



# Parental leave

## CSIRO STAFF ASSOCIATION

As at April 2024

**The CSIRO Staff Association secured significant improvements to paid parental leave for birth, adoption and long-term foster care. This includes a new minimum paid parental leave standard of 18 weeks for primary carers and 8 weeks for secondary carers, which increases to 18 weeks over the life of the agreement. Parents are able to use this paid leave flexibly up to 24 months after a baby is born or from placement of the child.**

### **What are the paid parental leave entitlements under the Agreement?**

The agreement specifies paid leave entitlements for a 'primary caregiver' and 'secondary caregiver'. Primary and secondary caregivers are entitled to parental leave over the 24-month period from the date of birth or placement of the child.

**Primary caregivers are entitled to 18 weeks paid leave.**

**Secondary caregivers are entitled to 8 weeks paid leave on commencement of the agreement.**

The secondary caregivers entitlement increases to 11 weeks on 1 March 2025, 14 weeks on 1 March 2026 and to 18 weeks on 28 February 2027. In a situation where a secondary carer has accessed this leave prior to the dates specified, their paid leave will be 'topped up' on the relevant dates as long as they are within the 24-month parental leave period.

### **Who is a primary caregiver?**

Under the Agreement, a primary caregiver is a pregnant employee with an entitlement under the *Maternity Leave (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1973*, or an employee (not a casual) who has primary care responsibility for a child born to them, adopted or in their long-term foster care. 'Primary caregiver' is a transitional term until both parents are eligible for 18 weeks paid parental leave.

### **Who is a secondary caregiver?**

Under the agreement, a secondary caregiver is an employee, other than a pregnant employee (and not a casual employee), who has secondary care responsibility for a child born to them, adopted or in their long-term foster care. 'Secondary caregiver' is a transitional term until both parents are eligible for 18 weeks paid parental leave.

### **What if I have a child under 2 years of age at the commencement of the Agreement?**

Parents of a newborn, adopted or fostered child prior to the commencement of the new agreement, and who are within the 24-month parental leave window, are eligible for a 'top up' of additional paid leave available under the new agreement, as long as this is used within the 24-month period.

### **Am I able to take parental leave flexibly?**

Paid parental leave can be accessed flexibly over the 24-month parental leave period and does not have to be taken in a single block. Parental leave may be taken in part days, at half pay, or it can be used to replicate a part-time work arrangement. An employee can also take their leave concurrently with another parent in relation to the same child.



## What additional leave is available for employees who experience premature birth?

Paid premature birth leave is available to a pregnant employee or an employee whose partner has given birth prematurely from the date of birth of the child to what would have been 37 weeks gestation. Paid parental leave is then available to the parents from what would have been 37 weeks gestation, as detailed above.

## What leave is available for employees who experience pregnancy loss?

A pregnant employee who experiences **stillbirth** retains access to full paid and unpaid parental leave. A secondary caregiver who has lost their child through stillbirth can access 2 weeks paid leave and unpaid parental leave.

A pregnant employee, or partner of an employee who experiences **pregnancy loss** between 12 to 20 weeks' gestation that is not a stillbirth is entitled to one weeks' paid leave. This is in addition to paid compassionate leave for miscarriage under the Agreement.

## What happens to any unused paid parental leave?

Paid parental leave that is not used within the 24-month parental leave period will lapse.

## Is there a qualifying period to access paid parental leave entitlements?

No qualifying period requirements apply for employees to access paid parental leave entitlements under the agreement. Even if you are new to the CSIRO, you are able to access these entitlements.

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