

Are you a teacher with an expectant spouse/partner?



You may be entitled to some time off for the birth of your child. Check your collective agreement for details. Note that if you are considering sharing parental leave with your spouse/partner, you should contact Teacher Welfare for help requesting leave from your employer.

Are you a part time teacher?

If you work part-time and are planning a pregnancy or are already pregnant, keep a log of any time you spend doing work outside the normal school day. (For example, first bell rings at 8:45 AM but you've been there since 6:30 AM preparing the science room for an experiment, or students leave at 3:35 PM but you stay until 5:30 PM marking papers). Items listed in your log should also include time spent on lesson planning, classroom and materials maintenance, curricular activities, marking, report cards, supervision, consultations with teachers and others, professional development and administrative duties (administrative designations only).

The Association has assisted teachers in making successful EI claim appeals relating to a shortage of hours. In these cases, teachers kept accurate and detailed records of hours worked beyond normal instructional hours and were able to prove that they qualified for benefits.

Information sources and important messages

- ❑ More detailed information is available on the Association's website (www.teachers.ab.ca).
- ❑ Service Canada has detailed information regarding employment insurance.
- ❑ The Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) operates the teachers' pension plan. While on unpaid leave, teachers do not accrue pension time or pay into their pension plans. However, once teachers return to work, they can purchase back that service. Contact ATRF directly at 1-800-661-9582 for information on how to do this.
- ❑ Benefits—Ensure seamless coverage. Complete the necessary paperwork in a timely manner to maintain your benefits while on leave.
- ❑ Association membership. Membership dues are not submitted on your behalf during your leave. The Association will bill you after your leave commences (dues are \$8 per month). There is no need to remit dues prior to receiving a bill.

Information Links

For more information, and if you have specific questions, contact the Alberta Teachers' Association Teacher Welfare program area.

Mailing address: 11010 142 Street NW,
Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 2R1

Phone: 780-447-9400, in Edmonton;
1-800-232-7208 from elsewhere in Alberta

Fax: 780-455-6481

E-mail: tw@ata.ab.ca

Website: www.teachers.ab.ca

Everything you need to know about maternity leave



Read this brochure if you are pregnant or planning to conceive.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

❑ **Read your collective agreement**

All collective agreements contain information about (1) time off—how much leave is available, (2) eligibility—who qualifies for leave, (3) rules for notification—when leaving and when returning and (4) pay and benefits.

All teachers have access to some time off for the period surrounding the birth. Teachers with more than one year of continuous service have access to one calendar year of leave and may start and end their leave at any time within that year. Options for teachers with probationary or temporary contracts are not as clear. Therefore, you are strongly urged to contact the Association for clarification.

Note that collective agreements may or may not contain clauses about contributions to benefits during the health-related portion of your maternity leave. Be aware that legislation might override some provisions in the collective agreement.

Your employer must pay you and make contributions to your benefit plan for any portion of your maternity (both prior to and following the delivery) when you are not well enough to work. This period is called the health-related portion of your maternity leave. The length of time you receive pay and contributions to your benefit plan is based on the amount of sick leave you are entitled to when you stop work.

Most collective agreements contain provisions for supplemental unemployment benefit (SUB) plans (top-up). These SUB plans work in conjunction with employment insurance (EI) benefits. Your employer will top up your EI benefits to a sum equivalent or close to your regular weekly earnings. In some districts, SUB plans may be taken as an alternative to sick leave. It is important to note that you do not have to participate in SUB plans that are not sanctioned by your collective agreement. Also, because teachers are paid only for days worked, SUB plans and health-related leave are likewise payable only during teaching periods (and, therefore, not during summer, Christmas or spring breaks).

❑ **Contact the Association**

Contact staff in the Teacher Welfare program area for assistance with interpreting your collective agreement and writing a letter to notify the school district of your maternity leave requirements. Find out which option is in your best interest.

❑ **Obtain proof of pregnancy**

Obtain a medical certificate or note from your doctor confirming your due date. Depending on your collective agreement, you may also need certificates identifying your antepartum and postpartum requirements (the length of time you will be off work before and after the delivery for health-related reasons).

❑ **Apply for EI**

EI applications are completed online and must be done within 10 days of the baby's birth. However, in some instances, mothers may need to apply prior to the birth. Please contact Teacher Welfare to determine what is in your best financial interest.

The application will require your salary calculations, direct deposit information and social insurance number. Note that the online application system may request a record of employment (ROE); however, you do not need it to apply for benefits. It is a good idea to retain a copy of your ROE for your records. Contact your employer for your ROE.

More detailed information about Employment Insurance is available on the Association's website (www.teachers.ab.ca) under Salary, Benefits and Pension / Employment Insurance.

❑ **Maintain all your benefits**

To protect yourself and your family during your unpaid leave and after you return to work, maintain **all** your benefits. Other options exist but are not recommended.

❑ **Add baby to your benefits**

Within 30 days of having your baby, add him or her to your benefits by completing the form provided by your benefits provider.