

Maternity and Parental Leave FAQs

What are Maternity Leave Benefits?

Employment Insurance (EI) Maternity benefits are offered to the birth parent who cannot work because they are pregnant or have recently given birth. Maternity leave benefits are available up to a maximum of 15 weeks.

What are Parental Leave Benefits?

EI Parental benefits are offered to non-birth parents, including adoptive parents, up to a maximum of 35 weeks (standard Leave) or 61 weeks (extended Leave).

How much notice am I required to provide before going on leave?

Written notice, stating the duration of the leave, is required to be provided a minimum of four (4) weeks in advance of the start date of the leave.

Are there any other types of leave that I can take other than a Maternity/Parental Leave?

Yes. You can choose to use vacation time and there may be special leave available. For questions regarding special leave and eligibility, please contact HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca to speak to an Advisor.

When can I start my leave?

Maternity Leave can start up to 13 weeks prior to the expected birth date of the child, but no later than the actual birth date of the child. For non-birth parents, the earliest that the leave can start is the birth date or adoption date of the child. The Parental Leave portion within the plan must be started within 52 weeks of the birth of the child (Standard Plan) or within 78 weeks (Extended Plan). Please note that if your parental leave extends beyond the specified timeframes (52 or 78 weeks since baby was born), EI will not provide any additional financial support for that extra period and this can have implications for UFV's Supplemental Employee Benefit (SEB).

What happens if the due date changes?

Please notify HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca at your earliest opportunity and an Advisor will be in touch with next steps.

What happens if I become ill before my leave starts?

Sick leave and/or short-term disability may be available to you. Please reach out to HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca to speak to an Advisor.

Can I share my leave with my partner? Can we take our leaves at the same time?

Yes, provided that the EI criteria are met, but only the parental leave portion can be shared. The shared portion can be taken concurrently or consecutively.

Can I work while on my Leave?

When you are on a leave, you are not able to work at UFV.

Can I change Plans once I start my leave? Can my partner and I have different Plans?

You will not be able to change the Plan with EI once you have made a choice. Both partners sharing a leave must be on the same plan. The option selected by the first partner on the EI application must be the option chosen by the second claimant.

I adopted multiple children or had a multiple birth. Does this extend how much leave I can apply for?

The number of weeks you are entitled to does not change regardless of the number of children birthed or adopted at one time.

Do I have to apply for my EI benefits and when should I apply?

There is no requirement for you or your partner to apply for EI benefits. However, to qualify for UFV's Supplemental Employment Benefit (SEB) and receive payment, you are required to apply for the EI benefit and provide a copy of the EI Benefit Statement that you receive during your leave. You can apply for EI benefits as soon as possible after you stop working but before 4 weeks has elapsed. Information on how to apply can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental/apply.html>

How do I find out if I qualify for EI Benefits, including how much I will receive?

The Government of Canada provides detailed information on eligibility and requirements, including how to apply, here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/ei/ei-list/reports/maternity-parental.html>

What is the Supplemental Employee Benefit (SEB)?

UFV provides a Supplementary Employment Benefit (SEB) Plan to permanent employees (Type A & B) to supplement maternity benefits and/or parental benefits as follows (Article 25.3(c)):

Leave Length	Maternity & Parental Leave (birth parent)	Parental Leave (non-birth parent)
12-month Leave	Week 1: 100% of salary paid by UFV Week 2-16: Top-up to 95% of salary Week 17-51: Top-up to 85% of salary Week 52: 100% of salary paid by UFV	Waiting period (if applicable): 100% of salary paid by UFV for week 1 Up to 35 weeks: Top-up to 85% of salary
18-month Leave	Week 1: 100% of salary paid by UFV Week 2-16: Top-up to 95% of salary Week 17-77: Top-up to 48.8% of salary Week 78: 100% of salary paid by UFV	Waiting period (if applicable): 100% of salary paid by UFV for week 1 Up to 61 weeks: Top-up to 48.8% of salary

How is SEB calculated?

You will receive an amount equal to the difference between your approved claim for Employment Insurance benefits and the associated percentage of your salary, calculated on your average base salary 26 weeks prior to the maternity or parental leave (Article 25.3(c)(vi)).

What happens to my benefits while on a maternity/parental leave?

UFV's extended health and dental benefits will be maintained throughout the duration of the leave based on the level of your permanent contract base salary. Seniority and vacation will continue to accrue and access to the Training & Development Allowance, Health Spending Account, and Professional Development fund will continue to be available.

What happens to my pension while on maternity/parental leave?

Pension contributions will continue to be made only on the top up/SEB portion of your income, as per the SEB outline above. Pension can be purchased for the remaining salary and service and can either be purchased at the end of your leave as a lump sum or continuous payments throughout your leave. As per the rules and guidelines set out by the Pension Corp, a purchase of service application for maternity/parental leaves must be submitted within 5 years of the leave, after which the service can no longer be purchased. For questions related to purchasing service, please contact HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca.

Can I take any leave beyond the above noted Maternity and Parental Leave?

You may be eligible for an extended maternity and/or parental leave accommodation, which is a temporary workload reduction for a period of up to three (3) years directly following the conclusion of a maternity and/or parental leave. For rules and eligibility, please reach out to HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca as soon as possible to speak to an Advisor. Written requests for this accommodation, if eligible, must be submitted no later than two (2) months prior to the commencement of the accommodation.

Can I extend my Leave if I chose the Standard Plan (12 month) over the Extended Plan (18 month)?

Yes, if you are on the 12-month plan and would like to extend your leave to 18 months, you can choose to extend your leave but there are some implications to be aware of. As both the SEB top-up and EI benefits cannot be changed or extended, the extension of your leave will be unpaid. As you will no longer be receiving SEB, your contributions to the Municipal or College Pension Plan will also cease, along with any non-mandatory employee-paid items, such as RRSP. Long-Term Disability (LTD) insurance and Optional Life Insurance (if applicable) coverage is a mandatory condition of the unpaid leave extension, and you will be required to provide UFV with 100% of the cost of the premiums which will become due during the period of your leave. Written notice must be provided to HRComp.Ben@ufv.ca at least 8 weeks in advance of extending your leave. Please reach out to an Advisor, Compensation & Benefits if you would like further details or have questions regarding extending your leave.