

Support for Employees taking Family-Related Leave



Policy owner EDI

Approval date and body UMT June 2019

1. Purpose

UCD is made up of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset. This includes those who have family obligations and may be returning from maternity/adoptive or carers leave. The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the University's commitment to supporting those returning from maternity/adoptive leave and those returning from carers leave, through a variety of measures, to enable them to continue to develop their careers.

UCD's Strategic Objective five is to attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff, therefore ensuring family friendly supports are available to attract diverse talent and to retain existing employees is critical. Supporting parents and carers is also a commitment that the University has made in its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

2. Definitions

Maternity Leave - Female Employees are entitled to twenty-six weeks' Maternity Leave, at least two of which must be taken before the birth and four of which must be taken after the birth.

Adoptive Leave - Any adopting mother or sole male adopter who commenced Adoptive Leave on or after 1st March 2007 is entitled to twenty-four weeks leave.

Carers Leave - provide for the temporary absence from employment of employees for the purpose of the provision of full-time care and attention to a person requiring it, while protecting the employee's employment rights. The minimum period of leave is 13 weeks and the maximum period is 104 weeks.

Family Friendly Policies – policies that make it possible for employees to more easily balance family and work, and to fulfil both their family and work obligations. Examples include the Shorter Working Year policy, Paternity Leave policy, Parental Leave policy, Career Break Policy, Job Share policy and Core Meeting Hours policy.

3. Scope

This policy applies to those returning from maternity/adoptive leave and carers leave.

4. Principles

All policies and policy related documents and forms are subject to amendment. Please refer to the UCD Governance Document Library website for the official, most recent version.

- To encourage open and constructive communication before, during and after maternity/adoptive and carers leave as appropriate
- To create an inclusive culture whereby people continue to feel valued if they take family - related leave
- To encourage and facilitate the uptake of family related leave by all genders
- To ensure individuals experience a level playing field in terms of opportunities and that those returning from maternity/adoptive/carers leave are not disadvantaged in any way as a result of this leave
- To put supports in place that facilitates the transition of the employee back into the workplace and re-establish their careers
- To recognise the contribution of all employees, including those availing of family leave
- To adhere to the principles of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and support the achievement of the UCD Strategy and EDI Strategy
- To comply with legal responsibilities

5. Roles and responsibilities

Line Managers/Head of School/Unit

- To foster an inclusive culture where all employees can reach their full potential
- To promote equality of opportunity for all employees
- To ensure employees are aware of the availability of family friendly policies
- To engage with the employee before and during maternity/adoptive leave, carers leave and long-term sick as appropriate
- To ensure there is adequate cover whilst the employee is on leave and involve the employee in this process
- To support the transition back to work through regular meetings with the employee following their return from maternity/adoptive leave, carers leave and long-term sick leave to agree a return to work plan
- To help identify the supports required for employees returning from maternity/adoptive leave or carers leave to re-establish their career and to reach their full potential. This includes a phased increase in teaching activity over the course of the first calendar year following their return, typically averaging 50% commitment over that year.
- To comply with legislation

Individuals

- To engage with their line manager before going on maternity/adoptive or carers leave
- To engage in regular conversations with the line manager after returning to work to support the re-establishment of their career
- To contribute to an inclusive environment
- To comply with legislation

6. Related documents

[Support for Employees taking Family Related Leave Guidelines](#)

[Maternity Leave Policy](#)

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[Adoptive Leave Policy](#)

[Carers Leave Policy](#)

7. Version history

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	June 2019	Policy Developed	EDI
1.1	June 2021	Policy amended to clarify point relating to phased increase in teaching facility	EDI

8. Version history

[Provide details with regard to any updates/amendments made to the policy.]