



PARENT'S LEAVE PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

The purpose of Parents' Leave is to provide a working parent up to nine weeks leave from work to enable them to take care of their child in accordance with Parent's Leave and Benefits Acts 2019. It is a statutory leave type separate to Maternity Leave, Parental Leave and/or Paternity Leave.

This procedure specifies the arrangements in place at the University of Limerick for the administration, monitoring and application of Parent's Leave.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all eligible relevant parents who are in the employment of the University of Limerick if their child(ren) are born or adopted after 1st July 2022. A pro-rata entitlement is applied for staff who do not work full time.

3. Procedure Details

Entitlements and Conditions: From 1st August 2024 the duration of Parent's leave and benefit will be extended from 7 weeks to 9 weeks. The leave must be taken within the first two years of the child's birth or of the child's adoption. In the case of a multiple birth, or when a person adopts two or more children at the same time, the total entitlement to Parent's leave shall not exceed nine weeks. Employees who had taken 7 weeks parent's leave prior to August 2024 will be entitled to an additional two weeks if their child is under 2 years of age.

The additional 2 weeks of Parents leave applied to:

- Children who are under the age of 2 in August 2024.
- Adoptive children who have been placed with their parents for less than 2 years as of 1st August 2024

4. Definitions

Relevant Parent - defined under the Parent's Leave and Benefits Acts 2019 as one of the following:

- a parent of the child.
- a spouse, civil partner or cohabitant of the parent of the child.
- a parent of a donor-conceived child as provided for under section 5 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015;
- the adopting parent or parents of a child; the spouse or civil partner of the adopting parent of the child (if the parents have not adopted the child together).

5. Procedure for taking leave

- 5.1 Parent's Leave must be taken either as one continuous period of 9 weeks leave or periods of not less than one week at a time. Accrued public holiday entitlement must be taken immediately following the Parent's Leave. An employee on maternity leave may take their Parent's Leave once their standard

maternity leave has concluded. If the employee avails of additional maternity leave, they may take the Parent's Leave after both have concluded. Each parent has a separate entitlement to Parent's Leave from their job; however, Parent's Leave is non-transferrable between employees of the University who are relevant parents.

6. Postponement

If there is an adverse effect on the operations of the Faculty/School/Unit/Division, the University can postpone Parent's Leave for up to 12 weeks in accordance with the Act. This will be discussed with the employee at the time by their Line Manager and the reasons will be provided in writing. Parent's Leave will not be lost if, solely as a result of postponement, the child reaches the age threshold. Postponement Defined Reasons:

- Seasonal variations
- Unavailability of person to perform duties
- Nature of duties
- Number of employees
- Number of employees on Family Friendly Leave
- Other relevant matters. Seasonal Variations is the only grounds for postponing more than once.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Employee

The employee will discuss the request for Parent's Leave with their Line Manager in the first instance. A formal application, which includes the signature of the Line Manager, together with either a medical certificate confirming the pregnancy and due date or the child's birth certificate (or equivalent for an adopted child), must be submitted to the Compensation & Benefits Section, HR Division no less than 6 weeks in advance of the start date of the requested leave.

7.2 The Line Manager

The Line Manager will discuss the employee's request for leave with the HR Division and will sign the leave application form to indicate their support of the application. The Line Manager will be mindful of the following factors when considering the Parent's Leave Application:

- The business needs of the unit in relation to the timing of the leave request.
- The number of employees availing of Family Friendly leave types at a particular time

7.3 The HR Division

The Director of Human Resources or their nominee will have responsibility for the final approval of the request for Parent's Leave. The HR Division will issue the employee with a letter confirming the approval of the Parent's Leave arrangement. Copies of the signed documentation are held electronically on the employee's record.

8. Employment Rights during Parent's Leave

The employees' rights are protected while availing of Parent's Leave; public holiday entitlements will accrue while on leave, service will be unbroken, and increments will apply. All employees are entitled to return to their own position at the end of the Parent's Leave. In the case of an employee who is on probation at the start of the Parent's Leave, their probationary period will be extended to cover the leave period. Service accrued during Parent's Leave is not counted for Superannuation/Pension benefit purposes. Absence on Parent's Leave cannot be treated as part of any other form of leave, including sick leave, annual leave, adoptive leave, maternity leave, force majeure leaves and parental leave to which the employee is entitled. The University will request Birth Certificates and other official documents if appropriate in the case of applications for Parent's Leave

8.1 Payment during Parent's Leave

Parent's Leave is unpaid by the University; however, employees may be entitled to Parent's Benefit from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection subject to the appropriate number of PRSI contributions. Information in this regard is available at the link [here](#)

8.2 Related Documentation

- Appendix A – Application and Approval Process
- Appendix B – Notes on Income Continuance Protection and Social Welfare arrangements
- Appendix C – How to claim Parent's Benefit from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

8.3 Contacts

Information on applying for Parents Leave is available by contacting the Compensation & Benefits Section at compandbens@ul.ie

9. Policy Review

This procedure will be reviewed by Human Resources subject to legislative changes

Appendix A

Application and Approval Process

An employee of the University who is a relevant parent, as defined within the Parent's Leave Procedure, is entitled to nine weeks parent's leave for each child within two years of the child's birth/placement of adoption.

Notice to Take Leave:

The employee must submit their application for Parent's Leave to the Compensation & Benefits Section, Human Resources at least **six weeks in advance** of the start date of the leave.

Process

1. All applications for Parent's Leave must be made using the Leave/Absence Form, available at the following link [here](#)
2. The Form must be completed, signed by the Head of Department/Manager and Dean/Divisional Director and returned to the Compensation & Benefits Section, Human Resources, along with the necessary birth certificate/adoption order, no later than six weeks before the proposed commencement of the leave.
3. Leave cannot commence prior to the employee receiving the formal confirmation of the approval of their parents leave application from Human Resources.
4. In the event that the agreed Parent's Leave period is changed, Human Resources must be notified in writing immediately as this can affect the payment of salaries to the employee.

Appendix B

Pay Related Social Insurance Contributions (PRSI)

Employees who take Parent's Leave may get a PRSI credit for each week taken. Employees are advised to contact the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) so that they may get credited with PRSI contributions for this time.

Income Continuance Plan (ICP) and Parent's Leave

Employees who are members of UL's Income Continuance Plan are advised to contact the scheme provider to discuss contribution arrangements during the period of Parent's Leave.

Appendix C

Parent's Benefit is paid by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Applications for Parents Benefit can be made online at <https://services.mywelfare.ie/>

- This requires the employee to have a verified MyGovID account to use MyWelfare.ie.
- Please visit www.mygovid.ie to get a verified MyGovID account. The staff member will need the child's PPSN to complete the application. If the staff member is unable to apply online, the Parent's Benefit application form can be requested from the Parent's Benefit Section by email at parentsben@welfare.ie or by calling 1890 690 690.
- For further information please visit <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/b321b1-parents-benefit/>

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