who are both resident physicians can share the parental leave, but the combined total cannot exceed the maximum length of parental leave allowable.

Benefits and Insurance

- Resident physicians automatically lose their Blue Cross benefits while on maternity and unpaid parental leave. A resident may choose to “opt-in” by paying 100% of the premiums for these benefits. In either case, residents continue to have access to their Flexible Spending Account, and PARA will continue to pay their premiums for Long Term Disability Insurance and Life Insurance.

Other things to consider:

Waivers of Training

- Occasionally some time taken off is “waived” so that a resident does not need to extend training. However, these waivers are rare and you cannot apply for a waiver until the final year of training. You should expect to complete your entire training.
- Also, be aware that waivers of training time may affect eligibility for the United States Board Exams due to their length of training qualifications. Get informed before you apply!

Information from PARA

- Check out the PARA website for more information by logging into the member’s section and checking for the Frequently Asked Questions page about Maternity and Parental Leave.

University of Alberta

- The RWBC’s Child Care Information List has information about local childcare options. Please remember that some day cares have very long wait lists so it is important to get your name on the list as soon as possible!
- The RWBC’s Resource List has help in finding a family doctor as well as accessing resources for you and your family’s health.

Returning to work

- Keep in touch with your program and let them know when you are coming back so they can get you back on the schedule.
- If you require scheduling or training accommodation (examples include for family reasons, medical needs, or to facilitate breastfeeding), please contact Jane Papp at AHS or Erica Dance at the LAW Office for assistance prior to your return to work.
- If you choose to extend your leave from the original planned date of return, you must inform the University (who will update AHS for you), as well as re-apply for EI to extend your benefits if applicable.
- Contact Jane Papp (see above) for any concerns with clinical access such as access to Netcare or PACS.
- Call the AHS HR Contact Centre (1.877.511.4455) to ensure they have the correct return to work date so you can be paid and have your benefits reinstated.
- Contact the Parking Services/Security Office to set-up your parking and get your ID reactivated.
 - <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services.asp?pid=service&rid=1026807>
- If any certifications have expired (i.e. BLS and ACLS), you should get re-certified prior to your return.
- Get a complete list from your program on what is required to complete your residency, such as specific courses you may have missed while on leave.

Need Help?

If you have any issues, questions or are in need of support, please contact Erica Dance in the Office of Learner Advocacy & Wellness at 780.492.3092 or erdance@ualberta.ca or contact PARA at 780.432.1749 or para@para-ab.ca.