



Maternity (Pregnancy)/Parental Leave Guide

Human Resources

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*****It is our ongoing commitment to deliver accurate and prompt service to our employees. If you have *any* feedback regarding the information in this document or how we can better outline the process, please send an email to benefits.hr@lakeheadu.ca.**

This comprehensive document has been compiled to facilitate the seamless navigation of the maternity/parental leave process, offering you peace of mind during the planning phase. Our aim is to provide you with a reference guide to ensure the systematic completion of necessary information over time and to enhance your awareness of entitlements.

This document includes check boxes throughout the steps that you may utilise for your own tracking to ensure you have covered all the details. Our administrators will collaborate with you along the way of planning your leave, but it is important that you understand these details and how you are impacted.

Important Information to review as you prepare for your Pregnancy/Maternity and Parental Leave:

1. [ESA Guide – Pregnancy and Parental Leave](#)
2. [Lakehead University's Workplace Leaves of Absences Policy](#) for Non-union employees (Refer to section 1)
3. Refer to the Collective Agreement of your union (If applicable). See our [Collective Agreements webpage](#) to select the one that applies to you.
4. Get familiar with Employment Insurance if you have not already. [Visit this page](#) for more information. Please note our office cannot advise you on EI benefits.
5. Ensure you understand your rights while on this leave.

If you are a **Union** employee, please ensure you review the article in your collective agreement respective to Maternity/Pregnancy/Parental leave.

To qualify for this leave, you must have started employment at least 13 weeks before the date the baby is expected to be born (the "due date").

You must provide the University with **at least** two weeks' notice of your intent to take pregnancy/parental leave. Ordinarily, the latest a pregnancy leave can begin is on the baby's due date. However, if the baby is born earlier than the due date, the latest the leave can begin is the day the baby is born.

After you have reviewed all the above information and connected with Human Resources for any questions you may have, you can now proceed with initiating and finalizing your leave with Lakehead University.

Follow These Steps to Set Up Your Leave with HR

1. Notify your supervisor AND Human Resources

I have discussed with my supervisor my intent to take pregnancy/parental leave.

Once you have reviewed the information above, connect with your supervisor to complete a Leave of Absence form (you can retrieve a new fillable PDF of the LOA form by visiting our [HR Related Forms webpage](#)).

To complete this form, please ensure you have filled out all applicable information:

1. Full name
2. Department
3. ID
4. Type of Leave: Maternity/Parental
5. Leave paid or unpaid: HR can complete this.
6. Leave of absence dates:
 - a. Maternity
 - i. The latest a pregnancy leave can begin is on the baby's due date. However, if the baby is born earlier than the due date, the latest the leave can begin is the day the baby is born. Refer to the [ESA Guide](#) for more information. The maternity leave portion would end when you would like, up to a maximum length of 17 weeks.
 - b. Parental (should you wish to extend the duration of your leave)
 - i. The parental portion of the leave must begin immediately after maternity/pregnancy leave ends. There can be no break in between.
 - ii. This can be up to a maximum length of 61 weeks.
 - c. If changes are to be made to the start date, two weeks' notice is required.
 - d. If changes to the start date are a result of early birth, still birth, miscarriage, that occurs prior to the due date, written notice is required.
 - e. If changes are to be made to the end date, four weeks' written notice is required.
7. Your signature
8. Your supervisor's signature.
9. Department head signature (if they are not your supervisor).

I have submitted a completed and signed LOA to Human Resources via email.

The form must be sent to our office via email, fully completed and signed. You must send it to formsubmission.hr@lakeheadu.ca.

A Human Resources administrator will intake the leave of absence form. They will review and verify the leave dates to ensure compliance with our Workplace Leave of Absence policy (if non-union)/the Collective Agreement (if applicable) and the Employment Standards Act. We will contact you regarding any corrections made on the form.

Once the form is authorized by Human Resources, we can move forward with the next steps.



2. Determine Top-up Benefit Eligibility

Lakehead University has supplemental top-up benefits for pregnancy and/or parental leave. To learn about top-up benefits available and to determine if you qualify, please refer to the appropriate Collective Agreement or University Policy.

- [Collective Agreements](#)
- [Workplace Leaves of Absence \(Non-union employees\)](#)

I have determined my top-up benefit eligibility.

Should you qualify for top-up benefits, an HR administrator will send you the applicable Top-up Agreement form to sign.

(If applicable) I have received and signed the Top-up Agreement form to sign.

***Human Resources requires a copy of the EI Claim Summary from you **before** any top-up payments can be calculated and entered into our system. It is important that, if applicable, the Top-up Agreement form is signed and returned to the administrator.

3. Finalize Benefit Details for the Duration of Your Leave

- [ESA Guide – Pregnancy and Parental Leave](#) (Draw your attention to the right to continue to participate in benefit plans section toward the bottom of the page)
- Refer to the Collective Agreement of your union (If applicable). See our [Collective Agreements webpage](#) to select the one that applies to you.

Our Human Resources Administrator will prepare an official letter for you regarding your benefits while on your leave. This letter provides a benefit breakdown and includes a fillable form for you to indicate the premiums you wish to continue paying for while on the unpaid portion of your leave.

It is standard for this letter to be provided **once the previous steps are completed** and is not provided prior. You may estimate the cost for the benefits by viewing the deduction amounts on your pay stub. Please note that GreenShield benefits, and Group Life Insurance are maintained for the duration of your leave, including unpaid portions.

I have received my benefit continuation letter from a Human Resources Administrator.

I have completed and sent the benefit continuation letter back to the HR Administrator via email.

4. Apply for Employment Insurance (EI)

Human Resources requires some information on the EI benefits you are receiving. The EI you are receiving is used to calculate top-up payments after the first week your leave begins. **If you are not eligible for top-up payments, please skip this step.**

Your Record of Employment will be provided electronically from Lakehead University to Service Canada. Apply as soon as possible after you stop working. If you apply more than 4 weeks after your last day of work, you may lose benefits.

Visit this [Service Canada website](#) to learn about EI benefits for Maternity/Parental leave and see if you qualify to receive this benefit.

I reviewed the EI benefit details.

We require a copy of the EI Claim Summary from you **before** any top-up payments can be facilitated. Please note your first week of top-up is paid at 95% of your salary. After this, the payments are calculated at 95% of your salary **less** EI benefits. It is common for there to be a delay in processing remaining top-up.

Please note that you cannot apply for EI until the day your leave starts.

I have successfully applied for Employment Insurance (EI)

After applying, please regularly check your account for updates. Our office will do our best to remind you to send us your EI statement, but the sooner you locate the statement and send us a screenshot, the faster we can calculate the rest of your top-up payments.

EI does not provide you with an actual document. You will need to screenshot the claim summary. It should include the start date, end date, and weekly benefit rate. Below is an example of what to look for. When you go to the main portal of the Employment Insurance page, on the landing page, go to "Your Claims". You will have an option that says, "Latest Claim", under that is a link that says, "My Latest Claim" and the information above should be there-- again, this will not be available until after the application is complete and your leave has already begun.

Start Date of Claim:	May 01, 2022
Type of Benefit:	Maternity / Parental benefits
Total Insurable Earnings:	\$21,976
Benefit Rate:	\$549
Federal Tax:	\$60
End Date of Claim:	April 29, 2023
Upcoming Extended Parental Benefit Rate:	\$330

I have provided the HR administrator with a copy of my EI statement.

5. Dependent Management and Beneficiaries

You can now add your baby to your benefits manually through your GSC Everywhere account! You can do this within 30 days of the life event (in this case, the day of birth and onward).

Please visit our [Spouse and Dependent Information Webpage](#) where you can review:

- Eligibility Criteria
- Coordination of Benefits
- Update your Spouse or Dependent Information

If you wish to update your life insurance beneficiaries (if applicable), please contact benefits.hr@lakeheadu.ca

If you wish to review your CAAT Pension Plan's beneficiary information, please login to your CAAT DBplus dashboard and go to "Member Information" and then click "Beneficiary Information."

6. Your Return Back to Work

It is your decision when you want to return to work within the given maximum length for this leave. As per ESA, should you want to change the date your leave was scheduled to end, your supervisor and our office require specific notice.

- a. If you want to return **earlier** than your original scheduled return, you must provide your supervisor and Human Resources with a **new written notice of at least four weeks before the new, earlier day.**
- b. If you want to return to work **later** than the date you were scheduled to return, you must give your supervisor and Human Resources a new **written notice at least four weeks before the date you were originally going to return.**
- c. Please note, you cannot schedule a new return date that would result in taking a longer leave than what you are entitled to as set out in ESA.

Use of Vacation Days

Employees who earn paid vacation days as set out in their employment contract/collective agreement, will continue to accrue vacation days for the duration of their maternity/parental leave. You are also entitled to the unused vacation days accrued prior to the commencement of your leave. **Ensure you discuss with your supervisor on what the use of this time looks like for you and the operational needs of the department.** It is important to note that the use of vacation time will be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time.

Returning as Scheduled

If there are no changes to your original scheduled return to work date, Human Resources does not require any notification. It is the responsibility between the supervisor and employee to inform Human Resources of any changes in your end date as noted in Section 6. We will use the Leave of Absence approved for your leave as our indicator of when you are returning.