Parental Leave Policy

Overview
At NBN Co we are collaborative and flexible. We help each other, reach out and do what is needed and we have simple and efficient ways of doing things.

NBN Co recognises the importance of work life balance and has established a framework to assist employees to balance family related responsibilities with work related commitments.

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on NBN Co’s parental leave framework which incorporates unpaid leave in accordance with the National Employment Standards (NES), plus paid leave which is additional to the statutory entitlements. The policy also sets out the roles and responsibilities of managers and employees in relation to parental leave.

Scope
This policy applies to eligible employees.
This policy operates independently of any government paid parental leave scheme.

Policy
Parental Leave Types
Parental leave is leave provided to eligible employees that is associated with the birth of a child or the placement of an adopted child.
Three types of parental leave are available to eligible employees as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adoption Leave</th>
<th>Taken by an eligible employee in respect of the placement of an adopted child where the employee is the primary care-giver to the child.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Carers Leave</td>
<td>Taken by an eligible employee in respect of a pregnancy or for the purposes of caring for a child following the birth of the child where the employee is the primary care-giver to the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Person Leave</td>
<td>Taken by an employee for the purpose of supporting their spouse/partner in respect of the birth of or the placement of an adopted child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parental Leave Eligibility
Employees may apply for parental leave if they have completed at least twelve (12) months continuous service with NBN Co at the date they wish to commence parental leave.

Parental Leave Amount
Eligible employees may take up to 52 weeks parental leave for the purpose of primary care giving and/or adoption. This can include any combination of paid parental leave (14 weeks provided by NBN Co), annual leave, long service leave and unpaid leave.
An employee can request a further period of up to 52 weeks unpaid leave immediately following the end of the initial parental leave period. NBN Co may refuse such a request on reasonable business grounds.

Where primary carer’s leave is shared, an employee’s entitlement to primary carers’ leave will be reduced by the primary carers’ leave taken by their spouse/partner.

Paid support leave of 5 days is provided to an eligible employee who is the support person to a person who will be the primary care giver.

Special Maternity Leave
An eligible pregnant employee is entitled to take unpaid special maternity leave if the employee is unfit for work because of:

- a pregnancy related illness; or
- the pregnancy ends, not in the birth of a living child, within twenty eight (28) weeks of the expected date of birth

An employee must give NBN Co notice if they are taking unpaid special maternity leave as soon as possible (which may be after the leave has commenced).

An employer may require evidence that would satisfy a reasonable person (e.g. a medical certificate).

The entitlement to unpaid parental leave is reduced by any unpaid special maternity leave taken by the employee while they are pregnant.

Employees (regardless of length of service) are also entitled to up to two days of unpaid pre-adoption leave to attend interviews or examinations required for the adoption of a child/children.

Taking parental leave
Unless otherwise agreed, eligible employees who are pregnant can take parental leave at any time within the six weeks immediately prior to the expected date of confinement.

In the case of an adoption, parental leave may be taken at the time of the placement.

Paid support leave must be taken within two (2) months of the birth or placement of the child/children.

Any request to extend the parental leave period must be made in writing at least 4 weeks prior to the expiry of the initial leave. This extra leave if granted cannot extend beyond 2 years from the commencement of leave.

While both parents are eligible for primary carers leave employees cannot take parental leave concurrently with their spouse/partner. Support person leave may be taken concurrently with a spouse/partner’s primary carer’s leave.

An employee’s entitlement to paid parental leave is not available concurrently to any paid parental leave entitlement through their spouse/partner’s employer, and will be reduced by any period of paid parental leave taken by their partner in respect of birth or adoption of the same child/children.

Where practicable an employee who intends to be a primary care-giver should advise their manager of their intention to take parental leave as far as practicable in advance.

As a minimum, employees must advise NBN Co in writing no later than ten (10) weeks before the expected date of birth or the expected date of placement of their intention to take parental leave.
This notice must specify the intended commencement and end dates of the leave. This request must be accompanied by a medical certificate stating the expected date of confinement or in the case of adoption a certificate confirming the expected date of placement and that the child is under the age of 16 years.

At least four (4) weeks before the intended start date mentioned earlier, the employee must confirm the intended start and end dates of the leave or advise any changes to these dates.

Where an employee is applying for paid support person leave they should advise their manager of their intention as far as practicable in advance, preferably four (4) weeks prior to the birth or placement. Where possible the employee should complete and submit a leave form.

**Payment and benefits during parental leave**

Paid parental leave is calculated on the employee’s base salary at the time the leave commences.

A part time employee’s paid parental leave is calculated on their base salary but will be pro-rated in accordance with the hours of work at the time the leave is taken.

An eligible casual employee’s paid parental leave is calculated on their average hours worked over the preceding 12 months.

Employees will continue to receive their salary in accordance with the existing pay cycle for the duration of the paid parental leave.

Employees may elect to receive their paid parental leave at half pay in accordance with the existing pay cycle for twice the duration of the paid parental leave benefit.

Paid parental leave is inclusive of public holidays. NBN Co paid parental leave will be counted as service for the purpose of the accrual of entitlements.

Unpaid parental leave taken in accordance with this policy will not break an employee’s continuity of service with NBN Co. However, any period of unpaid parental leave will not be counted as service for the accrual of any employee related entitlements or benefits such as long service leave, annual leave, personal leave and redundancy calculations.

**Superannuation**

During unpaid leave all standard member and employer contributions to the NBN Co Superannuation Plan will cease. However, an employee can choose to make voluntary contributions to the plan.

If an employee proceeding on parental leave is not a member of the NBN Co Superannuation Plan they will need to contact their individual Superannuation Fund.

**Death and disability cover within superannuation**

Employees will need to contact the NBN Co Superannuation Fund or their individual fund to discuss the impact of parental leave on their insurance cover.

**Professional memberships**

NBN Co will continue to reimburse a parental leave employee for professional memberships where they are relevant to the employee’s role.

**Company Assets**

All NBN Co assets including but not limited to mobile phones, wireless internet dongles, laptops and security passes must be returned to an employee’s manager prior to proceeding on primary carers or adoption leave.
Backfill of Position during period of leave

Managers may choose to temporarily backfill a role during the agreed period of extended absence. The maximum term of the backfill must not extend beyond the duration of the absent employee's agreed absence. During the period of absence, the headcount attributed to the temporary backfill employee and the absent employee will be one for the purposes of internal reporting.

Parental leave considerations

A pregnant employee wanting to work the six weeks before birth may be asked to provide a medical certificate at any time stating she is fit to perform her normal duties. If the employee is either unfit to work, or does not provide the requested medical certificate within seven (7) days NBN Co may require the employee to commence parental leave.

Transfer to a safe job

If it is not safe for an employee to continue in their usual job while pregnant, NBN Co will try to transfer the employee to a ‘safe’ job, with the same pay and conditions. A medical certificate that states that you can work, but cannot perform your normal job will need to be provided to NBN Co. If NBN Co cannot find a safe alternative, the employee is entitled to take paid "No Safe Job Leave" for the risk period, and be paid at their base rate of pay for ordinary hours of work in the risk period.

Communication during primary carers and/or adoption leave

Employees on primary carers and/or adoption leave and their managers are encouraged to keep in contact on a regular basis in order to maintain an awareness of work related issues. This contact can assist in the transition back to work and also gives the employee the opportunity to discuss the basis upon wish they wish to return to work (i.e. resume former position, part-time or other transitional arrangements).

Returning from primary carers and/or adoption leave

An employee on parental leave as a primary carer is required to confirm their intention of returning to work in writing at least four (4) weeks prior to their intended date of return. Upon returning to work an employee is entitled to return to the position they held immediately prior to commencing parental leave or prior to a safe job transfer.

If the position no longer exists, the employee is entitled to an available position for which the employee is qualified and suited nearest in status and pay to the pre-parental leave position.

Flexible working arrangements

An employee who is a parent or who has responsibility for the care of child/children may request a change in working arrangements.

The request must be in writing and set out the details of the change sought. NBN Co will consider such requests and will work with the employee to grant the request in full or reach an agreement that balances both the needs of the employee and NBN Co.

Employees should refer to the Flexible Work Arrangement Policy for further details.

Roles and Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- ensuring all necessary documentation is completed and that the leave is accurately recorded in NBN Co HR Systems
• keeping in regular contact with the employee
• planning for the period of absence and the return of an employee on parental leave.

Employees are responsible for:
• providing adequate notice prior to commencing and returning from parental leave
• ensuring all necessary documentation is completed and that the leave is accurately recorded in NBN Co HR Systems
• providing all certificates and documentation required to support their parental leave application.
• Pursuing any benefits that they may be entitled to under the Government Paid Parental Scheme
• Keeping in regular contact with their Manager

Further Information

Please contact your Manager or the Human Resource Support Centre if you require additional information in relation to this policy,