CUPE Pregnancy and Parental Leave

CUPE Collective Agreement Article 36 – Maternity or Parental Leave (page 65)

Birth Mothers

You are entitled up to:

- 17 consecutive weeks of pregnancy leave, and
- 35 consecutive weeks of standard parental leave or 61 consecutive weeks of extended parental leave, taken immediately after pregnancy leave

You must provide at least 4 weeks’ written notice prior to starting your leave. It should be addressed to your supervisor, with a copy sent to your HR Assistant, and must contain the following information:

- The start and end dates of your pregnancy leave – your pregnancy leave may commence up to 12 weeks prior to the projected date of birth
- The start and end dates of your parental leave
- The date of your return to work
- A note from your doctor or midwife indicating the expected probable date of birth

If you plan to take any vacation in conjunction with your leaves, please specify those dates in your letter. Please note that vacation time must be pre-approved in accordance with the CUPE Collective Agreement.

If your baby is born before your pregnancy leave is due to start, the date of birth then becomes the first day of your pregnancy leave. If this happens, it is imperative that you notify your HR Assistant as soon as possible so your leave dates can be adjusted accordingly.

Non-Birth Parents and Adopting Parents

You are entitled up to:

- 37 consecutive weeks of standard parental leave or 62 consecutive weeks of extended parental leave, taken within 52 weeks of the baby’s birth or the official date of custody of the adoptive child

As of March 17, 2019, non-birth and adopting parents who are sharing parental benefits may receive an additional 5 weeks of standard parental leave or 8 weeks of extended parental leave. One parent cannot receive more than 35 weeks of standard or 61 weeks of extended parental benefits. For more information, please visit *El maternity and parental benefits: What these benefits offer*.

You must provide at least 4 weeks’ written notice prior to starting your leave. It should be addressed to your supervisor, with a copy sent to your HR Assistant, and must contain the following information:

- The start and end dates of your parental leave
- The date of your return to work
- A copy of the baby’s birth certificate* or adoption papers

If you plan to take any vacation in conjunction with your leaves, please specify those dates in your letter. Please note that vacation time must be pre-approved in accordance with the CUPE Collective Agreement.

*If you intend on taking parental leave as soon as the baby is born, you will not have the birth certificate readily available. In this case, please provide a note from your doctor or midwife indicating the expected
probable date of birth. HR will temporarily place you on unpaid leave until documentation is provided. Once we receive a copy of the birth certificate, your HR Assistant will amend the unpaid leave to parental leave. This will not affect your eligibility for Employment Insurance.

**Maintenance of Benefits While On Leave**

Once your written notice is received by Human Resources, your HR Assistant will issue a letter confirming your leave dates and to provide details of your benefits during your absence. While on leave, SFU will continue to pay the employer portion of your benefit premiums and you will be responsible for paying the employee portion that is normally deducted from your pay. After receiving the confirmation letter, you must make arrangements to pay for your share of benefit premiums as soon as possible. A benefit authorization form will accompany your letter which details the amount owed. Finally, you will receive a Pacific Blue Cross Change Form to add your baby to your extended health and/or dental plan (if applicable). You must complete and return the Change Form within 60 days of the baby’s birth.

**Employment Insurance**

After receiving your last pay cheque, Payroll Services will electronically file your Record of Employment (ROE) directly to Service Canada so you can apply for Employment Insurance (EI). You should apply for EI Maternity and Parental Benefits through Service Canada as soon as you stop working. For more information on the application process, please visit [https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental.html).

**Requesting Top-Up Reimbursement**

Once you are back at work, you may submit a written request to your HR Assistant for a top-up of the difference between your Employment Insurance (EI) benefits received and your Normal Salary to a maximum of 35 weeks. In your request, you must include a summary of EI payments received stating the GROSS weekly amount. To retrieve this statement, log onto “My Service Canada Account” and going to My Past Claims>My Past Claims Details.

The first 50% of your top-up is payable after you have been back at work for 3 months without interruption and the remaining 50% is payable after you have been back at work for 6 months without further interruption. Interruptions are defined as any paid and unpaid absences from work, including but not limited to vacation and sick time. The waiting period to receive your top-ups will be extended by the number of days absent from work.

If you have any questions about pregnancy and/or parental leave or the top-up process, please contact benefits@sfu.ca.