



British Columbia Teachers' Federation

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LEAVES Rights and Benefits

Note: This fact sheet has been prepared for general information purposes. It is not a legal document. Please refer to the Employment Standards Act and Regulation for purposes of interpretation and application of the law.

MATERNITY

RIGHTS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- Amount of leave:
 - up to 17 weeks of unpaid leave starting no earlier than 11 weeks prior to the expected date of birth, no later than the actual birth date and ending no earlier than 6 consecutive weeks after the birth or termination of the pregnancy; and no later than 17 weeks after actual birth date;
 - the employee may request an earlier return to work;
 - in writing, at least 1 week prior to the proposed date of the return to work;
 - the employer may request a medical note supporting the ability to return to work.
 - the employee is entitled to an additional 6 weeks of unpaid leave for reasons related to the birth or termination of the pregnancy.
- Request for leave:
 - the request must be in writing and if made during pregnancy, sent to the employer at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the leave;
 - the employer may request medical certification as to the expected date of birth, the actual date of birth or the date of termination of the pregnancy.
- Security of Employment:
 - during the term of the leave the employer must not;
 - terminate employment, or;
 - change a condition of employment without the employees written consent.
 - as soon as the leave ends the employer must place the employee:
 - in the position the employee held before taking the leave, or;
 - in a comparable position.

2. Collective Agreement

- The rights from the ESA may not be diminished by the collective agreement.
- Rights beyond those in the ESA may be contained in the collective agreement.
- Contact the local for specific details.

BENEFITS

1. BC Employment Standards Act (Section 56(2) a, b)
 - Medical, Extended Health, Dental, Pension and Group Life Insurance plans for the length of the leave in the ESA:
 - if the employer normally pays the full premium, the employer must continue to provide the benefit plan(s), including pension, at no cost to the employee;
 - if the employer normally pays a portion of the premium, and the employee elects to continue the benefit plan(s), including pension, then the employer must continue to pay its share and the employee her/his share.

2. Collective Agreement
 - Sick leave may be available if you are unable to work prior to the date of birth and for the 2 week period following the birth or termination of the pregnancy because of the pregnancy.
 - A Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plan may be available which will top up your employment insurance, sickness, or maternity benefit.

3. BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP)
 - If you run out of sick leave, you may apply for SIP benefits.
 - Benefits are paid if you are unable to work prior the date of birth and for the 2 week period following the birth or termination of the pregnancy because of the pregnancy.

4. Employment Insurance (EI)
 - Qualification for EI benefits:
 - at least 600 hours of insurable earnings in the 52 weeks prior to the start of the leave of absence (or in the period since the last EI claim);
 - the qualification period may be extended to 104 weeks by application if unable to qualify because of illness or maternity;
 - teachers and teachers-on-call earn 9.1 hours per day or 45.5 hours per week pro-rated to the percent of time worked;
 - a 2 week waiting period from beginning of the leave may be covered by the SUB plan, or if ill, by sick leave or SIP.
 - Duration of benefits:
 - up to 15 weeks starting no earlier than 8 weeks prior to the expected date of birth and ending no later than 17 weeks after the date of birth or termination of the pregnancy;
 - benefits are payable during July and August.

5. Pension (TPP)

- Pension service credit continues to accrue when on paid sick leave and SIP.
- For other periods of leave when not on paid sick leave or SIP, you may purchase the pension service.
 - contact the Teacher Pension Plan (604-660-4088 if Lower Mainland, or 1-800-665-6770), the BCTF (604-871-2283 or 1-800-663-9163), your local union office, your employer, or go online to pensionsbc.ca for application forms;
 - if you pay your contribution for the unpaid leave period (EI benefits are not pay for pension purposes), the employer will pay its contribution;
 - you may buy this time during the leave (monthly) or following the leave for up to five years from the termination of the leave.
- The maximum period that may be purchased for one maternity leave is 17 weeks (18 weeks for leave prior to 2001) for leaves taken after 1981.
- Cost is the employee contribution rate only, x FTE monthly salary x number of months to purchase and is **always cost effective**.

PARENTAL

RIGHTS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- Amount of leave:
 - up to 35 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave starting:
 - a. for the birth mother, immediately following the Maternity Leave (unless the employee and the employer agree otherwise);
 - up to 37 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave beginning after the child's birth or placement and within 52 weeks after that.
 - a. for the birth mother who has not taken maternity leave
 - b. for the birth father, any time after the date of birth and within 52 weeks of the birth;
 - c. for an adopting parent, within 52 weeks after the child has been placed with the parents.
 - plus 5 more immediate weeks are available if the child has physical, psychological or emotional conditions requiring the additional leave.
- Request for leave:
 - the request must be in writing, sent to the employer at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the leave;
 - the employer may request medical certification supporting the employee's entitlement to the leave.

2. Collective Agreement

- The rights from the ESA may not be diminished by the collective agreement.
- Rights beyond those in the ESA may be contained in the collective agreement.
- Contact the local for specific details

BENEFITS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- Medical, extended health, dental, pension and group life insurance plans for the length of the leave in the ESA:
 - if the employer normally pays the full premium, the employer must continue to provide the benefit plan(s), including pension, at no cost to the employee;
 - if the employer normally pays a portion of the premium, and the employee elects to continue the benefit plan(s), including pension, then the employer must continue to pay its share and the employee her/his share.

2. Collective Agreement

- A Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plan may be available which will top up your employment insurance parental leave benefit.
- Participation in the group health benefits beyond the ESA period of leave may be available.

3. BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP)

- If you run out of sick leave, you may apply for SIP benefits.
- Benefits are paid if you are unable to work following the birth or termination of the pregnancy, because of the pregnancy.

4. Employment Insurance (EI)

- Qualification for EI benefits:
 - at least 600 hours of insurable earnings in the 52 weeks prior to the start of the leave of absence (or in the period since the last EI claim);
 - 2 week waiting period from the beginning of the leave may be covered by the SUB plan.
- Duration of benefits:
 - up to 35 weeks starting with the arrival of the child (birth or adoption) in the home, and ending 52 weeks after the birth or placement of the child;
 - the benefit period may be extended up to an additional 15 weeks if the child is hospitalized;
 - benefits are payable during July and August.
 - parents may share the leave, and then, there will only be one 2 week waiting period; both must meet eligibility requirements;
 - parents on parental leave are able to earn up to 25% of the weekly benefit of \$50, whichever is higher, without affecting the benefit, to allow a gradual return to work.

5. Pension (TPP)

- For periods of leave when not on paid sick leave or SIP, you may purchase the pension service.
 - contact the Teacher Pension Plan (604-660-4088, lower mainland, or 1-800-665-6770), the BCTF (604-871-2283 or 1-800-663-9163), your local union office, your employer, or go online to pensionsbc.ca for an application form;
 - if you pay your contribution for the unpaid leave period (EI benefits are not pay for pension purposes), the employer will pay its contribution;
 - you may buy this time during the leave (monthly) or within five years of the termination date of the leave. – Hint: the sooner you buy the leave, the cheaper the cost;
- the maximum period that may be purchased for one parental leave is 35 weeks (12 weeks for parental leaves taken between March 22, 1991 and January 1, 2001)
- cost is the employee contribution rate only, x FTE monthly salary x the number of months to be purchased and is **always cost effective**.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE

RIGHTS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- Amount of unpaid leave: 5 days per year related to:
 - a. the care, health or education of a child in the employee's care;
 - b. the care or health of any member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, parent, guardian, sibling, grandchild or grandparent) and any person who lives with an employee as a member of the employee's family.

BENEFITS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- Medical, extended health, dental, pension and group life insurance plans for the length of the leave in the ESA:
 - if employer normally pays the full premium, the employer must continue to provide the benefit plan(s), including pension, at no cost to the employee;
 - if employer normally pays a portion of the premium, and the employee elects to continue the benefit plan(s), including pension, then the employer will continue to pay its share and the employee her/his share.

COMPASSIONATE CARE

RIGHTS

1. BC Employment Standards Act
 - Amount of unpaid leave: up to 8 weeks to provide care or support to a family member (spouse, child, parent, guardian, sibling, grandchild or grandparent, and any person who lives with the employee as a member of the employee's family), if a medical practitioner issues a medical certificate stating significant risk of death within 26 weeks.
 - The leave must be taken in units of one or more weeks.
2. Collective Agreement
 - Rights to compassionate leave; paid or unpaid will vary pursuant to local collective agreement language
 - Employer may grant a compassionate leave beyond amount specified in collective agreement
 - Contact the local for specific details.
3. Employment Insurance Act
 - Amount of leave
 - up to 6 weeks to provide care for a family member who has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks (6 months).

BENEFITS

1. BC Employment Standards Act
 - Medical, extended health, dental, pension and group life insurance plans for the length of the leave in the ESA:
 - if employer normally pays the full premium, the employer must continue to provide the benefit plan(s), including pension, at no cost to the employee;
 - if employer normally pays a portion of the premium, and the employee elects to continue the benefit plan(s), including pension, then the employer will continue to pay its share and the employee her/his share.
2. Employment Insurance (EI)
 - Qualification for EI benefits
 - a decrease in more than 40% of regular weekly earnings
 - 600 hours of insurable employment in the last 52 weeks or since the start of your last EI claim (the qualifying period).
 - must apply for benefits
 - a medical certificate must be provided as proof that the ill family member has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks (6 months), and requires the care or support of one or more family members
 - Can be shared with other family members who meet the eligibility criteria
 - Care or support means:

- providing psychological or emotional support; or
- arranging for care by a third party care provider; or
- directly providing or participating in the care.
- Benefits paid to care or support one of the following family members:
 - your child or the child of your spouse or common-law partner
 - your wife/husband or common-law partner
 - your mother/father
 - your father's wife/mother's husband; or
 - the common-law partner of your father/mother
- Duration of benefits
 - up to a maximum of 6 weeks of benefits within the period of the 26 weeks that start from the Sunday of the week stated on the doctor certificate indicating a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death.

GENERAL NOTES

RIGHTS

1. BC Employment Standards Act

- maximum combined maternity and parental leave entitlement is 52 weeks, and may include an additional 6 weeks for extended maternity leave and/or 5 weeks for extended parental leave;
- none of these leaves is cause for employment termination;
- none of these leaves is cause for change in employment conditions without the consent of the employee;
- on return to work, the employee is entitled to return to the same or a comparable position;
- the period of leave is considered continuous employment for the purposes of:
 - a. seniority;
 - b. termination pay;
 - c. wage increases.

2. Collective Agreement

In all of the above leaves of absence, the collective agreement may be superior in **rights** or **benefits**. However, the ESA is the minimum and can not be diminished by the collective agreement. Be sure to contact the local to determine the rights and benefits from the collective agreement.

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BENEFITS BINDER 2006-07\LEAVES

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