

## Our Community Pregnancy and Parenting Policy

Our Community seeks to play a part in helping to ensure the entry into the world of any “OC babies” is as healthy, positive and stress-free for their parents as possible. We also wish to support staff who foster or adopt children, or who experience pregnancy loss.

Below we have described your statutory entitlements, as well as additional entitlements offered by Our Community to new parents or carers.

### Foster carers / adoptive parents

Our Community recognises the vital role foster carers and adoptive parents play in supporting vulnerable children. Your entitlements as a foster carer/ adoptive parent are outlined below, but please talk to your manager about any other needs you might have in supporting you in this role.

### Pregnancy

We recognise that every woman may experience pregnancy differently. While pregnancy is undoubtedly a joyful time for most women, it may also present some physical challenges. Some women experience excessive tiredness, nausea, hunger, discomfort, and swollen legs (among other things) through all or parts of their pregnancy and may require support from the company to negotiate these and other challenges.

Workplace accommodations may include the following:

- Permission to nap, if required (and a comfortable and private space in which to do so)
- Flexibility in your work schedule to allow you to attend medical appointments or to manage medical issues (including at short notice)
- Additional sick leave, if required.

Employees should feel free to discuss with their manager any assistance they may need. Employees may also (but are not required to) confidentially tell their manager about an early pregnancy to allow discrete accommodations to be put in place.

Expectant non-birthing parents should also feel free to request greater flexibility during the period of pregnancy in order to assist their partner and/or attend appointments.

### Special pregnancy/miscarriage/fertility-related leave

Under Australian law, employees who are eligible for unpaid parental leave can take unpaid special maternity leave where they experience a pregnancy-related illness or pregnancy loss after 12 weeks.



Our Community seeks to go beyond the statutory minimum and will provide whatever support is necessary for any employee suffering pregnancy loss (at any stage in the pregnancy) or pregnancy-related illness.

Our Community will also support employees undertaking treatment for infertility by providing access to flexible hours and additional leave entitlements as required. Please talk to your manager if you require such assistance.

### Parental leave

Employees are entitled to parental leave when a child is born or adopted. Parental leave entitlements include:

- Maternity leave
- Paternity and partner leave
- Adoption leave
- Special maternity leave.

Under existing laws, parental leave can be taken when:

- You give birth
- Your spouse or de facto partner gives birth
- You adopt a child under 16 years of age.

You are entitled to 12 months of unpaid parental leave so long as you meet the requirements below. You may also request an additional 12 months of unpaid leave (this may not be granted but we will do our best to accommodate both your needs and the company's).

In addition to the provisions relating to unpaid parental leave outlined above, eligible employees who are the primary carer of a newborn or adopted child are entitled to 18 weeks' leave paid by the federal government at the national minimum wage as part of the government's paid parental leave scheme.

Eligible secondary carers (including same-sex partners) are entitled to two weeks leave paid at the national minimum wage.



### Eligibility for parental leave

To be eligible for unpaid parental leave you must have worked continuously with Our Community for at least 12 months before the date or expected date of birth or adoption. You do not need to work for another 12 months before you can take a second period of parental leave.

Casual employees need to have worked on a regular and systemic basis for Our Community for at least 12 months.

### Our Community contribution

Our Community seeks to go above and beyond the statutory requirements in supporting new and adoptive parents/carers, regardless of your family dynamic, and we want non-birthing partners to have the opportunity to properly bond with their newborns and share the caring role.

On top of the government-provided entitlements, Our Community will provide to eligible staff members:

- For birth parents or primary adoptive/foster carers: Six weeks' parental leave, paid at your ordinary wage (this includes adoption or permanent fostering of a child aged up to 18 years)
- For non-birth parents/carers: Six weeks' parental leave, paid at your ordinary wage.

### Returning to work

Our Community recognises that the post-pregnancy period, including the return to work after parental leave, can present additional joys and challenges. Again, we seek to make this transition period as stress-free as possible for both primary and non-primary care-givers.

This includes:

- Allowing new parents to have as much or as little communication with the workplace as they like while they are on parental leave (though managers will check in regularly to see how you're getting along)
- Providing a private and comfortable place for breastfeeding and expressing and storage of breast milk
- Accommodating, wherever possible, temporary or permanent requests for altered work hours (including trial periods to test options)
- Understanding the increase in caring duties that caring for children may place on an employee, and making attitudinal and structural accommodations for these.



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Employees who are on unpaid parental leave are entitled to 10 paid “keeping in touch” days, which allow you to return to work for a few days as your schedule allows. According to [Fair Work](#), work on a “keeping in touch” day may include:

- Participating in a planning day;
- Doing training; or
- Attending a conference.

The [Department of Human Services](#) says, “a day of work is a Keeping in Touch day if the paid work you do to stay connected with your workplace or help you transition back into work”. It does not affect your right to continue your parental leave so long as you don’t exceed 10 days.

Our Community welcomes employees’ participation in this scheme.



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