

LEAVE POLICY

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OVERVIEW

Pro Health Care and any subsidiary companies (“**Pro Health Care**”) will endeavour to, where possible, approve leave requests by employees in order to best accommodate personal, family, work and community commitments, without compromising the achievement of Pro Health Care’s business objectives.

This policy sets out information on various types of leave that arise during employment.

Leave entitlements are outlined under the National Employment Standards in the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (“the Fair Work Act”), in addition, employees may have entitlement to leave under a modern award or State legislation (such as long service leave legislation).

This policy sets out employees’ entitlements to leave and the manner in which leave must be requested by employees. To the extent of any inconsistency between this policy and the legislation referred to above, the provisions of the legislation shall prevail.

In so far as this policy imposes any obligations on Pro Health Care (i.e. those in addition to those set out in legislation), those obligations are not contractual and do not give rise to any contractual rights. To the extent that this policy describes benefits and entitlements for employees (i.e. those in addition to those set out in legislation), they are discretionary in nature and are also not intended to be contractual. The terms and conditions of employment that are intended to be contractual are set out in an employee’s written employment contract.

Pro Health Care may unilaterally introduce, vary, remove or replace this policy at any time.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

Permanent full-time employees are entitled to 4 weeks’ paid annual leave per year (pro rata for permanent part-time employees), which accrues progressively throughout the year according to an employee’s ordinary hours of work and is cumulative from year to year.

Employees covered by the Nurses Award 2010 are entitled to five weeks’ annual leave per year, or six weeks if they are a “shiftworker” within the meaning of the award.

Casual employees are not entitled to paid annual leave.

Procedure for Requesting Annual Leave

All requests for annual leave must be approved in advance by Pro Health Care. The employee’s relevant immediate manager will consider the employee’s request in conjunction with the business and operational needs of the workplace.

Employees should complete a request for annual leave via a completed Leave Form, providing, where possible, four weeks’ notice of their leave. An employee must have an accrued leave balance of at least the amount of leave the employee proposes to take. Annual leave may be taken in advance of entitlement if special circumstances exist and with the express approval of management, noting that any such leave taken in advance will be deductible from termination payments should employment with the Pro Health Care cease prior to entitlement being achieved.

Simply making a request for annual leave does not automatically entitle an employee to take such leave. Pro Health Care may refuse to authorise a period of annual leave on the grounds of the operational requirements of the business or in the event that the employee has provided insufficient notice of their desire to take leave. Pro Health Care will not unreasonably refuse to approve a

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period of annual leave or deny an employee a period of annual leave which has already been authorised.

Pro Health Care Requiring Employees to Take Annual Leave

Pro Health Care may direct an employee to take annual leave in certain circumstances, which will be determined by the applicable industrial instrument (if any) covering the employee.

Termination of Employment

An employee is entitled to receive payment for the balance of their accrued but untaken annual leave when they cease employment.

If an employee does not give the period of notice required under the applicable industrial instrument (if any) covering the employee, then Pro Health Care may deduct from wages due to the employee up to the amount allowed under the applicable industrial instrument (if any).

PERSONAL/CARER’S LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

Personal/carer’s leave refers to both sick and carer’s leave. The entitlement to receive personal/carer’s leave arises as follows:

- Where an employee is unfit to work because of personal illness or injury; or
- An employee is required to provide care or support to a member of their immediate family or household due personal illness, injury or an unexpected emergency.

For the purposes of this Policy, ‘immediate family’ means a spouse, former spouse, de-facto partner, former de-facto partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the employee; or a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the spouse, de-facto partner or former de-facto partner of the employee.

Permanent full-time employees are entitled to 10 days paid personal/carer’s leave per year (pro rata for permanent part-time employees) at the base rate of pay, as defined under the Fair Work Act. An employee’s entitlement to personal/carer’s leave accrues progressively throughout the year according to the number of ordinary hours that the employee works and is cumulative from year to year.

Casual employees are not eligible for paid personal/carer’s leave.

Procedure for Requesting Personal/Carer’s Leave

The following procedures apply:

- An employee must, where practicable, advise their manager by phone call (not text message) of their inability to attend for work prior to the commencement of their shift and as far as possible the nature of the illness or situation and the estimated period of absence.
- Pro Health Care may require an employee to produce a medical certificate or other satisfactory evidence to prove their inability to attend for duty on the days in respect of which personal/carer’s leave is claimed. For example, a Medical Certificate or Statutory Declaration is required to be produced for all absences exceeding two or more consecutive working days, and/or before and after a week end and/or a public holiday and/or at the Practice Manager’s sole discretion.

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- Failure to produce a medical certificate or other satisfactory evidence may result in the employee's leave not being approved or paid.
- On return to work after a period of personal/carer's leave an employee will be required to complete a Leave Form on the day of their return.

Termination of Employment

An employee is not entitled to receive payment for the balance of their accrued but untaken personal leave when they cease employment.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

You can apply for leave without pay (LWOP) for any reason, if you have no other suitable leave available.

UNPAID CARER'S LEAVE

In addition to the paid entitlements outlined above, casual employees and permanent employees (who have utilised all of their paid personal/carer's leave) can access unpaid carer's leave entitlements for the purposes of providing care or support to a member of his/her immediate family or household due personal illness, injury or an unexpected emergency.

Employees are entitled to a period of up to 2 days unpaid carer's leave for each permissible occasion.

Procedure for Requesting Unpaid Carer's Leave

The procedural requirements for accessing these benefits are as per personal/carer's leave (see above).

UNPAID FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

All employees (including casual employees) are entitled to 5 days unpaid family and domestic violence leave per year to deal with family and domestic violence. It may be taken in a continuous 5-day period or separate periods of one or more days.

This type of leave is available in full on commencement of employment with Pro Health Care, but does not accumulate from year to year.

The employee may take unpaid family and domestic violence leave if:

- The employee is experiencing family and domestic violence; and
- The employee needs to do something to deal with the impact of the family and domestic violence; and
- It is impractical for the employee to do that thing outside the employee's ordinary hours of work.

Family and domestic violence means violent, threatening or other abusive behaviour by a close relative of the employee that seeks to coerce or control the employee and causes them harm or fear.

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A “close relative” for the purposes of this entitlement is a member of the employee’s “immediate family” (as defined above) and those related to the employee according to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship rules.

Pro Health Care will treat requests for unpaid family and domestic violence leave with confidentiality, as far as it is practicable to do so.

Procedure for Requesting Unpaid Family & Domestic Violence Leave

To be eligible for these benefits an employee must comply with the following conditions:

- An employee shall, where practicable, advise their manager by phone call (not text message) of their inability to attend for work prior to the commencement of their shift and as far as possible state the reason for the absence and the estimated period of absence.
- An employee may be required to produce evidence to prove their inability to attend for duty on the days to support the purpose of the unpaid family and domestic violence leave that is claimed. Such evidence may include a document issued by the police, a court or a family violence support service or statutory declaration.

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

The purpose of taking compassionate leave is for an employee to either spend time with an immediate family member who has sustained a life-threatening illness or injury, or to take the compassionate leave as a result of the death of an immediate family or household member. Please refer to Personal/Carer’s Leave for the definition on immediate family or household member for the purposes of this policy.

Compassionate Leave can be taken as a single continuous 2 day period, or 2 separate periods of one day each, or any separate periods that the employee and their manager agree on.

1. Paid Compassionate Leave.

Permanent employees are eligible to access 2 days paid compassionate leave per occasion if a member of their immediate family or household:

- Contracts a personal illness that poses a serious threat to their life; or
- Sustains a personal injury that poses a serious threat to their life; or
- Dies.

Permanent employees are entitled to payment at their base rate of pay for the employee’s ordinary hours of work (as defined under the Fair Work Act) when taking compassionate leave.

Casual employees are not eligible to access paid compassionate leave.

2. Unpaid Compassionate Leave.

Casual employees are eligible to access 2 days compassionate leave per occasion; however, this is unpaid.

Procedure for Requesting Compassionate Leave

To be eligible for these benefits an employee must comply with the following conditions:

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- An employee shall, where practicable, advise their manager by phone call (not text message) of their inability to attend for work prior to the commencement of their shift and as far as possible state the reason for the absence and the estimated period of absence.
- An employee may be required to produce appropriate written documentation as evidence to prove their inability to attend for duty on the days in respect of which compassionate leave is claimed. On return to work after a period of compassionate leave the employee will be required to complete the appropriate leave form.
- Failure to produce satisfactory evidence may result in the employee’s leave not being approved or paid.
- On return to work after a period of Compassionate Leave an employee will be required to complete a Leave Form on the day of their return.

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

Employees, including casual employees, can take community service leave for certain activities such as:

- Voluntary emergency management activities;
- Jury duty (including attendance for jury selection).

With the exception of jury duty, community service leave is unpaid.

Procedure for Requesting Community Service Leave

The following procedures apply:

- An employee shall, where practicable, advise their manager by phone call (not text message) of their inability to attend for work prior to the commencement of their shift and as far as possible state the reason for the absence and the estimated period of absence.
- An employee may be required to produce appropriate written documentation as evidence to prove their inability to attend for duty on the days in respect of which community service leave is claimed.
- Failure to produce satisfactory evidence may result in the employee’s leave not being approved or paid.
- On return to work after a period of Community Service Leave an employee will be required to complete a Leave Form on the day of their return.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

Eligibility & Entitlement

An employee is entitled to long service leave after a long period of working for the same employer. Most employees' entitlement to long service leave comes from long service leave laws in each State or Territory. These laws set out:

- How long an employee has to be working to get long service leave; and
- How much long service leave the employee gets.

In South Australia, A worker who has completed 10 years of service is entitled to 13 weeks long service leave. A further 1.3 weeks leave is granted for each completed year of service thereafter.

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Part-time and casual workers accrue their entitlements just like full-time workers. However, the payment for a period of leave is based on the ordinary hours worked per week or the average weekly hours over the previous 3 years of service.

Long service leave does not accrue during unpaid parental leave or other unpaid leave granted to a worker.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Employees may be able to access a period of unpaid parental leave when their child is born or when they adopt a child. There are also various other forms of leave that support pregnant employees and new parents.

Eligibility & Entitlement

Employees with at least 12 months service with Pro Health Care can access unpaid parental leave for a period of up to 12 months. Employees can also request an extension of an additional 12 months leave (however such additional leave is subject to approval from Pro Health Care and can be refused on reasonable grounds).

Parental leave can be shared between two parents, however the entitlement to parental leave cannot be more than 24 months in total (whether this is taken as a single continuous period by one parent or by both parents as two consecutive periods of leave).

Casual employees are only eligible for parental leave if they have worked for Pro Health Care on a regular and systematic basis for at least than 12 months, and have a reasonable expectation of continuing employment on a regular and systematic basis.

Either parent can access unpaid parental leave once the child is born, provided they have primary responsibility for the care of the child at that time. However, a maximum of eight weeks of parental leave may be taken by both parents at the same time (in periods of no less than two weeks on each occasion), in which case both parents just need to have some responsibility for caring for the child (this is called 'concurrent parental leave').

When Can Parental Leave Begin?

Where the pregnant employee is the only parent taking parental leave, parental leave may start up to six weeks before the birth of the child and must not start later than the date of birth of the child.

If the employee who isn't pregnant is the only parent taking the parental leave, the leave must start on the date of birth of the child, unless:

- The employee has responsibility for the care of the child; and
- Their partner is pregnant and is unemployed.

In such a scenario the leave has to be taken within 12 months after the birth of the child.

Where both parents are taking parental leave, and the pregnant employee is taking the first period of leave, it may start up to six weeks before the birth of the child and must not start later than the date of birth of the child.

Where a non-pregnant parent is taking the first period of leave it must start on the date of birth of the child.

Concurrent parental leave can start:

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- On the birth of the child
- Earlier than this date, if Pro Health Care agrees, or
- Later than this date, but it has to be within 12 months of the birth of the child.

Unpaid parental leave usually has to be taken in a single continuous period. This means the other parent may need to start their unpaid parental leave the next working day after the first parent's leave ends. There are some exceptions to this, including for flexible unpaid parental leave.

There are also special rules regarding when parental leave commences in situations of premature birth, where there are birth-related complications, or where the child dies within the first two years of their life, see further below.

Parental leave can be taken as continuous parental leave or flexible parental leave (or both).

What is Flexible Parental Leave?

An employee can take up to 30 days of their 12 month unpaid parental leave as “flexible parental leave”, at any time up to their child’s second birthday.

Flexible unpaid parental leave can be taken as:

- A single continuous period of one day or longer; or
- Separate periods of one day or longer each.

Flexible parental leave can be taken within the first 24 months of the birth of the child. However, the employee’s entitlement to continuous unpaid parental leave will end on the first day that the employee takes flexible unpaid parental leave. This means that if an employee is planning on taking a continuous period of unpaid parental leave, they should do so before they take any flexible unpaid parental leave.

An employee can take flexible unpaid parental leave after taking one or more periods of continuous unpaid parental leave. The total of both periods can’t be longer than 12 months.

An employee can take flexible unpaid parental leave on the same day as the other parent is on unpaid parental leave.

Procedure for Requesting Continuous Parental Leave

At least 10 weeks prior to the intended start date of the leave, the employee must provide Pro Health Care with written notification of their intention to take unpaid parental leave, along with a medical certificate stating that the employee or their partner is pregnant and confirming the expected date of birth of the child. This written notification must also specify the intended start and end dates of the leave. If the employee is unable to provide 10 weeks’ notice, they must provide as much notice as possible.

At least four weeks before the intended start date of the leave, the employee must also confirm the intended start and end dates of the leave with Pro Health Care and advise of any changes to these dates. If the employee is unable to provide four weeks’ notice, they must provide as much notice as possible.

When taking concurrent parental leave, employees must provide at least 10 weeks’ notice to Pro Health Care for their first period of concurrent leave. For second and later periods, they need to provide at least 4 weeks’ notice. If an employee can't provide these notice periods, they need to provide as much notice as possible.

Procedure for Requesting Flexible Parental Leave

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An employee who wants to take flexible parental leave needs to give written notice to Pro Health Care either:

- At the same time they give notice of their continuous parental leave (usually 10 weeks before the start of the continuous parental leave), or
- At least 10 weeks before the start of their flexible parental leave.

Notice can also be provided later if Pro Health Care agrees.

When they give notice, an employee needs to tell Pro Health Care the total number of days of flexible parental leave they intend to take. An employee can take up to 30 days of flexible parental leave.

An employee must confirm their flexible parental leave dates with Pro Health Care at least four weeks before they start their leave. If there have been any changes to the dates, the employee should tell Pro Health Care as soon as possible. If an employee can't give four weeks' notice, they need to give as much notice as possible.

Requesting an Extension of Parental Leave

If an employee is seeking an extension to their unpaid parental leave beyond the initial 12 months, they must provide their request to Pro Health Care in writing at least four weeks before the expected end date of the parental leave. A written response will be provided to the request no later than 21 days after the date on which the request is received. The request will only be refused on reasonable business grounds.

Factors relevant in determining reasonable business grounds include:

- The effect on the workplace and the business of approving the request, including the financial impact and the impact on efficiency, productivity and customer service;
- The capacity to organise work among existing staff;
- The capacity to recruit a replacement employee or the practicality of the arrangements that may need to be put in place to accommodate the request.

ADOPTION LEAVE

Parents who are adopting a child under the age of 16 may also access the unpaid parental leave entitlements detailed above. The eligibility criteria are the same as for other types of unpaid parental leave.

At least 10 weeks prior to the date on which the employee intends to take adoption leave, the employee must provide Pro Health Care with written notification of their intention to take adoption leave, along with documentary evidence stating the expected date of placement of the child. This written notification must specify the intended start and end dates of the leave. At least four weeks before the intended start date specified in this written notification, the employee must also confirm the intended start and end dates of the leave with Pro Health Care and advise of any changes to these dates.

Adoption leave must commence on the date of placement of the child (although "pre-adoption" leave is also available, see further below).

When taking concurrent adoption leave, employees must provide at least 10 weeks' notice to Pro Health Care for their first period of concurrent leave. For second and later periods, they need to provide at least 4 weeks' notice. If an employee can't provide these notice periods, they need to provide as much notice as possible.

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Flexible parental leave is also available for adoption leave, and an employee can take up to 30 days of their 12 month unpaid parental leave entitlement as flexible parental leave, at any time up to the second anniversary of their adopted child’s placement. The same rules regarding applying for flexible parental leave as explained above apply to adoptive parents.

Requesting an Extension of Adoption Leave

If an employee is seeking an extension to adoption leave beyond the initial 12 months, they must provide their request to Pro Health Care in writing at least four weeks before the expected end date of the parental leave. A written response will be provided to the request no later than 21 days after the date on which the request is received. As above, the request can only be refused on reasonable business grounds.

Unpaid Pre-Adoption Leave

Employees are also entitled to up to two days of unpaid pre-adoption leave to attend any interviews or examinations required in order to obtain approval for the employee’s adoption of a child.

An employee is not entitled to take this unpaid pre-adoption leave if:

- The employee could instead take some other form of leave (e.g. Annual Leave); and
- Pro Health Care directs the employee to take that other form of leave.

An employee must provide Pro Health Care with written notification of their intention to take the unpaid pre-adoption leave. This written notification must be given to Pro Health Care as soon as possible and must advise of the period of the leave to be taken.

PARENTAL LEAVE FOR STILLBIRTH, PREMATURE BIRTH OR INFANT DEATH

An employee who experiences a stillbirth or the death of a child during the first 24 months of life can take up to 12 months’ unpaid parental leave.

After a stillbirth or death of a child, employees can’t:

- Be called back to work
- Have any unpaid parental leave cancelled by Pro Health Care.

Employees can choose to return to work after experiencing a stillbirth or death of a child. If they decide to return to work after starting unpaid parental leave, they need to give Pro Health Care at least 4 weeks’ written notice before returning. If they haven’t started leave, they just need to give written notice about their return to work. Pro Health Care and employees can agree to the employee returning to work on an earlier date.

Taking Compassionate Leave

After experiencing a stillbirth or death of a child, an employee parent may be entitled to take compassionate leave while on unpaid parental leave. Another employee may also be entitled to take compassionate leave if the infant was, or would have been, an immediate family or household member of the employee.

Premature Birth and Birth-Related Complications

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Employees who experience premature births or other birth-related complications that result in their newborn having to stay in hospital or being hospitalised immediately after birth can agree with Pro Health Care to put their unpaid parental leave on hold.

This means that while their newborn is hospitalised, parents can return to work and the period when they are back at work will not be deducted from their unpaid parental leave. The employee can then resume their unpaid parental leave at the earliest of:

- A time agreed with Pro Health Care
- The end of the day when the newborn is discharged from the hospital, or
- If the newborn dies, the end of the day when the newborn dies.

SPECIAL MATERNITY LEAVE (“SML”)

An employee who is eligible for unpaid parental leave is entitled to a period of unpaid SML where she has a pregnancy related illness or where her pregnancy ends within 12 weeks of the expected birth, other than by giving birth to a living child.

An employee must provide Pro Health Care notice of their intention to take SML as soon as practicable. Pro Health Care may require documentary evidence such as a medical certificate.

TRANSFER TO A SAFE JOB

All pregnant employees, including casuals, are entitled to move to a safe job if it isn't safe for them to do their usual job because of their pregnancy. This includes employees that aren't eligible for unpaid parental leave.

An employee who moves to a safe job will still get the same pay rate, hours of work and other entitlements that she got in her usual job, although the employee and Pro Health Care can agree on different working hours.

The employee will remain under these arrangements until it's safe to go back to her normal job, or until she gives birth.

The employee will need to give Pro Health Care evidence that:

- She can work in some capacity but can't do her normal safely job (including the reason why her normal job isn't safe) and
- How long she shouldn't work in her normal job.

Pro Health Care can ask for this to be evidenced in a medical certificate.

When No Safe Job is Available – “No Safe Job Leave”

If there is no safe job available for an employee, they can take “No Safe Job Leave”. If the employee is entitled to unpaid parental leave, no safe job leave is paid leave.

For a full-time or part-time employee, no safe job leave is paid at the base rate of pay for ordinary hours of work.

For a casual employee, No Safe Job Leave is paid at the base rate of pay (not including the casual loading) for the average number of hours they would have worked in the period they're on leave.

For employees who aren't entitled to unpaid parental leave, No Safe Job Leave is unpaid.

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Interaction With Other Leave

Employees may be entitled to other forms of leave, such as personal/carer’s leave, when they are unfit or unavailable for duties prior to formally commencing parental leave.

KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS

Keeping in touch days are days an employee who is still on unpaid parental leave can go back to work for a single day, part day or multiple days (up to 10 days per 12 months of parental leave).

Pro Health Care and the employee must agree to the timing of keeping in touch days.

A keeping in touch day can only be worked earlier than 42 days after the birth of a child or adoption, if the employee requests this. A keeping in touch day can’t be worked earlier than 14 days after the birth or adoption.

An employee doesn't have to use keeping in touch days if they don't wish to. An employee gets their normal wage for each keeping in touch day or part day worked.

TAKING OTHER LEAVE DURING PARENTAL LEAVE

An employee may take paid annual leave within the parental leave period (although this will not extend the period of parental leave). An employee cannot take paid personal/carer’s leave or compassionate leave while taking a period of parental leave. An employee may be able to take long service leave within the parental leave subject to applicable State or Territory legislation.

Continuity of service is not affected by taking parental leave. However, parental leave does not generally count towards length of service (except in some States and Territories for the purposes of long service leave).

GOVERNMENT FUNDED PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Some employees may be eligible to receive payment from the Government whilst taking parental leave, this provides financial support at the minimum wage for up to 18 weeks to the primary carer of a newly born or adopted child. This is called “Parental Leave Pay” or “PLP”. It is a means-tested entitlement, so is not available to everyone.

For information about eligibility, making a claim and sorting out payments, go to Services Australia: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/parental-leave-pay

GOVERNMENT FUNDED “DAD AND PARTNER PAY”

Eligible working dads and partners (including same-sex partners) may be entitled to two weeks leave paid at the National Minimum Wage. These payments are made directly to the employee by the Government. This is a means-tested entitlement, so not available for everyone.

To be eligible for the payment, employees must be on unpaid leave from Pro Health Care. For more information go to Services Australia: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/dad-and-partner-pay

CONSULTATION DURING PARENTAL LEAVE

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If, while an employee is on unpaid parental leave, Pro Health Care makes a decision that will have a significant effect on the status, pay or location of the employee's pre-parental leave position, Pro Health Care will take all reasonable steps to consult with the employee about the effect of the decision on their position.

RETURN TO WORK GUARANTEE

Upon ending the period of unpaid parental leave, an employee is entitled to return to:

- Their pre-parental leave position; or
- If that position no longer exists, an available position for which they are qualified and suited that is nearest in status and pay to their pre-parental leave position.

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