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Approval Authority Mana Whakaae	Executive Director – People Culture and Campus Life
Contact Officer Āpiha Whakapā	Manager – Business Partnering Pūmanawa Tangata

Introduction | Kupu Whakataki

The University recognises and affirms the importance of whānau by providing an inclusive and equitable parental leave policy that aims to support parents.

The University of Canterbury recognises the importance of breastfeeding for both staff member and baby, and supports, protects and promotes breastfeeding.

The University has a positive approach to childbirth and parenting and recognises that parents are an integral part of our society and working environment.

[The Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987](#) provides employment protection, and provision for extended and paid leave. The terms of this policy exceed legislative requirements, with additional entitlements. Parental leave is normally taken in the period immediately following the birth or adoption of a child.

Definitions | Tautuhinga

Staff or staff member - person/s engaged for paid employment with the University by way of an employment agreement.

Primary carer is a person nominated for the purpose of this policy to receive the primary parental leave benefit and has a key responsibility for childcare.

Parental leave is time off work to care for a newly born or adopted child under six years of age.

Partner is a person who plays a key co-carer role, but for the purpose of this policy is not the person nominated as the ‘primary carer’.

Co-carer is a person who plays a key role in childcare, but for the purpose of this policy is not the person nominated as the ‘primary carer’.

Policy Statement | Kaupapa

Paid parental leave

1. If you take time off work to care for your baby or a child who has come into your care, you may be able to get paid parental leave from the government and / or the University. To qualify as a primary carer or co-carer, you must meet one of the following criteria:
 - Be pregnant
 - Be a parent of a child under age one
 - Have new permanent primary responsibility for a child under age six and be any of the following:
 - A parent or adoptive parent
 - A Home for Life parent
 - A matua whāngai (whāngai carer)
 - A grandparent with full-time care
 - A permanent guardian.

Government paid parental leave

2. Government paid parental leave is paid leave of 26 continuous weeks given to you if you are the primary carer so you can care for your child. It is paid by the Inland Revenue Department.
3. You need to have worked an average of 10 hours a week, in at least 26 of the weeks in the year before your due date, or the date the child comes into your care to be eligible for government paid parental leave.
4. You can start this up to six weeks before the expected date of your child's arrival or earlier in certain cases, such as if your baby is born early, or for medical or health and safety reasons.
5. You can transfer primary carer leave to your partner (or another person assuming permanent primary responsibility for the care).
6. Partners and co-carers may also be eligible for two weeks of Government unpaid partner's leave.

University paid parental leave eligibility

7. All permanent full or part-time staff members employed by the University for at least 12 months continuous employment prior to the due date of the baby, or they become the primary carer of the child under age six (6) on a permanent basis, are entitled to University paid parental leave.

8. Staff on fixed-term employment agreements are eligible for University paid parental leave if they have 12 months' service at the University during the twelve-month period immediately preceding the expected date of the child's arrival and remain employed by the University during the period of University paid parental leave.

University paid parental leave entitlements

9. The University provides eligible staff members up to nine weeks University paid parental leave at the rate of pay they received prior to taking parental leave. This is in addition to Government primary carer leave.
10. If more than one parent or carer is employed at the University, you can nominate one person to receive up to nine weeks of University paid parental leave, or share the nine weeks between you.
11. If more than one parent or carer is employed at the University, those not nominated as the primary carer will be recognised as a co-carer or partner and will receive two weeks of University paid parental leave in addition to the two weeks of Government unpaid partner's leave, provided they meet the University's eligibility criteria.
12. The additional two weeks of University paid parental leave may only be taken by a co-carer or partner.
13. The entire period of University paid parental leave must be taken within the total extended parental leave period of 52 weeks.
14. University paid parental leave cannot be accrued and any remaining University paid parental leave at the end of the 52 weeks will be forfeited.

Other benefits

Annual leave

15. Annual leave will accrue while you are on parental leave.
16. Payment of annual leave on return from parental leave will be calculated based on your normal rate of pay and your FTE (full time equivalent hours) at the time of application for annual leave. This exceeds statutory entitlements.

Unpaid extended leave

17. If you have completed one year's continuous service prior to the expected date of a child's arrival, you are entitled to up to 52 weeks unpaid leave.
18. If you have more than six months service but less than a year's service prior to the expected date of a child's arrival, you are entitled to unpaid leave of up to 26 weeks.
19. If more than one parent or carer is employed at the University, one of you can take unpaid extended leave or the leave can be shared between you.

Special leave

20. You are also entitled, before taking parental leave, to take a total of up to ten days special leave without pay for reasons connected with the anticipated arrival or adoption of a child.

Keeping in touch days

21. While you are on parental leave, you may want to use 'keeping in touch days' to stay connected with the University. You can choose to perform work from time to time, as long as you only do a total of 64 hours or less of paid work during your parental leave payment period, and this work is not within the first 28 days after the child's birth or the date they came into your care.

Job protection

22. When you return to work after parental leave you are entitled to resume work in the same position, unless it is a key position that cannot be filled by a temporary replacement, or it is made redundant.
23. Paid and unpaid parental leave is continuous service as set out in section 43 of the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987.
24. Service while on parental leave is considered unbroken for the purpose of calculating leave entitlements.
25. Time on leave should not affect seniority or status including eligibility for consideration for promotion or progression.

Breastfeeding

26. The University believes that the support of staff members with family responsibilities is good employer practice, and as a key component of our equal employment opportunity strategy, we are committed to providing a breastfeeding-friendly workplace.
27. The University provides facilities and the support necessary to enable staff in their employment to balance breastfeeding/breast milk expression with their work. The University provides for paid breaks for staff to breastfeed or express milk during their working hours.
28. This policy should be read in conjunction with the information found in the [Parents at UC intranet \(Staff access only, sharepoint.com\)](#)

Related Documents and Information | He kōrero anō

Legislation

- [The Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987](#)

- [Employment Relations \(Breaks, Infant Feeding, and Other Matters\) Amendment Act 2008 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)

UC Policy Library

- [Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy \(PDF, 203KB\)](#)
- [Flexible Employment Policy \(PDF, 213KB\)](#)

UC Website and Intranet

- [Parents at UC \(Staff access only, sharepoint.com\)](#)

External

- [The right to breastfeed \(Human Rights Commission website\)](#)
- [Breastfeeding at work \(Employment New Zealand\)](#)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
<i>For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz</i>			
1.00	Policy Creation. Rescinded and incorporated Breastfeeding in the Workplace Policy	Executive Director – People, Culture and Campus	Oct 2023
1.01	Updates to hyperlinks	Policy Unit	Dec 2023

This policy document remains in force until it is updated.