

You are here: Home / Work / Parental leave / Taking parental leave

Taking parental leave

As well as maternity and paternity leave, there are other leave options for eligible parents and carers. You may be able to get parental leave payments from the government.

Use the online tools to find out how much leave or financial income is available.

Types of parental leave

There is a range of leave options for:

- special leave — unpaid leave for pregnancy-related appointments
- primary carer leave
- extended leave
- spouse or partner's leave
- negotiated carer leave — if you're not eligible for work leave.

Employment NZ has more information about leave, including when it's for adoption, whāngai or temporary care.

- [Types of parental leave \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 1]
- [Who can get parental leave payments \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 2]

► Definition of a partner

Calculate how much leave you can take

Use Employment NZ's eligibility tool to find out how much leave you can take.

If you're an employee the amount of leave depends on how long you've worked for your employer.

[Parental leave eligibility tool \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 3]

► Leave criteria for employee hours and months worked

Applying for parental leave

To apply to your employer for parental or negotiated care leave you need to apply in writing 3 months before the baby's due date.

► How to apply for leave

While you're on leave

Your annual leave if you're an employee

When you're on parental leave you continue to build up annual leave as long as you return to your job. Your payments for annual leave are affected in the 12 months after you return to work.

What you'll be paid while you're on annual leave

Keeping in touch days

If your employer agrees, you can work from time to time. These are called keeping in touch days and criteria apply. Find out more on Employment NZ's website.

Keeping in touch with work (external link)^[Link: 7]

When to notify your employer

You need to notify your employer in writing before you return to your job or if your plans for parental leave change.

- Before returning to work
- Not returning to your job from parental leave

Resolve a problem with leave or redundancy

Employment NZ has guidance on how to sort out problems with parental leave requests.

If you have a problem with parental leave (external link)^[Link: 8]

In some situations your employer doesn't have to hold your job for you — for example if you're made redundant. You have rights when this happens.

Covering parental leave and employees returning to work — Employment NZ (external link)^[Link: 9]

Sharing your unpaid leave

If you and your spouse or partner are eligible for parental leave, you can transfer some of your unpaid parental leave to them.

► Check if you can share unpaid leave

Financial help

Use the SmartStart website's online checkers to find what financial help and paid parental leave (PPL) payments you are eligible for:

- Financial help checker — SmartStart (external link)^[Link: 11]
- Parental leave checker — SmartStart (external link)^[Link: 12]

► Caregiving and foster care

► If your baby arrives before its due date

► Death of a baby or child

Apply for your child's IR tax number

If you apply for a government payment, you need an Inland Revenue (IR) tax number for your child.

Get an IR number for your child

On the SmartStart website you can register your baby, order the IR tax number and apply for Working for Families or a Work and Income benefit.

Register the birth (external link) ^[Link: 16]

Transfer your paid parental leave (PPL) payments

You may be able to transfer the payments to your spouse or partner if they're eligible.

► Check eligibility for and transfer a PPL payment

When parental leave payments end

Working for Families are payments to families with dependent children aged 18 or under. Find out more and how to apply on the Inland Revenue website.

Working for Families (external link) ^[Link: 19]

Who to contact for more help

If you need more help or have questions about the information or services on this page, contact one of the following agencies.

- Employment New Zealand

Contact and agency details

- Inland Revenue

Contact and agency details

- Work and Income

Contact and agency details

Index of page links

1. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/types-of-parental-leave/>
2. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/pay-and-hours/pay-and-wages/leave-and-holiday-pay/parental-leave-payments#scroll-to-3>
3. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/eligibility/#parentalleavecalc>

4. <https://smartstart.services.govt.nz/stage/pregnancy#card199>
5. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/taking-parental-leave/requesting-parental-leave>
6. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/managing-parental-leave-as-an-employer/when-an-employee-requests-parental-leave#scroll-to-4>
7. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/taking-parental-leave/what-happens-while-on-parental-leave-and-your-return#scroll-to-2>
8. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/taking-parental-leave/what-happens-while-on-parental-leave-and-your-return#scroll-to-6#scroll-to-6>
9. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/managing-parental-leave-as-an-employer/covering-parental-leave-and-employees-returning-to-work#scroll-to-3>
10. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/eligibility/#parentalleavecalc>
11. <https://smartstart.services.govt.nz/financial-help/financial-help-checker>
12. <https://smartstart.services.govt.nz/financial-help/paid-parental-leave-checker>
13. <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/caring-for-someone/financial-help/>
14. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/pay-and-hours/pay-and-wages/leave-and-holiday-pay/parental-leave-payments#scroll-to-5>
15. <https://wheturangitia.services.govt.nz/>
16. <https://smartstart.services.govt.nz/stage/birth-to-1-year-old#card141>
17. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/eligibility/#parentalleavecalc>
18. <https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ird.govt.nz%2Fpaid-parental-leave%2Ftransfers%2Ftransfer-your-payments&data=05%7C01%7Cgovt.nz%40dia.govt.nz%7Cd98fc60722714646ffa908dbf78f9996%7Cf659ca5cfc474e96b24d14c95df13acb%7C0%7C0%7C638375968366423869%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZs b3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=iGSYS50KdwUH%2BoBkFZYBR%2B1tFJ3HLcEryKHUmFs3nlg%3D&reserved=0>
19. <https://www.ird.govt.nz/topics/working-for-families/new-to-working-for-families>

Page title: Taking parental leave | New Zealand Government

Printed: 8 September 2025

Printed from: <https://www.govt.nz/browse/work/parental-leave/taking-parental-leave/>