

PARENTS LEAVE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Parent's Leave?

Parent's leave entitles each parent to 7 weeks' leave during the first 2 years of a child's life, or in the case of adoption, within 2 years of the placement of the child with the family.

2. What are the criteria to be eligible to take parent's leave?

- Be a *relevant parent* (see 'Who can take parent's leave?' below)
- Take the leave within 104 weeks (2 years) of the birth of the child or in the case of adoption, from the date the child is placed with you (the placement date)
- Give at least **6 weeks' notice** to the University.

3. Who can take parent's leave?

- A parent of the child
- A spouse, civil partner or cohabitant of the parent of the child
- A parent of a donor-conceived child as provided for under section 5 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015
- The adopting parent or parents of a child
- The spouse, civil partner or spouse of the adopting parent of the child (if the parents have not adopted jointly)

4. How can I take parent's leave?

You can take this leave as:

- One continuous period of 7 weeks leave or
- Separate periods of leave not less than one week each

5. How is my pay affected during parent's leave?

From the employer's perspective, parents leave is treated as an unpaid leave of absence and so employees are not paid directly by their employer for the duration of their parent's leave. If an employee has sufficient PRSI contributions, they may be

eligible to receive the weekly parent's benefit. This is administered and paid directly by the Department of Social Protection (DSP).

6. How do I apply for parent's leave?

An employee wishing to avail of parent's leave must give written notice of their intention to take parent's leave, no later than six weeks before the proposed commencement of the leave to their Head of Department or their nominee.

Such notice is provided, by the employee completing the University's [Parents Leave Application Form](#) which can be found on the Human Resources website. The application completed form should be emailed to humanresources@mu.ie

7. How do I apply for parent's benefit?

Employees should apply directly for parent's benefit through the MyWelfare website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/b321b1-parents-benefit/>

8. Can my employer refuse my application for parent's leave?

An employer can only refuse parent's leave if an employee is not entitled to it.

An employer can postpone parent's leave for up to 12 weeks. An employer could postpone your leave for the following reasons:

- Seasonal variations in the volume of work
- No replacement to carry out your work
- The nature of your duties
- The number of other employees also taking parent's leave
- Any other relevant matters

9. What is the difference between parental leave and parents leave?

Parental leave entitles parents to take unpaid leave from work to spend time looking after their children until they reach the age of 12 years. Since 1 September 2020, both parents can take up to 26 weeks parental leave. You can get more information about [parental leave](#) on the HR website.

Parent's leave is specifically for parents during the child's first 2 years.

10. Can I share my parent's leave with my partner?

Both parents have an equal, separate entitlement to parent's leave. You cannot transfer your entitlement to your partner.

Where one parent dies, the surviving parent is entitled to leave for the amount of leave the deceased parent did not take from their 7-week entitlement (this is known as *transferred parent's leave*)