

Parental Rights



Urban Postal Operations

Acknowledgements

Some of our locals have been producing members' handbooks for years. The work to produce this parental rights guide book was made easier by work previously done by the Vancouver local when they produced *The Birds and the Bees and Article 23*.

Illustrations by Tony Biddle

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Contents

Introduction _____ 1.1



Before You Go _____ 2.1



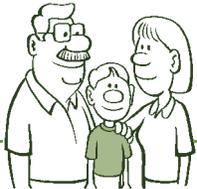
Maternity Leave _____ 3.1



Birth or Adoption Leave _____ 4.1



Parental Leave _____ 5.1



Adoption Leave _____ 6.1



If Something Goes Wrong _____ 7.1



Leave Without Pay for the Care and Nurturing of Pre-school Age Children _____ 8.1



Leave Credits, Deductions, Dues and Seniority _____ 9.1



When You Come Back _____ 10.1



Introduction

Congratulations!

Welcoming a new child into your family is a wonderful time filled with joy and excitement. But it can also be a stressful time, with so much to do and so many things to think about and prepare.

This booklet will help you to navigate your rights as a parent who works for the post office. It will give you important information about working while pregnant, maternity leave, birth or adoption leave, parental leave and your rights when you come back to work.



Before You Go



Taking Care of Your Health and Safety

While you're pregnant, your body is working double-time, doing all the work you normally do, while nurturing and protecting a growing baby. As the pregnancy progresses you may need to take extra care, particularly if your job involves awkward posture, heavy lifting, long periods of time without breaks, repetitive actions, or bending or twisting.

Poor working conditions can affect you and your baby. The collective agreement protects your right to work in a safe environment. If you believe that your regular work may put you or your pregnancy at risk, you can ask to be reassigned to work that is safer. You will need a certificate from your doctor and must apply in writing for a reassignment (Article 54).

Here are some factors that can lead to higher risks during pregnancy:

- Standing for more than three hours per day
- Working on industrial machines
- Repetitive lifting of more than 10 kg (22 lbs)
- Assembly line, or repetitive work
- Working in noisy, hot or cold environments
- Sitting for long periods of time

In your third trimester, try to avoid the following:

- Work that involves balance or heavy lifting
- Loud noises
- Rotating shift work
- Long hours

You should consider asking for a reassignment if your job involves any of these factors.



You can also take steps to improve your working conditions in other ways. Your workstation should be adjustable to reduce any awkward postures, to accommodate your changing body and to allow for sitting or standing and frequent changes in your posture. Walking is encouraged throughout your pregnancy, but in moderation.

In addition to these protections, there is special protection in the collective agreement if you work with a video display terminal (VDT). If you do, you can be reassigned to other work within the bargaining unit for the duration of your pregnancy with no loss of pay. If you want a reassignment, you have to tell your supervisor as soon as possible (Article 33.20).

If you choose to stay in a job that uses a VDT, consider the following safety precautions:

- Sit about an arm's length from the computer 70cm (28 inches) and about 120 cm (4 feet) from the backs and sides of co-workers' monitors.
- Take regular breaks away from VDT work.
- Use a radiation-reducing screen or shield, but do not use one that distorts the image on the monitor.
- Turn off the VDT when not in use.
- Do not use lead aprons.



Uniforms

If you wear a uniform at work, you have two options for maternity wear:

- You can buy your own clothes in approved colours and the employer will reimburse you up to \$130. You must provide the store receipt. (Article 34.01, Note 3)
- You can order maternity clothes from the uniform supplier. If you order from the supplier, you may spend up to \$130. Place your order with your supervisor, who will send the order to the supplier. You will receive the order within 18 working days.

You will not be deducted points for maternity wear.

You can also get your regular-issue parka widened by the manufacturer, free of charge, but they will not re-fit it after your pregnancy.



Maternity Leave

Unpaid Leave (Right to Maternity Leave, Article 23.01)



What do you get and when?

All pregnant employees are entitled to 17 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. Normally, you can start unpaid leave no earlier than 11 weeks before your due date and it must end no later than 17 weeks after your baby is born.

You can ask, in writing, to start your maternity leave earlier or later than eleven weeks, and you can return to work before the 17 weeks are completed, but you have only 17 weeks total, regardless of when you start or end your leave. You may be eligible for parental leave and/or leave for the care and nurturing of preschool age children, see those sections in the following pages.



How do you apply?

You must notify your supervisor at least 15 weeks before your estimated due date. Canada Post may ask you for a medical certificate proving that you are pregnant.

Paid Maternity Leave



What do you get and when?

If you have worked for the post office for six months of continuous service, and if you are eligible for the Employment Insurance (EI) maternity leave benefits, you are eligible to receive paid maternity leave.

Under the collective agreement, you can start maternity leave up to 11 weeks before your expected due date. However, under EI, you can start maternity leave only 8 weeks before your due date. Therefore, your paid leave can only start 8 weeks before your due date.



What is the maternity leave pay rate?

The money you receive while you are on maternity leave is a combination of EI benefits and the Supplementary Unemployment Benefit (SUB) Plan found in the collective agreement. To be eligible for EI, you must show that your regular weekly earnings will go down by 40% and that you have accumulated 600 work hours in the last 52 weeks (or since your last EI claim, whichever is the most recent).

EI pays a basic rate of 55% of your average earnings, up to a maximum of \$413 per week. This payment is taxable income, which means that federal (and, in some provinces, provincial) income tax will be deducted.

This amount is topped up with the SUB, to 93% of your weekly wage. Your weekly wage means your regular weekly pay, not counting any overtime pay. This money is taxable income, but there are no deductions for Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan, EI, or any of your other regular deductions like union dues or the pension plan. See *Leave Credits, Deductions, Dues and Seniority* on page 9.1 for more information. If you are eligible for any pay raises during your maternity leave, your payment from Canada Post will be adjusted to 93% of the new amount.

EI does not pay any benefits for the first two weeks of leave. They call this period a deductible. However, Canada Post pays you 93% of your regular wages for that two-week period.

The money you receive from Canada Post for the two-week period or as top-up will not be deducted from your EI benefits. Other income may be deducted, see *If you work* on page 3.4.

Note

Although you are only paid 93% of your regular earnings, because there are no deductions other than income tax, you will receive very near to the amount of your regular pay throughout your maternity leave.

However, because you are receiving income from two sources you may be taxed at a much lower rate than you usually are. In addition, in some provinces, EI will not deduct provincial income tax. These two factors combined could result in you owing a large amount of money when you prepare your income tax return for the year in which you take leave. You may ask Canada Post to tax your SUB at a higher rate, or put money aside to prepare for this.



How do you apply?

To apply for maternity leave, you must notify your supervisor at least 15 weeks before your expected due date. Canada Post may ask for a note from your doctor saying that you are pregnant and when you are expected to have your baby.

There are two parts to applying for the maternity leave allowance: applying to EI and applying to Canada Post.

Employment Insurance

You must provide Canada Post with proof that you have applied for and will receive EI to be eligible for the top-up, so you have to do this first.

You will need a Record of Employment (ROE) from Canada Post. Ask your supervisor to prepare one for you a couple of weeks before your last day of work, so that it will be ready when you leave. Canada Post is required by law to have it ready for you within five days of your last day. You can have it sent by mail, or pick it up in person.

You can apply for EI online or in person at a local Human Resources Centre of Canada (HRCC) office. You should apply as soon as you stop working. If you wait more than four weeks you may lose benefits.

To apply online go to

<http://www100.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/dem-app/english/home2.html>

If you want to apply in person, you can find your office in the blue pages of your local phone book, by calling 1 (800) 206-7218, or on the Internet at

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/our_offices.shtml

To apply, you will need:

- your Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- your Record of Employment (ROE) from Canada Post (as well as an ROE from any place else you worked in the past 52 weeks)
- personal identification (e.g. driver's licence, birth certificate or passport) if you are applying in person
- your complete banking information (a voided cheque works) if you want your benefits deposited directly into your bank account



Maternity Leave

- details related to your most recent employment, including your gross salary, your gross salary for your last week of work, and gross amounts of money that you have received or are expecting

If you are going to apply for parental leave benefits, you can apply at the same time as you apply for maternity leave benefits.

Usually you will receive notification from EI that you have qualified for benefits, and a payment will be deposited in your bank account, within 28 days of your claim. You do not have to fill out cards while you are on maternity or parental leave. You will not receive reports from EI, except with your first and last payments.

Canada Post

When you receive notification from EI that you have qualified for benefits, take it to your supervisor to apply for the SUB plan. You should ask a shop steward to accompany you to this meeting. Canada Post will ask you to sign the Maternity Leave Agreement that is in Appendix B2, which says that you will return to work for six months following your maternity leave (unless you will be taking parental and/or another type of leave, then you have to return for six months after that leave is finished).

If you don't go back to work for six months, Canada Post will expect you to repay the money you received while on maternity leave. You do not have to repay the EI portion.



If you work

If you work while you are on maternity leave, any money you earn will be deducted, dollar for dollar, from your EI benefits. You have to report any money you earn while collecting maternity allowance to EI. Barring exceptional circumstances, the total combined income from EI, the SUB and all other sources cannot be more than 93% of your regular pay.



Birth or Adoption Leave



What do you get and when?

If your spouse is giving birth, you are entitled to one day of leave with pay. This can be the day before, day of or day after your baby is born, or on the day your spouse enters or leaves the hospital, if you are having a hospital birth.

Parents who are adopting a child also get one day of leave with pay.



Parental Leave



What do you get and when?

If you have worked for the post office for 6 months of continuous service, you can take up to 37 weeks of leave without pay to take care of your baby. You can start your parental leave on the day your baby is born or on the day that the baby comes into your care. If you are taking maternity leave, you can start parental leave as soon as your maternity leave ends.

Parental leave can be split between two parents, but the total number of weeks must not be more than 37. The total number of weeks of parental and maternity leave must not be more than 52 weeks, whether it is split between two parents or not. In addition, the parents can take the leave at the same time, or one after the other.



How do you apply?

Four weeks before you want to take leave, you have to notify your supervisor in writing, saying how many weeks you will be away. Canada Post may ask you to supply a copy of your baby's birth certificate.

Parental leave benefits

Canada Post does not pay any parental leave allowance, however, you may be eligible to receive Employment Insurance (EI) benefits while you are on unpaid leave. To be eligible for EI, you must show that your regular weekly earnings will go down by 40% and that you have accumulated 600 work hours in the last 52 weeks (or since your last EI claim, whichever is the most recent).

EI pays a basic rate of 55% of your average earnings, up to a maximum of \$413 per week. This payment is taxable income, which means that federal (and, in some provinces, provincial) income tax will be deducted, but there are no deductions for Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan, or for EI.



EI does not pay any benefits for the first two weeks of leave. They call this period a deductible. However, only one two-week unpaid waiting period must be served. Therefore, if you have taken maternity leave, and had the two-week unpaid period then, there will be no waiting period for your parental benefits to begin. Similarly, if two parents are sharing the parental leave, only one two-week waiting period has to be served.

If you are applying for maternity leave benefits from EI, you can apply for parental leave benefits at the same time.



How do you apply?

You can apply for EI online or in person at a local Human Resources Centre of Canada (HRCC) office. You should apply as soon as you stop working. If you wait more than four weeks you may lose benefits.

To apply online go to

<http://www100.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/dem-app/english/home2.html>

If you want to apply in person, you can find your office in the blue pages of your local phone book, by calling 1 (800) 206-7218, or on the Internet at

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/our_offices.shtml

To apply, you will need:

- your Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- your Record of Employment (ROE) from Canada Post (as well as an ROE from any place else you worked in the past 52 weeks)
- personal identification (e.g. driver's licence, birth certificate or passport) if you are applying in person
- your complete banking information (a voided cheque works) if you want your benefits deposited directly into your bank account
- details related to your most recent employment, including your gross salary, your gross salary for your last week of work, and gross amounts of money that you have received or are expecting

Usually you will receive notification from EI that you have qualified for benefits, and a payment will be deposited in your bank account, within 28 days of your



claim. You do not have to fill out cards while you are on parental leave. You will not receive reports from EI, except with your first and last payments.



If you work

If you work while you are on parental leave and receiving benefits from EI, you can earn \$50 per week or 25% of your weekly benefits, whichever is higher. Anything above that will be deducted dollar for dollar from your EI benefits. You have to report any money you earn while collecting benefits to EI.

If two parents are collecting parental benefits at the same time, you each can earn \$50 per week or up to 25% of your respective weekly benefits, whichever is higher.



Adoption Leave

Unpaid Leave



What do you get and when?

If you have worked for the post office for six months of continuous service, you can take up to 37 weeks of unpaid leave to take care of your adopted child. Leave can begin on the first day your child comes into your care.



How do you apply?

Four weeks before you want to take leave, you have to notify your supervisor in writing, saying how many weeks you will be away. If there is a valid reason why you can't give four weeks' notice, exceptions may be made. Adoption leave can be split between two parents, but the total number of weeks must not be more than 37. The parents can take the leave at the same time, or one after the other. Canada Post may ask you for proof of the adoption.

Paid Adoption Leave



What do you get and when?

If you have worked for the post office for six months of continuous service, and if you are eligible for the Employment Insurance (EI) parental leave benefits, you are eligible to receive 12 weeks paid adoption leave. You are also eligible for an additional 25 weeks of parental benefits from EI, but Canada Post does not provide top-up (SUB) for that period.

Adoption leave can begin the day your child comes into your care.



Adoption leave pay rate

The money that you receive while you are on adoption leave is a combination of EI benefits and the Supplementary Unemployment Benefit (SUB) Plan from Canada Post. To be eligible for EI, you must show that your regular weekly earnings will go



down by 40% and that you have accumulated 600 hours in the last 52 weeks (or since your last EI claim, whichever is the most recent).

EI pays a basic rate of 55% of your average earnings, up to a maximum of \$413 per week. This payment is taxable income, which means that federal (and, in some provinces, provincial) income tax will be deducted. During your 12-week paid adoption leave, Canada Post tops up this amount with the SUB, to 93% of your weekly wage. By weekly wage, Canada Post means your regular weekly pay, not counting any over time pay. This money is also taxable income, but there are no deductions for Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan, EI, or any of your other regular deductions like union dues or the pension plan. See *Leave Credits, Deductions, Dues and Seniority* on page 9.1 for more information. If you are eligible for any pay raises during your adoption leave, your payment from Canada Post will be adjusted to 93% of the new amount.

EI does not pay any benefits for the first two weeks of leave. They call this period a deductible. Canada Post pays you 93% of your regular wages for that two-week period.

The money you receive from Canada Post for the two-week period or as top-up will not be deducted from your EI benefits. Other income may be deducted, see *If you work* on page 6.4.

Note

Although you are only paid 93% of your regular earnings, because there are no deductions other than income tax, you will receive very near to the amount of your regular pay throughout your parental leave.

However, because you are receiving income from two sources you may be taxed at a much lower rate than you usually are. In addition, in some provinces, EI will not deduct provincial income tax. These two factors combined could result in you owing a large amount of money when you prepare your income tax return for the year in which you take leave. You may ask Canada Post to tax your SUB at a higher rate, or put money aside to prepare for this.



How do you apply?

Four weeks before you want to take paid leave, you have to notify your supervisor in writing, saying how many weeks you will be away. If there is a valid reason why you can't give four weeks' notice, exceptions may be made. Canada Post may ask for proof of adoption.



Adoption Leave

There are two parts to applying for the adoption leave allowance: applying to EI for parental benefits (EI does not have a separate category for adoptive parents) and applying to Canada Post for the SUB plan.

Employment Insurance

You must provide Canada Post with proof that you have applied for and will receive EI to be eligible for the top-up, so you have to do this first.

You will need a Record of Employment (ROE) from Canada Post. Ask your supervisor to prepare one for you a couple of weeks before your last day of work, so that it will be ready when you leave. Canada Post is required by law to have it ready for you within five days of your last day. You can have it sent by mail, or you can pick it up.

You can apply for EI online or in person at a local Human Resources Centre of Canada (HRCC) office. You should apply as soon as you stop working. If you wait more than four weeks you may lose benefits.

To apply online go to

<http://www100.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/dem-app/english/home2.html>

If you want to apply in person, you can find your office by looking in the blue pages of your local phone book or calling 18002067218, or on the Internet at

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/our_offices.shtml

To apply, you will need:

- your Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- your Record of Employment (ROE) from Canada Post (as well as an ROE from any place else you worked in the past 52 weeks)
- personal identification (e.g. driver's licence, birth certificate or passport) if you are applying in person
- your complete banking information (a voided cheque works) if you want your benefits deposited directly into your bank account
- details related to your most recent employment, including your gross salary, your gross salary for your last week of work, and gross amounts of money that you have received or are expecting



Adoption Leave

Usually you will receive notification from EI that you have qualified for benefits, and a payment will be deposited in your bank account, within 28 days of your claim. You do not have to fill out cards while you are on parental/adoption leave. You will not receive reports from EI, except with your first and last payments.

Canada Post

When you receive notification from EI that you have qualified for benefits, take it to your supervisor to apply for the SUB plan. You should ask a shop steward to accompany you to this meeting. Canada Post will ask you to sign the Adoption Leave Agreement that is in Appendix B4, which says that you will return to work for six months following your adoption leave (unless you will be taking parental and/or another type of leave, then you have to return for six months after that leave is finished).

If you don't go back to work for six months, Canada Post will expect you to repay the money you received while on adoption leave. You would not have to repay the EI portion.



If you work

EI allows you to earn \$50 per week or 25% of your weekly benefits, whichever is higher, while you are collecting parental leave benefits. You have to report any income you earn to EI. However, while you are on paid adoption leave, the total combined income from EI, the Canada Post top-up and all other income sources cannot be more than 93% of your regular pay, so, at least while you are collecting top-up from Canada Post you will not be any farther ahead for working.



If Something Goes Wrong



If You Get Sick

You maintain your right to sick leave and long-term disability benefits while you are taking maternity, parental or adoption leave.

Before you take leave

Sick leave

If you have to take time off while you are pregnant for health-related reasons, you can use sick leave.

Note

Contact your union local for assistance if you have questions about taking sick leave.

If you need to take sick leave before you go on maternity leave, the process is no different than if you were not pregnant. You may take casual sick leave without a medical certificate, provided you have not taken more than 10 days in that year. As usual, you may have to provide a medical certificate from your doctor for absences longer than five consecutive working days. If you are under midwife care, you will need to visit a doctor to get a medical certificate for sick leave purposes.

You can use up as many of your accumulated sick leave credits as you need. You can also borrow future sick leave credits, up to 20 days for full-time employees and up to 80 hours for part-time employees. Borrowed sick leave credits are paid back to Canada Post out of future credits, in coming years. If you leave before you have accumulated enough credits, you will have to repay in cash or have the money deducted from your final paycheque.

While you are taking sick leave, you receive 100% of your regular earnings.



If Something Goes Wrong

Disability Insurance Plan

If your doctor has advised you to take health-related leave that is longer than the time you have in sick leave or other borrowed leave, you may be covered by the Disability Insurance (DI) Plan. You should contact Canada Post to get a claim kit as soon as you know you will be taking any extended sick leave. There is a 13-week waiting period before you will receive payment from DI.

The Disability Insurance Plan pays 70% of your regular earnings.

Note

If you have questions about applying for Disability Insurance, contact your local for help.

EI Sick Leave Benefits

You can apply for sick leave benefits through the Employment Insurance (EI) program if you have used up all your accumulated and borrowed sick time, and still have time to wait before the DI waiting period expires.

The EI sick pay benefits pay 55% of your regular earnings up to \$413 per week.

The process for applying for sick leave benefits is exactly the same as applying for maternity leave benefits from EI (see page 3.3) with one exception: you will also need a medical certificate from a doctor explaining how long your illness is expected to last. It may be possible to get the two-week waiting period waived under certain circumstances.

If you receive sickness leave benefits from EI, your total combined weeks for sickness, maternity and parental leave benefits under EI may be extended up to 65 weeks, because weeks for sickness leave benefits are added to your maternity and parental leave, not counted as part of it.

note

*If you take sick leave or receive benefits under DI, you may qualify to have the two-week waiting period for you maternity leave waived. **Do not let EI waive this period.** Canada Post will pay you 93% of your regular pay during the two-week waiting period. If you waive that period, your total maternity leave time will be shortened by two weeks.*

While you are on leave

If you get seriously ill while you are on maternity, adoption or parental leave, you may want to consider ending your parental related leave and taking sick leave or



If Something Goes Wrong

collecting DI benefits instead. There are many factors to consider, including whether you are receiving the maternity or adoption allowance and whether your child's other parent will need to take parental leave to care for your child while you are ill.

The benefits you are eligible for and can receive are the same as outlined on the previous pages in the Before you leave section.

note

If you have questions or need advice about your options, contact your local for more information. If you are going to stop your maternity or parental leave to take sick leave or collect DI instead, contact your local.

Notify your supervisor at Canada Post as soon as you can to arrange to end your maternity or parental leave. You may have to apply to do so in writing.

You will have to call EI to stop your maternity or parental leave benefits. You can apply for sickness benefits at the same time, if you have used up all your sick leave and are waiting for DI benefits. When you become well, it will take four to six weeks to re-start your maternity or parental benefits claim, if you are still eligible for benefits. You can call the automated telephone line to stop or adjust a claim at 1 (800) 206-7218.



If Your Child Becomes Ill

Maternity leave benefits can be collected within 17 weeks of the actual or expected birth of your baby, whichever is later. However, if your baby has to spend time in the hospital, the 17 week limit is extended for each week the baby is hospitalised. The total number of weeks (fifteen) does not change, but you can wait and collect the benefits when your baby comes home. If you have already started collecting benefits, you can stop your claim by calling the automated telephone line at 1 (800) 206-7218. Contact your supervisor at Canada Post as soon as possible to let them know that you will be stopping your maternity leave. You may have to make the request in writing.

note

If you have questions or need advice about your options, contact your local for more information.



In Case of Miscarriage or Still-birth

If you have a miscarriage, you can take sick leave or, if you have used up all your sick leave and will require a longer period off work, you can apply for DI benefits. There are also provisions under EI to cover you if you have a miscarriage. If the pregnancy terminates within the first 19 weeks of pregnancy, it is considered an illness. If you have used up all your sick leave, you will be able to collect sickness benefits. See the information under *If You Get Sick* for how to apply.

On the other hand, if the pregnancy terminates in the 20th week or later, or if your child is still-born or dies shortly after birth, you would still be eligible for the 17 weeks maternity leave, and maternity benefits under EI and the collective agreement.



Leave Without Pay for the Care and Nurturing of Pre-school Age Children

You can take leave without pay to take care of your pre-school age children (Article 23.09). You can take one or several periods of leave for one month or more, up to a total of five years time for your entire period of employment at Canada Post.

If you take leave for a period that is longer than three months:

- the time will be deducted from the calculation of your continuous employment for the purposes of vacation leave, and
- the time will not count for pay increment purposes.



Leave Credits, Deductions, Dues and Seniority

Earning leave credits



Vacation leave

You will earn annual leave credits as if you had received pay for at least 10 days in each calendar month while you are on maternity, adoption and/or parental leave. You do not earn vacation credits while you are on care and nurturing leave.



Sick leave

If you are a full-time employee, you will earn sick leave credits as if you had received pay for at least 10 days in each calendar month you are on maternity, adoption and/or parental leave. If you are a part-time employee, you will receive sick leave as if you had worked your regularly scheduled hours. You do not earn sick leave credits while you are on care and nurturing leave.



Annual increment

The time you spend on maternity, adoption, and parental leave, and/or care and nurturing leave that is under three months will be counted for annual increment purposes. Care and nurturing leave that lasts longer than three months will not be counted for pay increment purposes.



Seniority

Taking maternity, adoption or parental leave, or care and nurturing leave do not affect your seniority. Time taken for parenting-related leave is not considered a break in service.



Health plan premiums and coverage

While you are on maternity, adoption, parental leave, you are still entitled to all your extended health plan coverage, including vision and dental care, and the disability insurance plan. Canada Post continues to pay its portion of these premiums.



Leave Credits and Seniority

However, because you are not receiving regular pay, your portion of the premiums will not be deducted from your income. When you return to work, you will have to pay back the premiums. You can do this as one lump sum, or have extra deductions from your pay until it is paid back. Deductions from your paycheque will be over a period twice as long as the time you took off for leave (i.e. each pay's deduction will be for one and a half times the usual deduction).

While you are on leave for the care and nurturing of pre-school aged children, you can continue your coverage but you must pay both your portion of the premiums and Canada Post's portion of the premiums.

If you have single coverage, you must fill out an EHCP Application form and a Dependent Information form to change to family coverage after the birth or adoption of your child. You can get these forms before you take leave. You can send the completed application form to the Human Resources office at work. The Dependent Information form has to be sent in to Great West Life Insurance.



Alberta Health Care/BC Medical Services Plan

Canada Post will continue to send in both its and your share of the monthly premiums for provincial health coverage while you are on leave.



Pension plan

Canada Post does not deduct your portion of the pension plan from your SUB payments while you are on paid maternity or adoption leave. Nor does Canada Post pay your portion, while you are on unpaid parental, adoption or care and nurturing leave. You will have to catch up on those pension payments when you return to work; you will have double deductions from your pay until you are repaid in full.



Union dues and representation

The union continues to represent you and work on your behalf while you are on leave.

When you take paid maternity or adoption leave, you must continue to pay your dues in full. You can send dues payment up front by post-dated cheques, in one lump sum, or by sending in monthly cheques. Cheques are made out to "CUPW [Your local's name]". You should write your social insurance number and the months for which you are paying on the front of the cheque(s).

If you are taking unpaid leave, you can contact your local and ask for a dues waiver. If you need more information of any kind, contact your local Secretary-Treasurer.



When You Come Back

When you come back to work you have additional rights as a parent.



Right to Refuse Dangerous Work

Under the Canada Labour Code (Section 132), if you are breastfeeding a child, you can refuse work that you believe will put your health or the health of your child at risk. You must tell your supervisor that you are refusing the work and why.

You must consult with your doctor for a risk assessment as soon as possible after refusing the work. If your doctor supports your refusal, you will be reassigned to other work that does not pose a health risk to you or your child.

If you are reassigned, you are considered to be still holding your regular job, and must be paid your regular wages.



Special Leave

When family emergencies arise, you may be able to take special leave with pay (Article 21.03). Examples include taking care of your child if he or she is sick. Canada Post cannot unreasonably withhold permission to take special leave.



Child care projects/Special needs

CUPW's Child Care Fund helps parents balance work and family. The union negotiated the fund to help members who have the most trouble finding or affording high quality child care. The fund is used for projects to provide child care and related services to CUPW families, child care information programs, needs assessments and child care research. CUPW currently has projects in many cities across the country.

CUPW's Special Needs project provides support to CUPW families with children with special needs by assisting them with child care and other related costs such as special transportation, equipment, assistive devices and respite care. Support and funding



When You Come Back

help bring child care and related costs more in line with what all members would pay.

Canada Post contributes to the Child Care Fund every three months. However, the union controls the fund. CUPW's full-time child care co-ordinator develops and administers the programs.

For more information, ask your local for the fact sheet on child care.

To find out more about the Special Needs Project, call 1-800-840-LINK or e-mail cupw-upcespecialneeds@ns.sympatico.ca.



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