

1.0 Aim of The Policy

- 1.1 The Parent's Leave and Benefit Act 2019 amended by the Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 enables a "relevant parent" to take **nine weeks parent's leave** which must be taken within 104 weeks (2 years) of the birth or placement of the birth/adoption of a child. The following policy sets out the eligibility criteria and entitlements attached to parent's leave.
- 1.2 Parent's leave is available to eligible members of staff to allow them time off from work within the first 2 years of the birth or adoption of their child or the child of their spouse or partner. Parent's leave must be used to assist in the provision of care to the child. The state-paid parent's leave standard benefit is the same rate as maternity, adoptive and paternity benefit provided the staff member has made sufficient PRSI contributions.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy covers all part-time and full-time members of staff provided that they meet the conditions outlined below.

3.0 Eligibility to Take Parent's Leave

- 3.1 Parent's leave is available to staff members who are deemed to be the "relevant parent" of a child. There is no minimum service required with LauraLynn to qualify for parent's leave. Parent's leave is non-transferrable between relevant parents. Under the Act, a "relevant parent" includes:
 - a parent of the child
 - the spouse, civil partner or cohabitant of a parent of the child
 - a parent of the child where the child is a donor-conceived child
 - the adopting mother or sole male adopter of the child
 - the spouse, civil partner or cohabitant of the adopting mother or sole male adopter of the child
 - each individual in the couple where the child is, or is to be, adopted jointly by a married couple of the same sex or a couple that are civil partners of each other, or a cohabiting couple of the same sex

4.0 Entitlements and Conditions

- 4.1 The following conditions apply to taking parent's leave.
 - A staff member who is a relevant parent may avail of parent's leave in periods of not less than one week at a time.
 - The leave will commence on the date the relevant parent selects in his/her written notification.
 - Staff who are/will be availing of maternity leave/adoptive leave are required to take this leave before taking parent's leave. Staff members entitled to paternity leave and parent's leave can take these leave entitlements in whichever order they wish (subject to statutory time limits).

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- In the case of multiple births, or where two or more children are being adopted at the same time, only a single seven-week entitlement of parent's leave applies.
- Staff members on fixed term or specified purpose contracts: - for such individuals the contract of employment will terminate in the normal manner and the entitlement to parent's leave will cease to apply with effect from the date of termination of the contract of employment.

5.0 Notice Required When Applying For Parent's Leave

5.1 The Head of Department must be notified in writing by the staff member at least six weeks before he/she intends to take the leave. This application form at the end of this policy must be completed as part of the application process. There may be a requirement to provide a copy of relevant documentation in relation to the child (see section 5.2). Where LauraLynn is not the same employer from whose employment maternity or adoptive leave has been taken, the staff member will be required to include a copy of the medical, or other appropriate, certificate confirming the pregnancy and specifying the expected week of confinement / birth or date of placement of the child.

5.2 The documentation that may be required to support an application for parent's leave are as follows:

- In the case of a birth:
 - A copy of the medical certification as provided by the mother to LauraLynn or other appropriate certificate from a registered practitioner confirming the pregnancy and specifying the expected date of birth of the child concerned, or
 - A copy of the birth certificate where notification is given after the birth.
- In the case of an adoption:
 - A copy of the placement certificate where notification is given after the day of placement.
 - In the case of an intercountry / foreign adoption, a declaration of suitability and eligibility prior to the day of placement followed by written confirmation of the placement.

6.0 Applying For Parent's Benefit

6.1 A staff member taking parent's leave may apply for Parent's Benefit online at www.mywelfare.ie. The staff member will need their child's PPS number to complete the application. Staff may qualify for parent's leave and not qualify for parent's benefit, for example, if they do not satisfy the PRSI contributions.

7.0 Postponement of Parent's Leave by LauraLynn

7.1 In certain limited circumstances LauraLynn may need to exercise its right to postpone, for up to 12 weeks, the staff member's intended parent's leave commencement date. Postponement may arise where LauraLynn is satisfied that the taking of parent's leave at the time specified in the notification would have a substantial adverse effect on the service provided by the staff member due to

- (a) the unavailability of a person to carry out the staff member's duties during the period of the leave,

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- (b) the nature of staff member's duties
- (c) the number of other members of staff availing of parent's leave during the period

8.0 Early Confinement / Date of Delivery

- 8.1 Where the birth of the child occurs four or more weeks prematurely, a staff member who is the relevant parent will be deemed to have complied with their notice of intention to take parent's leave if notice is given in the period of 7 days from the date of delivery.

9.0 Postponement of Parent's Leave Due to Late Birth/Postponed Adoption Placement

- 9.1 An member of staff who is a relevant parent may postpone a period of parent's leave where the date of birth occurs after the date selected by a relevant parent in their notification to their head of department or where the date of placement is postponed in the case of adoption. The relevant parent may select another date on which parent's leave will commence.

10.0 Postponement of Parent's Leave When The Child is Hospitalised

- 10.1 If the child is hospitalised, the staff member may request in writing to postpone all or part of their parent's leave. The postponed leave is to be taken not later than seven days after the discharge of the child from hospital or such other date as may be agreed between the relevant parent and their head of department.

11.0 Protection of employment Rights

- 11.1 During the period of parent's leave, the staff member's employment rights are protected (except for the staff member's right to remuneration).
- 11.2 Staff continue to accrue an entitlement to annual leave and public holidays while on parent's leave. A period of absence on parent's leave cannot be treated as part of any other leave to which the staff member is entitled such as sick leave and annual leave.

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PARENT'S LEAVE APPLICATION FORM

Personal Details	
Staff Member's Name:	
Job Title/Grade:	
Department:	

Parent's Leave Details	
Name of Child: (if name not known, write baby's, surname)	
Date of birth/placement of the child: (if applying in advance of the birth/placement, or where LauraLynn is not the same employer from whose employment maternity or adoptive leave has been taken, please include medical, or other appropriate certificate confirming the pregnancy and specifying the expected week of confinement / birth or date of placement of the child.	Day ____ Month ____ Year ____
I declare that I am a relevant parent. _____ The following documentation (where applicable) must be enclosed with the application: • medical certificate confirming the expected date of birth, or • a copy of a birth certificate, or • a copy of the declaration of suitability, or • a copy of the certificate of placement.	

Parent's Leave Dates – Note: Parent's leave must be taken in blocks of one week or more	
Commencement date: (First day of parent's leave)	Day ____ Month ____ Year ____
Return to work date:	Day ____ Month ____ Year ____
New Balance of 9 week's Parent Leave Remaining	_____ weeks

Declaration	
I declare that the information given above is accurate and complete.	
Signed: _____	Date: _____ (Employee)
Signed: _____	Date: _____ (Head of Department)

Parent's leave must be used to assist in the provision of care to the child. This leave may be terminated if it is not used for this purpose. Any member of staff abusing this leave may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in line with the LauraLynn Disciplinary Procedures policy.

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