

MATERNITY LEAVE - CANADA

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Background and Purpose

A maternity leave is granted upon request to employees who are pregnant, have given birth or are taking care of a newborn. The maximum duration of the maternity leave must not exceed 17 weeks (i.e. 119 days).

Scope (including applicability)

This policy applies to all employees based in Canada, except employees based in the province of Quebec, unless otherwise covered in an applicable collective agreement or another Air Canada benefits plan.

Policy Statement and Text

Eligibility

To be eligible for a maternity leave under the terms of this policy, the employee must be pregnant or have recently given birth.

Note: Adoptive parents are not eligible for a maternity leave.

Duration and Conditions of Leave

- The leave can last up to 17 weeks (i.e. 119 days).
- It can commence up to 13 weeks (i.e. 91 days) before the expected date of birth and end no later than 17 weeks (i.e. 119 days) following the birth of the child.
- The leave must be taken in one continuous period and cannot be split into more than one leave.

Benefits

The birth mother may be eligible to receive maternity benefits. These benefits can commence as early as 12 weeks (i.e. 84 days) before the expected date of birth. Maternity benefits may be combined with parental benefits. For additional information, please refer to the Service Canada web site.

Employee who is in receipt of maternity benefits may also be eligible to receive supplemental employee benefits under the Air Canada's [Pregnancy Leave Benefit Plan](#), available on the HR Connex portal

Note: Unifor and CUPE employees must refer to their collective agreement.

Notice

Employees must submit an initial request and any subsequent changes via the eLeaves application which can be accessed by clicking on the HR Connex link on the ACAeronet Portal. The request must be submitted **at least 30 days prior to the start of the leave.**

They must also provide to their manager a medical certificate from a health care practitioner validating the pregnancy at least 30 days prior to the start of the leave.

At least 30 days following the birth, the employee must send a copy of the birth certificate (or medical attestation of birth) to leaves.conges@aircanada.ca. Failure to do so could impact the employee's travel and benefit entitlement.

Following the commencement of the maternity leave, a record of employment (R.O.E.) will be issued and mailed to the employee's home address.

Impact on Pension, Benefits, Vacation and other programs

For information on how this leave affects pension, benefits, vacation and other programs, please refer to HR Connex, under *Policies and Programs > My Benefits > Time Away from Work > Maternity Leave - Canada > How the "Maternity Leave" Affects Other Benefits / Plans / Programs.*

For unionized employees, some policies may be superseded by provisions in the applicable collective agreement.

Medical complications during pregnancy

If medical complications arise during pregnancy but before the maternity leave and the employee is unable to perform their duties (or another job for which they are qualified in experience, training, or education), they may be eligible for benefits under the Air Canada Income Protection Program until the child is born. Additional information can be found on the HR Connex portal under [Medical Complications during Pregnancy – Canada](#).

If medical complications occur while the employee is giving birth or within six (6) weeks (i.e. 42 days) after the birth, income may continue under the Air Canada Income Protection Program after the Air Canada's Pregnancy Leave Benefit ends. Continuing income is available only for the period after the date the employee was originally scheduled to end their maternity leave.

Medical certificates

The company requires medical certificate from a health care practitioner of the employee's choice to:

- Confirm that an employee is experiencing pregnancy-related medical complications and cannot return to work.
- Indicate the expected duration of a potential risk and the activities or conditions to avoid the risk when a job is reassigned or modified. The employee may be eligible to receive group disability or workers' compensation benefits in this situation.
- In certain situations, the health care practitioner may be requested to provide a detailed description of the employee's restrictions or accommodations required.

If the employee does not provide a medical certificate from a health care practitioner when requested, their benefits may be suspended or ended.

Termination of a Pregnancy

If a case of a termination of pregnancy occurring after the 19th full week of pregnancy, the employee would be entitled to the same level of benefits as in the case of maternity leave. For additional information, please refer to the Service Canada website. Employees participating in this exception are not, however, eligible to participate in the Company's Pregnancy Leave Benefit Plan.

Employees will be required to send a medical note to leaves.conges@aircanada.ca at least 30 days following the start of their maternity leave.

If the termination occurs before the 19th full week of pregnancy, the leave of absence, if required, will be considered as a medical leave. Please refer to the [medical leave](#) policy under HR Connex.

Filling vacancies

Vacancies created by employees on maternity leave will normally be filled on a temporary basis until the employee returns to work.

Return to work

Employees are entitled to return to the position they occupied at the start of their leave. They may be assigned a comparable position at the same location with wages and benefits equal to those of the former position.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employee

- Submits an initial request and any subsequent changes through the eLeaves application.
- Provides to their manager a medical certificate from a health care practitioner validating the pregnancy at least 30 days before the start of their leave,
- Sends a copy of the birth certificate (or medical attestation of birth) to leaves.conges@aircanada.ca at least 30 days following the birth of the child.
- Contacts their Manager to reconfirm the date upon which they will return to work at least 30 days before returning to active service
- Consults a health care practitioner if they believe their job functions pose a health risk to themselves, the fetus or child.
- Sends medical certificates to Occupational Health Services as required.

Manager

- Processes employee's request on the eLeaves application and provides start and return dates.
- Tracks untaken vacation days within the year and ensures that they are taken prior to the return to work.
- Sends a copy of the medical certificate validating the pregnancy to leaves.conges@aircanada.ca.
- Notifies the workplace committee or health and Safety representative when an employee stops performing their job because of possible health risks.
- Notifies the employee in writing if reassigning or modifying their job is not reasonably practical.

Occupational Health Services

When applicable, verify information on the medical certificate and communicate non-confidential information to the employee's manager.

Authority

Global Human Resources

Non-Compliance with the Policy

Non-compliance with this policy may lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Cross References to Related Policies

[HR policy – Parental/Adoption leave \(Canada\)](#)

[HR policy – Medical leave](#)