



# Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leave Fact Sheet

The following is a guide to maximizing the benefits UNA has acquired for its members through extensive bargaining. This streamlined information is provided to help you accomplish a successful maternity and parental leave and to maximize the benefits available to you under your Collective Agreement and applicable legislation.

There are different aspects to Maternity and Parental Leave:

Sick time before the birth of the baby, if necessary.

Payment through Employment Insurance.

Unpaid Leave of Absence from your employment.

Top up benefits through the SUB Plan.

## Sick Time

If you are medically unable to work leading up to the birth of your child, you are entitled to access your sick time and/or disability benefits.

To begin sick leave prior to the Maternity LOA/ Delivery date, have a physician write you a sick note clearly explaining you are no longer able to work due to pregnancy related health concerns. Give the note to your manager or Abilities Management at which point you should be placed on sick leave and paid out of your sick bank until your delivery date and commencement of your Maternity LOA. If you do not have sufficient time in your sick bank you may need to transition to Short Term disability benefits and have your doctor complete forms from the Insurance Company.

If you experience any problems with having your sick leave approved, please contact your Local office or Labour Relations Officer for assistance with the process.

You are also entitled to begin your maternity leave as early as 12 weeks before the expected date of delivery. However, if you are beginning maternity leave because you are not feeling well enough to work and have disability benefits, you should look to sick leave as an option before starting maternity leave early. This will maximize the time you can spend with your baby and the benefits you are entitled to.

# Leave of Absence

There are two available leaves of absence under the Collective Agreement: Maternity and Adoption/Parental.

## Maternity

Under the Collective Agreement you are entitled to an unpaid leave for Maternity Leave for up to 18 months. If you would like a longer leave, you will need to discuss this with the Employer and have them agree to a longer leave. Maternity Leave will commence at the latest, upon the date of delivery.

The leave of absence is an unpaid leave. To qualify for the leave, you must have completed 90 days of employment and provide the Employer with at least 2 weeks notice where possible.

We recommend that once you are comfortable sharing the news with your manager, you provide your manager with a written request for a maternity leave of absence with the estimated date of delivery. The manager will complete the leave of absence request form and forward it to Human Resources. The HR Benefits Department will then mail you a Maternity Leave Package, which will include: Information Guide & Frequently Asked Questions, Check Lists, Benefits Cost/Coverage Form, SUB Plan Application Form and Benefits Changes Request Form.

After your delivery, please advise the HR Contact Centre and your Manager of your date of delivery as soon as possible. Your Record of Employment will then be electronically submitted to Service Canada so you can receive EI benefits.

## Benefits While on Leave

For maternity leave, healthcare benefits (e.g. dental, disability, health etc.) are compulsory during the valid post delivery health period (~ 6-8 weeks). Cost is split and pre-payment through payroll deduction can be arranged if enough notice is given. If payment is not received prior to going on leave and/or arrangements for prepayment have not been made, benefits will be waived following the compulsory portion of the LOA with the outstanding balance recovered from your first paycheck upon returning to work.

For maternity leave, upon completion of the valid post delivery health period (~ 6-8 weeks), benefits become optional. Following the valid health related portion, the next 12 week period is optional and the premium cost share continues for those 12 weeks. For adoption and parental leave, for the first 12 weeks of leave you can make arrangements to prepay your share of benefit premiums prior to the commencement of your leave and the premium cost share will

## Return to Work from Leave of Absence

An employee on a leave of absence for maternity, adoption or parental must provide the employer with at least two (2) weeks' written notice of readiness to return to work.

## Adoption/Parental Leave of Absence

Under the Collective Agreement, you are entitled to an unpaid leave for up to 18 months when you adopt a child or for parenting duties following the birth of a child.

We recommend you advise your manager as early as possible with a written request for an adoption or parental leave of absence with an estimated date you would like to commence your leave. The manager will complete the leave of absence request form and forward it to Human Resources. You should receive a Leave Package from HR.

As long as you have made the application for leave and it was been approved you can then commence your adoption leave with one (1) day's notice. Make sure to keep your manager up-to-date on the adoption proceedings.

You may commence parental leave with one (1) day's notice as long as you have applied for the leave at least 12 weeks prior to the expected date of delivery.

continue for the 12 weeks.

For the remainder of your LOA you can choose to continue or discontinue the same benefits coverage selected in the 12 week optional period but you will pay 100% of the premiums. Your decision on benefits, once submitted, is final.

Any terminated benefit coverage will be reinstated when you return and are actively at work. To be actively at work to your regular duties and hours in your work rotation. Life, AD&D and Disability coverage are reinstated immediately. Supplementary Health and Dental resume the first of the month following your return.

### HR Contact Centre Information:

Phone: 1- 877-511-4455

Email: [hrcontactcentre@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:hrcontactcentre@albertahealthservices.ca)

# Employment Insurance

To be eligible for Employment Insurance, you must have 600 hours of insurable employment in the last 52 weeks (or the period since the start of your last claim, whichever is shorter) to qualify. You can check your pay stubs and look for EI premium deductions from your gross income. In 2020, for every \$100 earned the employer will deduct \$1.58 to a maximum of \$856.36 for the entire year.

**There are 2 parts to EI benefits:** Maternity Benefits and Parental Benefits. Maternity Benefits can be directly followed by Parental Benefits and you can apply for both at once.

Maternity benefits are only available to the person who is away from work because they are pregnant or have recently given birth. Maternity benefits are up to 15 weeks. To receive benefits, proof of pregnancy is required by signing a statement declaring the expected/actual delivery date.

Parental benefits are available to the parents of a newborn or newly adopted child. There are 2 options: Standard and Extended. Parental benefits can be split between parents and parents can receive their weeks of benefits at the same time or one after another. Once you start receiving parental benefits you cannot change options.

1. **Standard Parental Benefits** are for up to 40 weeks, but one parent cannot receive more than 35 weeks of standard benefits.
2. **Extended Parental Benefits** are for up to 69 weeks but one parent cannot receive more than 61 weeks of extended benefits.

## Examples:

1. Chris and Alex are having a baby. Chris gives birth to the baby and takes the full 15 weeks of maternity benefits. Chris and Alex choose standard parental benefits and they each take 20 weeks at the same time to care for their child.

2. Chris and Alex are adopting a child. They choose to take extended parental benefits. Chris takes 39 weeks and Alex can take up to 30 weeks of extended parental benefits to care for their child.

For 2020, the maximum yearly insurable income is \$54,800. For maternity and standard parental benefits the basic rate of EI benefits is 55% of your average weekly income, the most a person is eligible to receive is \$573 weekly. For extended parental benefits the basic rate of EI benefits is 33% of your average weekly income, the most a person is eligible to receive is \$344 weekly.

Application for Employment Insurance can be made online and takes approximately 60 minutes to complete. An application should be completed as soon as possible after your last shift worked as applicants risk losing benefits if applying later than 4 weeks after their last day of work. When applying you will require your social insurance number (and the SIN of the other parent if you plan to share benefits), mother's maiden name, mailing and residential address, direct deposit banking information, employment information from all employers over the previous 52 week period and the expected or actual date of birth of the child. For adoption you will need the date your child was placed with you and the full name and address of the agency handling the adoption.

A Record of Employment (ROE) is required to complete the EI application. AHS automatically processes and sends the ROE to Service Canada once all worked and/or sick hours are paid. Casual employees MUST request their ROE from the Human Resources Benefits Department.

EI pay begins within 28 days following receipt of the application and all supporting documentation.

## Service Canada Contact Info:

Online: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)  
Phone: 1-800-206-7218

# SUB Plan

The SUB plan is a wage "top up" offered during the **valid health related period** post delivery. Starting on your date of delivery you may be eligible for the SUB Plan supplement.

To receive the SUB plan top up, you must be eligible for sick leave benefits. To be eligible, you must be a regular full time, regular part-time or temporary employee. Casual employees do not qualify.

If you are in receipt of EI maternity benefits, the plan will top up your earnings for the valid health related period post delivery. If you do not qualify for the EI maternity benefits, the SUB plan will pay the equivalent of the EI maternity benefits and SUB top up for the valid post delivery health related period.

Typically, the valid health related period post delivery is 6 weeks for a vaginal birth and 8 weeks for a C-Section. The SUB plan and valid health related period can be extended up to 17 weeks with medical evidence. In cases where the valid health related period extends longer than 17 weeks, employees revert back to receiving sick leave or short term/long term disability if no sick hours remain.

To claim the SUB top up of 95%, you MUST HAVE BANKED SICK TIME. An employee seeking 6 weeks of 95% SUB plan top up, must have 6 weeks of banked sick time on the date of delivery. An employee seeking 8 weeks of 95% SUB plan top up, must have 8 weeks of banked sick time on the date of delivery.

Sick hours are required to be in your bank, but are not used while receiving SUB plan top up. Once sick leave is exhausted, the SUB plan tops up to 66.67% of your regular weekly earnings.

To apply for the SUB top up, have your physician complete their section of the application approximately 6 weeks post delivery. Submit the completed application and a copy of your EI Maternity leave benefit payment information. Completed SUB plan applications MUST be submitted within 6 months of the delivery date or will not be processed.

SUB plan claims are processed after the valid health related period post delivery and are paid in one lump sum by direct deposit through AHS payroll.