

APPENDIX 6: Best Practice Guidelines - Parental Leave.

Both parties acknowledge the importance of Parental Leave and ensuring that RMOs feel well supported to take parental leave and that they are provided with the appropriate information and guidance to take leave and also their transition back into the workplace following time away.

Both parties also acknowledge that there are unique challenges in ensuring RMOs are supported appropriately on their return due to the way they work. Parties recognise the importance that properly supporting RMOs through their return to work is vital in ensuring that RMOs continue to progress through training.

The below outlines the best practice guidelines & principles that both parties have agreed should underpin the basis for any communications and decision making in regard to parental leave.

Before going on leave

RMOs are required to provide 3-months' notice of leave required for parental leave. Once a District is notified of the leave application, any process should include:

- Providing RMOs with a link to the appropriate IRD forms & advising them of the process in order to claim the statutory payments
- Notice of the ability to reduce hours prior to going on leave if required and the potential associated salary impact
- Provide the RMO with a copy of the Employer's Policy for parental leave & breast-feeding policies
- Discuss keeping in touch days (if applicable) and the ability to access work emails etc while on leave

During Parental leave

- RMO/District to facilitate conversation at least 3-months prior to returning to work including, but not limited to:
 - Confirming RMOs return date
 - RMOs working arrangements – Is there any ability for part-time work or flexible working arrangements. If Part-time or flexible arrangements have been requested, Districts need to ensure that every effort is made to facilitate the request
 - Provide information in regard to breast feeding facilities and support available
- Provide returning RMO with their Roster for when they return, within the required notice periods

NB: The Parties note that an RMO may not be returning to the same District, hospital, service, or position from which they commenced leave. The returning RMO will inform the new District if they are returning from a period of parental leave (no less than 2 months prior to start date). In applying the above guidance in such circumstances, the relevant Districts, hospitals or services should ensure they liaise with one another in respect of the individual RMO's Parental Leave.

Following Parental Leave

- Where requested RMOs should not be rostered for any long days, weekends or nights in their first month after returning from parental leave
- The employing Districts are responsible for ensuring that any RMO who wishes to continue their breast-feeding journey on their return to work are strongly supported to do so including;
 - Ensuring appropriate breaks are provided to an RMO who is breastfeeding and wishes to breastfeed during work
 - Ensuring appropriate facilities are provided in the workplace for an RMO who is breastfeeding and who wishes to breastfeed in the workplace and that these facilities are within a reasonable distance of the RMOs workplace i.e., accessible (and near acute services if applicable) with access to refrigeration facilities
 - If the above cannot be provided, then the District will agree with the RMO what other support may be provided including reimbursement (in part or in full) of a portable/wearable breast pump so RMOs can continue to breast feed and work

Attention is drawn to the Code of Employment Practice issued by the Minister of Labour (February 2010) outlining how employers can meet their statutory obligations under s.69Y of the Employment Relations Act to provide breastfeeding facilities and breaks as reflected in the above.