How to use Parental Leave Pay

Parental Leave Pay is a payment to help support parents take time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child.

It is a payment that you can use flexibly and can be shared between parents. The number of days you will be paid for depends on when your child was born or adopted.

Whether you are the birth parent, an adoptive parent or in a surrogacy arrangement, you can use Parental Leave Pay in a way that meets your needs.

Choose how to take your payment

You can choose how to use your Parental Leave Pay days to suit you, your family and your work schedule.

You can use it in any of the following ways:

* use all your days at once with no breaks
* use a series of single days
* spread out your days in to smaller groups of weeks and individual days.

You can take your days before, after or at the same time you get paid or unpaid leave from your work.

At least one parent needs to claim and be eligible within 12 months from when your child is born or adopted. The other parent has 2 years to claim from the child's birth or date of adoption.

Sharing Parental Leave Pay with your partner

Parental Leave Pay can be shared between eligible parents.

You can decide how to share these days. You may want to share the days evenly or have one parent take more days. This gives you both the option to spend time at home with your baby.

You and your partner can also take some days at the same time, so you can spend time together as a family.

You can share your days with another parent if you are either:

* the birth mother
* the first adoptive parent
* the first gaining parent in a surrogacy arrangement.

Sharing Parental Leave Pay with another parent

The other parent must be either:

* the partner of the birth mother
* the biological father
* the partner of the biological father
* the partner of an adoptive parent
* the partner of the gaining parent in a surrogacy arrangement.

Both you and the birth mother must meet the work test if you are any of the following:

* the partner of the birth mother
* the biological father
* the partner of the biological father.

This means if you meet the work test but they do not, you will not be eligible to share Parental Leave Pay.

You must both meet the work test to check that you have worked enough hours before the birth or adoption.

Parental Leave Pay for single parents

You can either take the full number of days or share it with another eligible parent who meets the work test.

Choose and change your days

When you claim Parental Leave Pay you must choose at least one day.

If you are not sure when and how to use your other days, you can tell us about your Parental Leave Pay days and options at a later time. You must use them within 2 years from when your child is born or adopted. We’ll send you a letter to remind you if you still have days to use before this date.

If you need to return to work earlier than planned or change your leave dates, and you will now be working on a day you had chosen to receive Parental Leave Pay, you need to change your days as soon as possible. You can also change the number of Parental Leave Pay days you share with your partner at any time.

You can choose and change your days using your Centrelink account through myGov.

Working while getting Parental Leave Pay

You can use Parental Leave Pay days even if you go back to work.

You can get it on any days you do not usually work, including:

* days of paid or unpaid leave
* weekends or non work days as part of a part time work arrangement.

This can be helpful for parents who want to ease back into work.

For more information

* Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/plpdays** for more information in English
* Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/parentalleavepay** for more information in English and other languages
* Go to [**servicesaustralia.gov.au/yourlanguage**](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/information-your-language) where you can read, listen to or watch videos in your language
* Call the Centrelink Indigenous call centre on **1800 136 380**. Let us know if you need an interpreter, and we will arrange one for free.
* Call **1800 556 955** for Medicare and **131 272** for Child Support. Let us know if you need an interpreter, and we will arrange one for free
* Visit a service centre.

Note: calls from your home phone to ‘13’ numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to ‘1800’ numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services. It’s your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make an application with regard to your particular circumstances.