

CHAPTER FOUR – MATERNITY PROTECTION ENTITLEMENTS

(Should be read in conjunction with the [Introduction](#), [General Provisions for All Schemes](#), and [Definitions](#))

1. Maternity Protection Entitlements

- 1.1 All pregnant teachers, who give birth to a live child, or who reach their 24th week of pregnancy, are entitled to 26 weeks Maternity Leave and 16 weeks additional unpaid Maternity Leave.
- 1.2 Maternity Leave will ordinarily begin on such day as the pregnant teacher selects, unless medically certified that the leave should commence on a particular date. However, the commencement date must not be later than 2 weeks before the end of the week of the baby's expected birth and four weeks must be taken after the end of the week of the baby's birth. For these purposes, Saturday is regarded as the end of a week. Teachers may also take cognisance of the DSP rules whereby eligibility for Maternity Benefit does not normally commence until the 24th week of pregnancy and ends when Maternity Leave ceases. Further details on the DSP regulations are available directly from that Department.
- 1.3 If the birth occurs in a week before a teacher has commenced her Maternity Leave then the Maternity Leave must commence immediately and the employer must be informed.
- 1.4 If the birth occurs after the expected date and there are less than 4 weeks of Maternity Leave remaining, then the employer/DSP must be informed and the Maternity Leave will be extended to ensure that 4 weeks Maternity Leave are taken following the birth.

2. Statutory Additional Unpaid Leave

- 2.1 Commencing on the day immediately following completion of Maternity Leave, a teacher has the option to take a maximum of 16 consecutive weeks statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave.
- 2.2 A teacher who avails of statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave may be entitled to receive PRSI credits. The Application [SW1](#) for Maternity Leave Credits which is available from the DSP must be completed by the teacher and employer and returned to the DSP. It is the teacher's responsibility to apply for these credits and not the employer.

3. Non-Statutory Additional Unpaid Leave to the end of the school year

- 3.1 A teacher who, on completion of Maternity Leave and statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave may apply for non-statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year.
- 3.2 In the context of this leave the end of the school year is taken to mean August 31st. For example, if all the other leave types referred to above were to expire by May 4th, and the teacher in question wished to remain out of school for the rest of the school year, rather than return for a short period, then the non-statutory additional unpaid leave must continue until August 31st inclusive.
- 3.3 This leave type is not a statutory entitlement and it is subject to obtaining written sanction from the employer at least six weeks in advance of an intention to avail of this leave.

4. Sequence in which leave must be taken

- 4.1 The sequencing arrangements for maternity entitlements are:
- a) Maternity Leave (26 weeks)
 - b) Any statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave (maximum of 16 weeks)
 - c) Non-Statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave to end of school year (to Aug 31st)
- 4.2 When all associated leave types have been fully utilised, as appropriate to each individual, then the next working day becomes the date of resumption for the teacher.

5. Application Procedures for Teachers

- 5.1 Application for Maternity Leave both paid and unpaid should be made by teachers to their employer at least 6 weeks in advance of commencement of the leave on the prescribed application form which is attached at [Appendix A](#) of this chapter.

5.2 The applicant is responsible for completion of the [MB1](#) Form and should ensure that the school/ETB completes the employer's portion before forwarding to the DSP at least 6 weeks prior to the start date. The MB1 Form should **NOT** be sent to the Department of Education and Skills.

6. OLCS Procedures where applicable and calculations for Employers

6.1 Employers must enter absences on the OLCS at least 6 weeks prior to the start date for Maternity Leave.

6.2 The procedure for recording Maternity Leave absences on the OLCS is attached at [Appendix B](#) of this chapter.

6.3 An example Maternity Leave case and calculation worksheet is attached at [Appendix C](#) of this chapter.

7. Pay Arrangements and Maternity Benefit

7.1 Continuation of salary during Maternity Leave is not a statutory entitlement and is contingent upon compliance with the agreed terms and conditions of this scheme.

7.2 Any action which necessitates an adjustment to a teacher's pay should be notified to the Department/ETB immediately.

7.3 Under the DSP regulations any [Maternity Benefit](#) payable by the DSP to PRSI contributors at the full rate (Class A), will issue directly to the teacher in question. A deduction from salary equivalent to the maximum weekly rate of Maternity Benefit payable to the teacher will initially be applied by the Department/ETB.

7.4 Under the DSP regulations, PRSI contributors at the modified rate (Class D) have no entitlement to Maternity Benefit. Therefore no deduction is applied to their salary and they remain on their ordinary rate of pay.

7.5 If the amount of benefit payable to the teacher is less than the maximum, or if a person is not entitled to any Maternity Benefit, they should notify their payroll section immediately to ensure that the salary adjustments are correct. Changes to the automatic deduction can be made provided the teacher furnishes a copy of the DSP's written notice of the actual Benefit rate applicable, if any, to the relevant payroll. Deductions, where appropriate, will be made fortnightly during the period of paid leave up to a maximum of 26 weeks for Maternity Leave. If the absences are recorded late any arrears due will have to be deducted from salary after the date of notification.

- 7.6 Maternity Benefit payment will be treated as taxable income.
- 8. Time off for ante-natal care appointments, post-natal care appointments and attendance at ante-natal classes.**
- 8.1 Pregnant teachers are entitled to time off work, without loss of pay, to:
- a) attend medical appointments related to ante-natal care,
 - b) attend one set of ante-natal classes in a working career, other than the last 3 classes in such a set, and
 - c) attend medical appointments related to post-natal care within 14 weeks of the birth.
- 8.2 If a pregnant teacher misses particular ante-natal classes in a set then it is permitted that during a subsequent pregnancy, or pregnancies, she may attend classes equivalent to those missed.
- 8.3 An expectant father is entitled to time off work, without loss of pay, to attend the last two ante-natal classes in a set attended by the pregnant mother.
- 8.4 Two weeks' notice should be given for each absence referred to in this section and appropriate certification provided.
- 9. Health and Safety of pregnant, post-natal, and breastfeeding teachers**
- 9.1 The [Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) and the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work \(General Application\) Regulations 2007](#) (S.I. No. 299 of 2007) place an obligation on the employer, as soon as it is notified by the teacher that she is pregnant, to assess any specific risk in the workplace to that teacher and to ensure that the pregnant, post-natal, or breastfeeding teacher (within a 26 week period after the birth of the child) is not exposed to any agents, processes or working conditions that will damage either the safety or health of the pregnant teacher and/or that of the developing child.
- 9.2 The teacher should be informed of the results of the risk assessment and the measures to be taken. The detailed arrangement regarding the respective responsibilities of the employer and the teacher in relation to health and safety leave are contained in Sections 17 – 20 of the Maternity Protection Act 1994.
- 9.3 Where a risk has been identified and it is not possible to remove it, protective and preventive measures should be taken to safeguard the health of any teacher to whom the provisions apply, such as:

- a) a temporary adjustment in the working environment of the teacher concerned so that exposure to the risk is avoided, or
- b) in the event that such adjustment is not possible, by moving the teacher to suitable alternative work which does not entail the risk, or
- c) in the event that such alternative work is not available, and having consulted with and received certification from the Occupational Health Service (OHS), by granting the teacher health and safety leave. The teacher is entitled to receive, on request, a certificate stating the reasons why she has been granted leave. The certificate must also state the start date and expected end date of the leave. Maternity Related Health & Safety Leave can be granted in respect of more than one period, provided the conditions outlined in 9.1 and 9.2 above are fulfilled for each such period concerned.

9.4 A sample certificate of risk form is supplied in the schedule to the [Maternity Protection \(Health and Safety Leave Certification\) Regulations 1995 \(SI No. 19 of 1995\)](#).

9.5 Health and Safety Leave will cease when:

- a) the teacher concerned commences Maternity Leave, or
- b) the teacher is no longer an employee to whom Part III of the Maternity Protection Act, 1994 applies (i.e. she notifies the employer that she is not pregnant, has not given birth within the last fourteen weeks or is not within 26 weeks of the birth and breastfeeding, as defined in the Act); or
- c) the risk ceases

9.6 Specific questions on health and safety issues should be addressed to the [Health and Safety Authority](#) (HSA), www.hsa.ie, which can provide advice, assistance and encouragement aimed at the prevention of work related accidents and the promotion of occupational safety, health and wellbeing.

9.7 A teacher who makes PRSI contributions at the modified rate (Class D), and has no entitlement to [Health and Safety Benefit](#) from the DSP, will be entitled to full pay while on health and safety leave. A teacher who makes PRSI contributions at the full rate (Class A) and who is entitled to Health and Safety Benefit from the DSP will be paid full salary by the Department of Education and Skills for the first 21 days and thereafter will be paid full salary less any benefit paid by DSP. [HSB1 Form](#) .

10. Father's Leave: Entitlement of male teachers to leave in the event of the death of the mother while on Maternity Leave

10.1 In the event of the death of the mother within 40 weeks of the birth of a living child, a male teacher who is the father of the child is entitled to leave as follows:

- a) if the mother dies before the end of the 24th week following the week of the birth of her child, the father is entitled to paid leave up to the 24th week. At the end of this period he is entitled to apply for a further 16 consecutive weeks additional unpaid leave commencing immediately or
- b) if the mother dies after the 24th week following the week of the birth of her child, the father is entitled to unpaid leave up to the 40th week following the week of the birth of the child.

10.2 The sequencing arrangement outlined in Section 4 will also apply to the father's leave:

- a) Father's Leave (the transfer to the father of any balance remaining of the mother's Maternity Leave entitlement up to the 24th week following the week of birth)
- b) Statutory additional unpaid father's leave (the transfer to the father of any balance remaining of the mother's additional unpaid leave up to the 40th week following the week of birth)
- c) Non-statutory additional unpaid father's leave to end of school year (Aug 31st)

10.3 The leave should normally commence within 7 days of the event which has created the father's entitlement to the leave but the employer should exercise discretion appropriate to the individual circumstances. To avail of his leave entitlement the father in this circumstance may simply apply in writing to his employer. As soon as is reasonably practicable, the employer should be provided with a copy of the death certificate of the mother and a copy of the birth certificate of the child.

11. Postponement of leave entitlements in the event of hospitalisation of the child

11.1 In the event of the hospitalisation of the child, a request may be made to the employer for postponement of

- a) Maternity Leave
- b) statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave

c) father's leave

d) statutory additional unpaid father's leave

11.2 Maternity Leave can only be postponed after at least 14 weeks of the leave has expired, 4 weeks of which must have been taken after the week of the child's birth. Postponement of the leave will require the absent teacher to resume duties in the school during the period of postponement.

11.3 An application for postponement must be made in writing to the employer, accompanied by certification from the hospital in which the child is hospitalised. The employer must notify the teacher in writing as soon as possible of its decision. If the leave is postponed, the employer and the teacher must agree the date of return to work.

11.4 The Department/ETB, and the DSP must be notified immediately if the teacher is to return to work to facilitate pay adjustment and cease any benefit from the DSP the finalisation of payment to the replacement teacher.

11.5 The postponed leave must be taken in one continuous period commencing not later than 7 days after the discharge of the child from hospital. The maximum period for postponement of the leave is 6 months.

11.6 The teacher must provide the employer with a letter or other appropriate document from the hospital, or the child's doctor, confirming the child's discharge date.

11.7 If the teacher becomes ill having returned to work and before he/she has taken the postponed leave, he/she will be considered to have started the postponed leave on the first day of absence due to illness unless the teacher notifies the employer that he/she does not wish to begin the postponed leave. If this happens he/she will forfeit the postponed leave and the absence will be treated as Sick Leave. The normal procedures in relation to Sick Leave should then be followed, including the furnishing of a medical certificate where appropriate.

12. Termination of statutory additional unpaid Maternity/father's leave in the event of sickness of the mother/father

12.1 An application to take statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave, or statutory additional unpaid father's leave may be withdrawn in writing, for any reason, up to 4 weeks prior to the proposed commencement date for such leave. If the 4 week

cancellation period provided for in the Act has passed, entitlement to withdraw an application has been lost. However, in the event of illness, a formal request can still be made to the employer, even after a period of such leave has commenced, to terminate the leave in favour of a certified Sick Leave absence.

- 12.2 Approval of such a request to terminate the leave is at the discretion of the employer. If approved, the employer and the teacher must agree the date for any such termination of the leave. The date agreed cannot be earlier than the first day of certified illness and not later than when the terminated leave would otherwise have ended. The normal procedures in relation to Sick Leave will then apply. The teacher will not be entitled subsequently to take the additional unpaid Maternity Leave or any part of it not taken at the time of commencement of Sick Leave.
- 12.3 To facilitate necessary pay adjustment the Department/ETB must be notified immediately that the teacher is now on Sick Leave.

13. Provision for breastfeeding

- 13.1 Within a twenty six week period after the birth of the child, a teacher who has returned to work is entitled to one hour per day for the purpose of breastfeeding. The time off, without loss of pay, may be taken as follows:
- a) one break of 60 minutes, or
 - b) two breaks of 30 minutes each, or
 - c) three breaks of 20 minutes each
- 13.2 A teacher who qualifies for this provision must notify the employer in writing of her intention to avail of such breaks. Notice should be given 4 weeks prior to the return to work following maternity related leave under the terms of the Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools. A copy of the birth certificate of the child must be submitted with the application for breastfeeding breaks. It is a matter for the employer to make the necessary arrangements with the teacher to facilitate the taking of the breastfeeding breaks.

14. Fixed Term/Fixed Purpose Appointments

- 14.1 A teacher who is on a fixed term/fixed purpose contract of employment shall have full Maternity Leave entitlements during the term of the contract. The granting or taking of Maternity Leave entitlements should not affect a fixed term/fixed purpose appointment or the renewing of such an appointment.
- 14.2 Maternity related entitlements shall cease on expiry of the contract unless that contract is followed directly by a 'back to back' contract in an approved teaching post funded by monies provided by the Oireachtas.

15. Replacement Contracts

- 15.1 All absences covered by the terms of this chapter, of duration of at least one day, are substitutable. Contracts awarded to cover absences outlined in this chapter should make clear reference to the fact that there are circumstances where the replacement appointment may have to be terminated in the event of the absent teacher returning to duties earlier than initially expected. (e.g. an absent teacher postpones part of the Maternity Leave due to the hospitalisation of the newborn baby).

16. Status during Leave

- 16.1 A teacher absent on any of the leave types referred to in this chapter, with the exception of non-statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave is deemed to have been in employment at that time. Paid absences are fully reckonable for all purposes including seniority, determination of panel rights etc. Statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave is reckonable for all purposes, with the exception of superannuation. Absence on non-statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year is not reckonable for any purpose including accrual of annual leave.

17. Vacant Posts of Responsibility

- 17.1 A teacher absent on any of the leave types covered by the terms of this chapter should be notified regarding vacant Posts of Responsibility which are to be filled in the school.

18. Employment during Maternity Leave

- 18.1 Teachers are not permitted to engage in any paid employment during the course of their Maternity Leave. Under the DSP regulations Maternity Benefit may be terminated in the event that paid employment is taken up while on Maternity Leave. Any salary payment from the Department/ETB may have to be reviewed in the event of termination of Maternity Benefit arising from non-compliance with the terms of the DSP scheme.

19. Resumption of Duties

- 19.1 The employer should provide the absent teacher with a written statement of their absence and expected date of resumption of duties. Four weeks before the teacher is due to return to the workplace written notice should be given to the employer confirming the intention to resume duties from that date.

Appendix A

Application Form for Maternity Protection Entitlements

Application Forms/Supporting Documentation should NOT be submitted to the Department of Education and Skills. This Application Form should be fully completed and retained in the school/ETB with any other relevant documentation for record and audit purposes.

This form can be used to apply for Maternity and/or statutory and/or non-statutory unpaid Maternity Leave. It should be completed and submitted at least 6 weeks before the leave is due to commence.

If the applicant pays Class A PRSI contributions a completed [MB 1 & 2](#) Forms should be submitted to the DSP. This Form is available from the DSP or online at: www.welfare.ie

APPLICATION IN RESPECT OF:

Maternity Leave Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave Non-Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave

Please tick as appropriate:

Name: _____ School: _____

Roll No: _____ Contact No: _____ PPSN: _____

Expected date of birth (EDB) ____/____/____

(Medical certificate must be enclosed confirming expected date of birth)

I wish to commence my Maternity Leave on ____/____/____

State the number of days statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave that are to be taken (if any):

_____ (Consecutive days and to include weekends)

Statutory Additional Unpaid Maternity Leave from _____ to _____ (enter inclusive dates)

A teacher on completion of Maternity Leave and statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave may apply for non-statutory additional unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year'.

Non-Statutory Additional Unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year from _____ to 31st August _____.

I wish to apply for the above leave in accordance with the scheme as set out in the *Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools – Edition 2*.

Signature of teacher: _____ Date: _____

Approval and Verification by Employer

I certify that I have approved the above leave in accordance with the scheme as set out in the *Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools – Edition 2* and I have retained on file the following documents for audit purposes:

- 1) All applications for Maternity Leave entitlements.
- 2) Certificate showing expected date of birth.
- 3) A copy of the completed MB1 and 2 Forms

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(On behalf of Employer)

Appendix B

Procedures relating to the Recording of Maternity Leave on the OLCS

- 1) Click Add under Leave on the OLCS menu
- 2) Enter start and end date of the leave
 - Click Next
- 3) Select the staff member on leave
 - Select the leave category – Family Leave and
 - Select the leave sub category – Maternity Leave
 - The total number of days in the range should read 182 (26 weeks) in respect of Maternity Leave.
 - Click Next
- 4) Enter the expected date of birth
 - Verify [MB 1](#) & [2](#) Forms certification

Information to Assist Employers in the Completion of the MB 2 Forms

- A list of the PRSI weeks for the current and previous year is displayed on OLCS to assist in the completion of the employer's section of the [MB 1](#) & [2](#) Forms.
- Where the total number of PRSI weeks is 52 for the previous tax year and the teacher has been in continuous employment since then, the total number of weeks to be entered is 52. If the total number of weeks is less than 52 and the teacher has a contract to the start date of her Maternity Leave the total number of weeks is the sum of PRSI weeks in the previous tax year plus the PRSI weeks in the current tax year to the start date of her Maternity Leave.
- Enter the appropriate Employers Registered Number, sign, date and stamp accordingly.

Employer Register Number for Post Primary Teachers is 0081300S

Employer Register Number for Primary Teachers is 4000099H

- Click on Add Certificate
- Enter start and end date of the Certificate (This date must match the Start and End date of the Maternity Leave)
- Click Add (A Certificate number is generated which should be recorded on the back of the application and filed)
- Click Next
- Click Add, A confirmation message is displayed.

Note: Additional Maternity Leave (Unpaid)

It is important to note the Unpaid Maternity Leave absences cannot be entered on OLCS until the next working day subsequent to the notification of Maternity Leave. The Department/ETB must first verify the Maternity Leave in order to commence deductions from salary.

Appendix C (i)

Example Maternity Leave Calculation Worksheet

Example based on expected date of birth (EDB) of 15th May 2017; 26 weeks Maternity Leave commencing from 2nd May 2017; followed by 112 days statutory unpaid leave followed by non-statutory unpaid leave to the end of the school year.

| | |
|---|--|
| (1) Expected date of birth (EDB) | 15 th May 2017 |
| 2) Commencement Date (must be at least 2 weeks prior to the end of the week of the baby's expected birth) | 2 nd May 2017 (In this example the latest permissible start date would be 8 th May 2017) |
| (3) Maternity Leave end date (26 weeks from 2 nd May 2017) | 30 th October 2017 |
| (4) Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave (max of 16 weeks= 112 days) | In this example 112 days unpaid leave are to be availed of from 31 st October 2017 to 19 th February 2018 inclusive |
| (5) Resumption Date following Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave | 20 th February 2018 |
| (6) Teachers have a further option of Non Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year (August 31 st) | In this example the teacher chooses to avail of this option Non-Statutory Unpaid leave from 20 th February 2018 to 31 st August 2018 |
| (7) Final date for resumption of duties | 1 st September 2018 |

Appendix C (ii)

Maternity Leave calculation Worksheet for teacher absences

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Name: | | PPS No: |
| (1) Expected date of birth (EDB) | Applicant must provide a Doctor's Certificate to confirm this. | Date : |
| (2) Commencement | Date Maternity Leave is to commence (must be at least 2 weeks prior to the end of the week of the baby's expected birth). | Date : |
| (3) End Date | Count 26 weeks from date of commencement (182 days). | Date : |
| (4) Statutory Unpaid Maternity (commences immediately after ordinary Maternity Leave and includes weekends) | The amount of unpaid leave applied for (up to maximum of 16 weeks = 112 days). | Date : From: _____ To: _____ |
| (5) Provisional resumption date | Determine the next working day which follows the end of the Statutory Unpaid Maternity period. | Date: If leave outlined at (6) below is not availed of, then this is the return to work date. |
| (6) Teachers have a further option of Non-Statutory Unpaid Maternity Leave to the end of the school year | The end of school year is to be understood as meaning the next August 31 st following the date at (5) above. | If non-statutory unpaid leave applies then it runs from the date at (5) above to Aug 31 st . From: _____ to 31 st Aug _____ |
| (7) Final date for resumption of duties | This will be the first working day following the period at (6) above. | Final resumption date: |