



## Managing Transitions

# Opening

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Creating safe, open, and inclusive environments to ensure your maternity and parental leaves are positive and enjoyable experiences.

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**Recognition:** Engineers Canada and Geoscientists Canada would like to thank all the engineers, geoscientists, and people who represented companies and sectors that contributed to the update of this foundational document, originally called *Managing Transitions*. Engineers Canada greatly appreciates the relationship and collaboration with Flip Learning and Guiding Star to produce this guide and recognizes the contributions of several staff who also helped make this guide possible including; Cassandra Polyzou, Yasemin Tanaçan-Blacklock, Shelley Ford, Jeanette Southwood, P.Eng., and Gerard McDonald, P.Eng. We would also like to thank Lili El-Tawil, for the French translation of this report, and Matthew Kulka for his work on the presentation of this report.

**Note on terminology and limitations:** It is noted that the equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and truth and reconciliation knowledge areas are dynamic and ever changing, and as such, the terminology used in this guide is intended to be inclusive and the verbiage used is acceptable at the time of creation. This guide is also primarily written from the perspective of traditional western conceptions of maternity leave, and it is acknowledged that parental leaves, adoption, fostering, and extended family/community care situations also exist and should be supported. It is also acknowledged that with family planning there are at times unforeseen circumstances (e.g., miscarriages, terminations, still births, unsuccessful fertility treatments) and organizational and legal practice is still being developed to address the needs of “non-traditional” and “non-nuclear” families. We trust this guide can still be helpful, even if it does not fully address all people’s circumstances and experiences.

To ensure inclusion of all gender identities and expressions, gender neutral pronouns and terms are utilized whenever possible. Although gendered, “maternity leave” is used throughout this guide to reflect the legal term and the associated legal protection. For more information, please contact Engineers Canada or Geoscientists Canada.

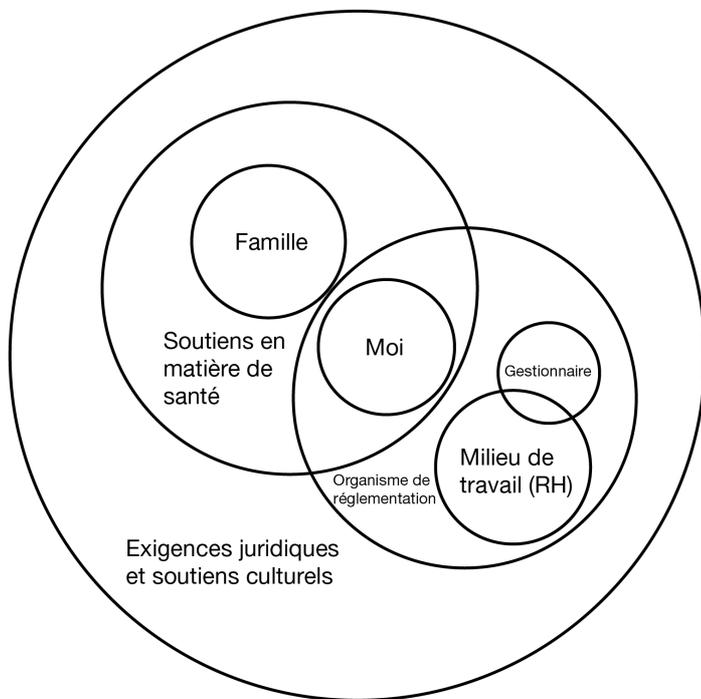
## Introduction

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*“If I were to give one piece of advice to those planning to go on their first parental leave, I would tell them to have the courage to talk with their leader about what you ideally want. It opens the window to come together to make a realistic plan that sets expectations. For me, keeping a connection when I was on leave was important, as I considered my workplace a community. I would have liked to have a chance to join the team socially to keep in touch with co-workers and have some adult conversation as well as get parenting advice from people I trust.”[1]*

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As workplaces strive to support balance, ensure healthy lives, and foster employees who can pursue their personal and career passions, it is important that the supports, communication, and understanding are in place for maternity and parental leaves. Everyone wants a safe, open, healthy, and inclusive environment. Engineers and geoscientists often find themselves engaged in jobs that consume them—from remote field work to large refineries to office towers to rigs on international waters—and planning and taking maternity and/or parental leaves (hereinafter referred to as “leave or leaves”) has many considerations in order to ensure that both the employee, their newest family member, and the workplace have what they need before, during, and after this leave. There are often many supports and access to advice and recommendations within a person’s life; the graphic below shows some of how these supports and considerations interact.



This national guide is building off the original Engineers Canada and Geoscientists Canada's *"Managing Transitions: Before, During and After Leave: A Planning Resource Guide for Employees and Employers."*[2] We know there are many aspects of life that need planning when a family wishes to begin or to grow, including but not limited to:

- »The health of the birth parent and infant
- »Preparing the home and its members
- »Managing expectations of family and workplace leaders and colleagues
- »Learning to parent
- »Assurance of cultural supports
- »Knowledge of legal requirements
- »Planning for travel if adopting
- »Ensuring healthy supports for balance
- »Of course, always seeking and practicing self-care

This guide will provide some considerations for engineers and geoscientists and their engineering organizations and leaders.

Every situation is different, from the pregnancy or adoption to the organization and its policies to the people that need to come to a common understanding to ensure there is a smooth transition as both employees and employers consider what to do before, during, and after leave. It is recommended that this guide be used in conjunction while working with the employee's healthcare practitioner, cultural supports, community social programs, adoption agencies, and their leader/HR department, all with a goal of building a community around them for the life aspects that are not addressed in this document.

## Why an organization needs to implement leading practices for maternity and parental leave

A safe and healthy work environment is one that upholds equity, embraces diversity, creates inclusion and builds belonging. The business case for diversity[3] is well understood:

- »Increasing revenues
  - »Attracting new customers; finding new markets
  - »Building customer loyalty; retaining existing business
  - »Keeping your growth strategy from running out of fuel

- »Improving success in cross-cultural negotiations
- »Reducing costs
  - »Eliminating differential turnover across demographic groups
  - »Minimizing litigation costs
  - »Controlling relocation costs
- »Increasing Productivity
  - »Tapping the top talent
  - »Maximizing productivity through flexibility
  - »Motivating all employees to do their personal best
  - »Maximize the value of diverse teams - innovation, creativity, and quality
- »Reputation and responsibility[4]
  - »Inclusion boosts company reputation
  - »Strengthening of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance
- »Innovation and group performance
  - »Increase in creativity, innovation, and openness
  - »Better assessment of consumer interest and demand
  - »Diverse management teams are innovative and earn a premium for their innovation
  - »Diversity reduces 'groupthink' and enhances decision-making

As the labour shortage continues with trained professionals in more and more demand, and as the world evolves, the voices of marginalized people and what they value are causing the industry to adjust their traditional practices.[5] Society and marginalized people have equity and inclusion for all. As legal and cultural norms shift, holding non-hegemonic identities is safer and more common. The younger generation of graduates come with a high level of emotional intelligence and a large variety of questions for their employer, requiring their organization and possible future leaders to have demonstrated inclusive workplaces[6] and leading-edge equitable policies.

We see a variety of changes, culture shifts, and targets specifically set to attract and retain diversity. The shift in business practice has resulted in public reporting of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impact reporting[7] or commentary on how a company meets the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals[8] (SDGs) or is implementing the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples[9] (UNDRIP) or the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.[10] The organizational shift is from one of solely capitalistic values and intentions to that of social justice and employee happiness and life balance. We know that employees are happy when they feel trusted, can be authentic, and feel psychologically safe[11] and that this leads to retention and increased productivity. Below are a few examples of organizational practices that increase employee happiness:[12]

- »Prioritize work-life balance
- »Allow flexible working schedules
- »Listen to your employees
- »Create career mobility
- »Build a positive work environment
- »Recognize employees for their hard work - and reward them
- »Offer extensive benefits
- »Encourage breaks
- »Change your office space
- »Be supportive of innovation
- »Learn more about your employees
- »Don't keep score

By putting the employee and their happiness first, an organization will need to be prepared for many different life experiences. This guide is intended to provide considerations for leaders and organizations and their employees for a parental or maternity leave.

We know that at the heart of happiness is belonging and connection. In a world where negativity, information overload, isolation, and even indifference to world wars and issues is common, we need to embrace teachings like humility. When we work for the good of society, the happiness of our people and teams, the

balance with their families, we work ultimately in the public interest. As professional engineers and geoscientists and their employers, this is at the heart of the Code of Ethics – that we work in the public interest. And that means we put people first.

## Health supports

### Overview

As an engineer or geoscientist who is getting ready to expand their family, we know the goal is to find balance in your spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical states while remaining healthy. Whether you are adopting, fostering, carrying the infant, or are the other parent who is planning to take parental leave, this stage leading up to the birth and after can be stressful, challenging, and dynamic.

The stage when your newest addition is part of the family may also be stressful during the leave as the infant grows and develops, the carrier's body changes once again, and the family shifts with the daily changes in growth.

Other supports around you may include your health care practitioners, family and friends, communities of people who have been through similar experiences, your organization and Human Resources department, and your cultural and spiritual supports. We encourage you to identify and use your individual supports to assist you to achieve balance and to remain safe and healthy before, during, and after your leave.

### Approach to health supports:

- »As organizations embrace diversity, health supports need to consider the whole person – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.
- »An example of a community that may require different health supports would be First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples, who experience systematic and systemic racism regularly within society and may have to cope with hard socioeconomic environments outside of the workplace along with intergenerational trauma, all of which requires support such as access to Elders and Knowledge Keepers, regular and consistent trained psychologist or therapist access, physical access to safe places for daily ceremony (such as smudging), and zero tolerance for racism and bullying within the workplace. The role of family in childbirth is also different in terms of who cares for the infant, in which the legal requirements allow for immediate family which may not include uncles, aunts, nor grandparents.
- »The amount of stress that a person and their immediate family is under needs to also be recognized. This stress is on a physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual level during fertility treatments, adoption or fostering, and pregnancy. Leaders and employers need to ensure frameworks and policies consider that this life experience touches every aspect of a person and changes them permanently.
- »Health supports need to also be in place for all outcomes, as not all attempts to expand a family are successful. Unsuccessful fertility treatments, non-selection for adoption, and still births, terminations, and miscarriages may cause a person to enter a grief cycle and continue to be under stress for an undefined amount of time. Leaders need to be prepared to handle and support this journey.[13]
- »An understanding that not all home lives are safe and healthy is also needed, especially where there is the risk of a partner coming into the workplace and putting the employee or co-workers at risk. Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) has a legal requirement to implement policies and procedures as part of violence prevention plans where domestic violence is considered a workplace hazard.[14]

### Leading practices:

- »Develop and communicate with all staff a workplace harassment and violence policy and prevention plan (this would include, but would not be limited to, harassment, discrimination, accommodation, and violence guidelines).
- »Consider forming a workplace committee with a focus on providing mental health and wellness tools, support, and resources.
- »Offer training and/or workshops on mental health (e.g., stress responses, zones of regulation, identifying burnout) and benefit offerings (e.g., paramedical expenses and employee assistance program).
- »Encourage an environment where conversations are safe and brave with a goal of removing stigma and other biases.
- »Consider Mental Health First Aid Training for employees.

# Before transition

## Overview

In an ideal situation, we expect that every employee can be their full authentic selves in the workplace and have safe and brave spaces with empathetic leaders where open and transparent conversations happen regularly, and policies, supports, and frameworks already exist for employees' unique situations. Realistically, we know not every organization is at a place of belonging and inclusion, and that there are many leaders that continue to work on communication, emotional intelligence, empathy, and relationship building. We also acknowledge that there are many companies that do not have policies in place and may not have dedicated human resources capacity and that some employees might be the first ones going through this experience with their leader and employer. It is also recognized that not every experience when it comes to maternity and parental leave is positive; there are circumstances that must be considered, such as when home life is not safe and supportive, and there are situations of threat, violence, or harassment from other family and community members or there are cases of miscarriage, stillbirth, termination, unsuccessful fertility treatments, or non-selection in the foster or adoption system.

During the engagement sessions that contributed to developing this guide, we heard that understanding, empathy, and support from employers/leaders was often not in place. Leaders were not showing empathy towards what it is like to be pregnant, they were not recognizing the emotionally and physically taxing situations such as miscarriages, nor the effort it takes to manage a household with a new addition. We heard from employees who went on leave and returned to see their position eliminated and others who were dismissed while on leave. In these situations, it was felt that the leader did not represent the employee or their interests in organizational change discussions nor during larger performance management and business planning meetings.

Ultimately, the priority prior to a leave is engaging, designing, and putting in place transition programs, framework, and policies around parental and maternity leave.

## Leading Practices

When it comes to leading practices,[15] there are several examples and considerations to highlight:

- »Companies that consider parental spaces:
  - »Access to lactation/breastfeeding rooms
  - »On-site childcare
  - »Concierge service that runs errands for people
  - »Ensuring washrooms have change tables and access to wipes
- »Companies that consider the whole person:
  - »Access to employee resources groups for professionals who are parents, particular to experiences for mothers, fathers, non-binary parents, grandparents, adoption, and other unique situations
  - »Access to parent career coaching
  - »Flexible work arrangements, such as:
    - »Telecommuting or hybrid work arrangements
    - »Flexible hours to consider teleworking with children at home, working with school closure days, summer holidays, and back-to-school obligations and time off for sick children and support for their extracurriculars
    - »Reduced work hours and job sharing
  - »Safe and brave spaces where individuals are comfortable talking about how their personal life decisions affect their career goals and professional development
  - »Consideration to vacation, time-off, and personal days required not only for own self-care, but also new dependent care, such as caring for a sick child
  - »Support for securing school holiday care and school closure days for Professional Development
  - »Support on developing a transition/career plan
  - »Support for arranging nanny sharing or job sharing
- »Companies with leading maternity leave, parental leave, and adoption leave benefits:
  - »Fully paid leave, above and beyond legal requirements
  - »Full access to benefit programs that consider the physical healing time, the emotional bundle

that comes with pregnancy and childcare, need for cultural/spiritual supports throughout, and access to mental and psychological wellness supports for the additional stress and expectation management

If you are looking to develop a policy, there are several organizations with leading practices, such as Catalyst, human resources consultancy firms, and other existing guides from both within Canada and from other countries, such as the Workplace Gender Equity Agency, “Developing a Leading Practice Parental Leave Policy”, February 2022, or Adecco’s “The Ultimate Employer’s Guide to Maternity Leave” [16] that walks through garnering leadership support, engagement and consultation with employees, researching leading practices, and then how to measure success.

## For employers to consider prior to leave:

- »Understanding the provincial and territorial maternity and parental leave legislation, which is different between provinces and territories. Part of this is understanding the minimum requirements as well as the privacy and confidentiality boundaries of disclosing and discussing the leave.
- »Discussing the organization's Maternity/Parental Leave Policy with the employee. The employer is encouraged to have a policy in place that outlines the purpose, guidelines, additional benefits (if offered over and above legislative minimums), and other terms and conditions. Ensure the policy is applied consistently and fairly and ensure the employee is aware of the policy and options available for leave.
- »Ensuring the employee talks with the Human Resources department about health and dental benefits, pension contributions, top-up compensation, years of service, vacation accrual, supports and other relevant policies before leave.
- »Understanding that leave is aligned with psychological health and wellness, under which there are Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) obligations for psychological safety and human rights considerations.
- »Organizations must consider that the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* has stipulations around domestic violence as a workplace hazard.[17] This means that an organization has legal obligations to implement an appropriate policy and procedures as part of a violence prevention plan in the case where a maternity or parental leave is being planned and in which it is not a safe and healthy relationship and there is a risk of a partner coming into the workplace, putting the targeted employee at risk or posing a threat to co-workers.
- »Understanding the engineering and geoscience licensure regulations and what the employee chooses to do in terms of practicing status, non-practicing status, ensuring continuing professional development (CPD) hours, or cancelling their license and the implications for technical project work.
- »An organizational framework and policy should be in place to ensure a consistent approach. Thought needs to be put into understanding what needs to be documented and kept on file. As part of this guide, there are personas that can be used as tools to test against frameworks and policies to ensure equity and inclusivity. The personas used in conjunction with this guide present a specific learning scenario or vignette for individuals to use to highlight options, ideas and/or actions and suggestions.
- »Encouraging team leaders to set up one-on-one planning meetings with the employee. At this stage, both the employer and the employee are aware of the applicable legislation and policy information. There should be a series of planned one-on-one meetings with the employee, and a plan created based on the discussion.
  - »Consider setting up weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly meetings to provide both the employer and the employee with an opportunity to discuss how things are going and to address any questions or concerns that may be on the parties' minds.
  - »It is important for the employer to create a safe place where the employee feels comfortable engaging in discussion. Creating a set mini agenda will help with this and assessing what the employee may need will be helpful, as their needs may change as their leave approaches.
  - »Keeping communication open and transparent with the employee also shows them that their employer cares and is there to help make the transition as smooth and stress-free as possible.
  - »It is important that employers understand what information can be shared during and beyond a one-on-one discussion.
- »Providing on-going training for leaders, to ensure a compassionate and empathetic approach with an open and transparent communication style, and a 360 anonymous feedback loop will ensure the employee feels supported by their leader and the organization. Active listening will help to ensure mutual understanding and that expectations are managed. Part of this is also understanding the privacy and confidentiality boundaries of discussing leaves.
- »Ensuring the leader understands what the Human Resources department has for framework and policy with regards to benefits and disability coverage, pensions/retirement savings, transition planning, career planning, and employee resource groups and being open to discussing these with their employee will help common understanding.
- »A performance expectation of any leader should be to know their people's performance and career aspirations. When there are discussions on promotion, project assignments, department reorganization, mergers and acquisitions, and other shifts in duties or teams, a leader needs to be able to represent all their team members, even those on leave.
- »Planning for a baby shower or departure party for the employee. This is a great opportunity to show the employee that the employer values the role they play. Going the extra mile to host the employee a virtual or in-person baby shower or office party can make a positive difference in how they feel about working for the organization. It is also an enjoyable way to boost office morale with a fun get-

together for your employees. By pre-planning and engaging in open and transparent discussions, all parties should feel prepared and informed of the next steps.

- » Making sure the employee has created a transition/career plan. In this plan, the employer and the employee can:
  - » Explore potential post-leave career pathways for the employee.
  - » Explore possibilities of training and education before, during and after leave. As required, understand the employee's professional development requirements for maintaining member status with their regulator.
  - » Discuss the employee's transition plan for all current projects and responsibilities and ensure communication with all affected parties.
  - » Decide whether the employee will have a transitional or permanent replacement and whether it will be by an internal or external person. Initiate necessary recruiting processes, giving time consideration to knowledge transfer and training.
  - » Discuss a stay-in-touch plan. Discuss the employee's preferences for staying in touch while they are on leave. If the employee wants to remain in touch, designate a leave liaison, typically a peer or colleague, who will actively engage the employee on leave as per the staying-in-touch plan.
- » Talking to the employee regarding company tools and resources: whether the employee can keep their equipment such as laptop and phone to continue working or communicating with the employer.

## **For leaders to consider before leave:**

- » Understanding that the employee may require adjustments and accommodations to working conditions and job requirements during the pregnancy to ensure the health, safety, and wellness of the individual and the infant. It is noted that in the case of adoption, accommodation for short-notice trips may be required. Time-off will also be required for medical appointments and there may be notice for short-term sick leave (e.g., bed rest).
- » Understanding that each pregnancy, foster situation, and adoption is different, with a different amount of stress on everyone. Ensure the workload and job expectations are managed and accommodation is being made as needed and agreed to by the employee and understood by larger teams and departments and clients.
- » With each experience being unique, it must be understood that there are also circumstances that should have support and care built around them, such as miscarriages, terminations, still births, and unsuccessful fertility treatment, all of which have a physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental effect on the individuals and will often be accompanied by grief cycles. Not all policies accommodate for these circumstances, but a leading organization will be caring and accommodating in these regards and ensure access to time-off, flexibility in work amount and access to supports. In some jurisdictions, an employee experiencing these circumstances may be eligible for job-protected leave.
- » As a leader, understanding what information the employee is comfortable sharing with work colleagues is also important. There may be those on the team with professional and personal relationships with the employee; understand that what is shared with you as a leader is subject to privacy and confidential information requirements.
- » Being aware that employees may also choose to have multiple children and that parental leaves may come close together for an individual. It is important to recognize that employees (new or current), in many jurisdictions, are protected from harassment and discrimination in the workplace under the protected ground of Family Status.
- » Consideration of how to celebrate and recognize this change with your employee and your team is important in building places of belonging. For example, will you host a baby shower? Provide a gift? Have a team lunch? Work with the employee on creating and distributing a staff announcement?
- » The off-boarding and on-boarding process is vital, especially from the perspective of the employee, who wants to continue feeling they are valued and are part of the organizational family. To ensure belonging, communication is key. It is recommended that certain and agreed-upon IT/email/chat platform access continues with consideration for continued access to company newsletters, social functions, and professional development activities. In discussions with the employee, the leader can work towards a common understanding for what is reasonable for involvement, knowing that this will need to be adjusted as the leave unfolds, as the infant and parental obligations are dynamic. When on-boarding after the leave, be sure to put in the proper requests to ensure that everything is ready for the employee when they return.
- » Understanding what the Human Resources department has for framework and policy with regards to benefits and disability coverage, pensions/retirement savings, transition planning, career planning, and employee resource groups and being open to discussing these with their employee.

»A performance expectation of any leader should be to know their people's performance and career aspirations. When there are discussions on promotion, project assignments, department reorganization, mergers and acquisitions, and other shifts in duties or teams, a leader needs to be able to represent all their team members, even those on leave.

## **For employees to consider prior to leave:**

- »When employees embark on expanding their family, whether it is through pregnancy, adoption, fostering, or becoming a guardian, it requires delicate and intentional change management and is accompanied by its own level of stress.
- »The employee should research and understand leave legislation for their jurisdiction and company. This applies whether the employee is pregnant, the partner, or a parent-to-be who is adopting. In all these situations, it is important to understand the rights and responsibilities regarding maternity and parental leave in their respective jurisdiction.
- »Determining your sources of income while on leave. You can start making a list of all possible expenses while on leave, such as health, dental and travel expenses, RRSPs, mortgage payments and other regular expenses, member dues (consult with your regulator as some offer programs for deferment or reduction of annual dues). With the list, you will have a better idea of the total expenses and determine if they can afford it without any income. In the meantime, you can also find out whether you qualify for EI or QPIP (if residing in Quebec) during your leave.
- »Knowing *how* and *when* to approach your leader/employer. Know that legally, there is a minimum time frame, and due to privacy/confidentiality laws, you may not need to disclose medical details and can simply turn in a medical note.
- »If you are comfortable, build the confidence to have difficult or uncomfortable conversations with your leader around career and family planning, as this will allow for a smoother transition. It is important though that you feel safe in what you share and are clear about what you are sharing in confidence. In a safe and brave place, you and your leader should be able to calmly discuss questions and concerns from both sides and discuss where you can work together to come to an agreeable path forward. It is important to acknowledge that this experience may change you – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually – and that your needs and the agreed upon path forward need to be flexible and dynamic, with open and on-going discussions. When having these conversations, know that the right to share information of a private or confidential nature may be legally protected. You have certain legal obligations to what you need to share and when and what you may choose not to share.

### *Things to consider **when disclosing to your leader:***

- »Are there safety considerations to ensure the health and wellness of you and your infant? (e.g., not working in the lab, around chemicals, field work, access to alternate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), modified or limited work schedule.)
- »Will you need time off for medical appointments?
- »What other stress may have to be considered – cultural needs, family expectations, additional childcare, work capacity, time off, access to benefits, career planning, etc.?
- »How will you talk about any unforeseen circumstances, such as miscarriages, still births, or unsuccessful fertility treatments? And what do you need to ensure your safety, health, and well-being?
- »How will you talk about situations in which the relationship with the other parent is unsafe and there is possible threat, violence, or intended harm?
- »Are there any anticipated upcoming organizational changes that will impact your position – such as mergers and acquisitions, departmental re-organizations, change in clients, or projects, promotional opportunities and/or professional development opportunities?
- »How can you remain connected and feel like you belong to the team and organization while on leave? How can you adjust the plan and communication while on leave?
- »What and when do you want to share with the team and larger organization around your family planning, noting that there are legal frameworks in place to protect your privacy and confidentiality?

After the initial conversation with your leader, the discussion needs to be on-going, as your life will be in constant change with varying impacts. For example, if you are planning to adopt internationally, the call to go meet the family usually has a short time frame and requires you to have unplanned time off.

Typically, the next step is to contact your Human Resources department and let them know of the leave, any supports you need, and to access existing supports and get clarity on policies and frameworks in place.

### *Things to consider **when talking to Human Resources:***

- »What are the current policies surrounding maternity and parental leave, access to benefits, accommodations, flexible work arrangements? What other supports are available?
- »What forms need to be submitted and by when?
- »What needs to be documented?
- »Do you work through your leader solely on things like company access when off on leave and retaining hardware (cell phones, laptops, docking stations, company vehicles, etc.)?
- »When do you need documentation from healthcare practitioners?
- »What will be the impact to your salary – what does it mean if “the company tops up” and how does this work with Employment Insurance (EI)/QPIP benefits?
- »How does the leave interact with your years of service and possible promotions, salary increases, vacation and personal days, pension and retirement plans, and taxes?
- »What supports and policies are in place for when you come back from a leave?
- »Are there job-sharing options, access to lactation rooms, ability to bring kids to work events, on-site childcare?
- »Are there flexible work options? This may include adjustment of start/end times, part-time work, gradual return to work, ability to work longer days for a day off lieu, remote work options, etc.)

*Things for employees to **consider for their professional status**:*

As an engineer or geoscientist, you also need to think about how you will handle your active, practicing status. Each provincial and territorial regulator has different options available, such as:

- »In some provinces and territories, you can keep your active, practicing status if you have enough practicing hours from the past three years, which is the simplest option. Note that you will still have to pay the annual licensing fee and document your continuing professional hours if this is a requirement.
- »In some provinces and territories, you can move to non-practicing status by simply completing a form. Upon return to work you will have to complete a reinstatement form to active, practicing status.
- »You always have the option of cancelling your license, noting though that the time to re-activate or restore your license may be significant and could impact your on-boarding and technical work upon your return to work.

The other regulatory consideration is if you hold the *Responsible Member* position for a company’s Permit to Practice or Certificate of Authorization and to ensure that this responsibility is transferred to another active, practicing professional.

*Things to consider **with your leader after the initial conversation**:*

Further discussion considerations with your leader are as follows, as your leave approaches:

- »Ensuring your career plan is understood by both parties and what happens if there are organizational changes, project opportunities, or a merger and acquisition. Part of this discussion is the anticipated professional development and technical skills training that you may require upon your return.
- »Amount or frequency of communication during your leave, how much you want to be engaged in work activities during leave, and how your leader can contact you, with consideration of the type of communication (if providing work/service there may be an impact if you are collecting benefits from the federal EI/QPIP programs).
- »Discussing any other accommodations and time off that is required.
- »Talk about what you envision the on-boarding process to look like and when you plan to give notice of your return.

## **During Transition**

### **Overview**

Once the child arrives, it is time for the employee to concentrate on not only enjoying the newest member, but also finding balance, rest, and ensuring your and your child’s health. It can be a time of constant change as the child grows and as the carrier’s body and needs re-center as well. In the case of fostering or adoption, the family may be learning a new culture and language in order to create a healthy environment for the child.

With an agreed-upon plan at work, you should be able to focus on your family and not worry about unknowns of the return to work.

For an organization, the transition plan should be in place and be implemented – which includes keeping the employee’s career aspirations in mind, keeping the agreed upon communication and access open, and ensuring that both the organization and the employee still feel a sense of belonging.

## **For employers and leaders to consider during leave:**

- » Leaders need to recognize that the employee is entitled to job-protected leave. For workplace planning, consideration of how to cover the leave should be in place, for example, with short-term contracts.
- » The leader should understand that the employee has no obligation to provide technical service nor take part in any work. While the employee is on leave though, if the employee is wanting to engage in performing technical work (“service”), the organization can engage in an arrangement. Although this is not generally encouraged, it may be reasonable and consensual that the employee does provide a level of service while caring for their family. The employer and the employee will have to understand both the personal and the financial impact while they are on leave, with special consideration if the employee is collecting federal employment benefits while on leave (e.g., EI/QPIP).
- » During performance review times, leaders need to consider years of service accrual, knowing that even though the individual is not engaging in technical work, being a parent develops valuable skills such as time management, budgeting, negotiation, managing expectations, and stress management. Employees on leave should be considered for raises and promotional opportunities. If this is not the case, it is sometimes referred to as the “pregnancy penalty”.
- » Since the employee’s career aspirations were discussed before the leave, it is vital that the leader and organization keep the employee in mind, even when the employee is on leave and is not present to represent themselves. This needs to be considered during organizational discussions, project opportunities, succession planning, and people development and business planning. This should have been captured in a transition/career plan with the employee.
- » From the prior discussions with the employee, access to and requirements for the employee’s professional development should be understood. The plan for the employee’s professional status should have already been conveyed to the regulator.
- » When preparing for the return of the employee, know that there are legal notification obligations within Canada. In most jurisdictions, employers must give the employees their same, or equivalent, job back when they return to work.
- » Understanding that the employee, upon return, will require on-boarding, training, and continuing professional development to ensure that their current technical and professional skillset meets the expectations of their work and team. During the leave, the organization may have changed, and the individual may have a new leader and team—time for adjustment will be needed. When planning for on-boarding, be sure to put in the requests to ensure that everything is ready for the employee on their expected date of return.
- » Reviewing the transition plan co-created by the employee and the employer and follow-through with those agreed upon commitments, such as preferences of communication, training opportunities, and promotion opportunities.

## **For employees to consider during leave:**

When employees are ready to disclose their pregnancy or child adoption to their employer, respecting that there are minimum legal notification timelines, an employee should consider:

- » Childcare arrangements. One of the key considerations is planning your return to work and childcare arrangements. Currently, most daycares have a waiting list of up to a year or more, so do not delay with researching, exploring, and deciding on childcare arrangements. You may also want to explore your child attending a day or two a week to allow transition time before you return to work.
- » Finding a support network. Explore new-parent or adoptive-parent groups. Visit a public library, use your community networks or simply search the internet for other ways to connect.
- » Continuing with professional development activities. You can continue with professional development activities as discussed with your employer and keep records so you can verify attendance if required. Examples include reading technical journals and taking part in other informal learning, continuing your volunteer activities—by teleconference or email if necessary—completing a web-based course, attending conferences and corresponding professional development seminars, or attending regulator professional development seminars, if available.

Employees should also consider the following questions before going back to work:

- »Are you returning to the same position or an equivalent?
- »How has the organization, your team, and your leader's vision changed while on leave?
- »Will you be going through a full on-boarding process?
- »What training needs to be taken or re-taken?
- »What human resources policies are in place that you can access as a parent?
- »What would you like for flexibility and accommodation that is different than before? (e.g., work from home, flexible work hours, minimal travel, access to on-site childcare, need for a lactation room, more personal time to care for children)?
- »If you are considering an additional parental leave shortly after you return, how will the transition work? (Only share what you are comfortable and feel safe to share with your leader.)
- »Has your career vision/path changed from your perspective? If so, what opportunities are there within your organization so that you continue to be passionate about your work and that your duties fit your personal and professional goal?
- »What forms do you need to adjust beneficiaries, adding a dependent to benefits, and are there any other support groups available?

## After Transition

### Overview

When an employee comes back from maternity and parental leave, everyone needs to recognize that things have permanently changed. The organizational priorities may have shifted, leaders may have different teams, colleagues may have departed the organization, and there may be new people that the employee doesn't know. The employee now must balance their work and personal lives differently, and the health and safety needs of the employee may be different - leaders especially need to understand this.

### For employers and leaders to consider after leave:

- »Understanding that the employee, upon return, may be a different person with additional parental obligations and different career objectives. A framework for support for parent employees may already be in place, and this would include accommodation practices such as flexible work arrangements, job sharing, limitations on work travel, and benefit coverages for child dependents.
- »With the COVID-19 pandemic, leading practice for flexible workplaces and policies has evolved.[18] Practice now considers:
  - »Location flexibility, such as telecommuting, hybrid work arrangements, and snowbird programs
  - »Schedule flexibility, such as flextime, adjustment to hours, averaging arrangements, shift work, part-time schedules, and job sharing
  - »Supports for working parents for a variety of situations, such as working from home with kids, childcare with teleworking, flexible hours for back-to-school season, child sickness, and school closure days, consideration to work sharing or nanny sharing.
- »Understanding that the employee, upon return, will require on-boarding, training, and continuing professional development to ensure that their current technical and professional skillset meets the expectations of their work and team. During the leave, the organization may have changed, and the individual may have a new leader and team—time for adjustment will be needed.
- »It is recommended the employer arranges an orientation (like that of a new employee) with their returning employee during their first week or two back to work. Discuss what has changed and what has remained intact and set expectations for a successful return to work. On the day of return, introduce the employee to the staff members (as some may be new). Two weeks before the employee's return, initiate arrangements for office, computer, supplies, and other administrative supports. Ensure the Human Resources department is in communication with the employee.
- »As the employee is preparing to return, ensure that all IT requests are submitted so that their workspace, IT needs, and network connections are ready upon return.
- »Upon return from leave, a leader should always reconnect with their employee to see if there is any shift in career aspirations, what needs to be re-balanced, and how to manage expectations of the team and larger organizations with those that you have agreed to with the employee. Life and career priorities are likely to shift with a new addition to their family.

- »Setting up one-on-one meetings. Remember to set up one-on-one meetings with the employee to review how the back-to-work transition is progressing (what is going well, what is challenging) and to simply check in on their progress. As the employee has been off for a period of months to over a year, it is important to discuss and review with the employee the frequency of these check-ins. We suggest the meetings are set up for the first month and then reviewed at the end of that month for continuation into the following month. Ensure this schedule works for you and your employee.
- »Organizations must also consider that the Occupational Health and Safety Act has stipulation around domestic violence as a workplace hazard (FOOTNOTE). If an employee finds themselves in an unsafe and unhealthy relationship with a risk of a partner coming into the workplace, putting the targeted employee at risk or posing a threat to co-workers, the organization has a legal obligation to implement an appropriate policy and procedure as part of a violence prevention plan. Everyone needs to be kept safe.
- »Providing on-going training for leaders to ensure a compassionate and empathetic approach with an open and transparent communication style, and a 360 anonymous feedback loop will ensure the employee feels supported by their leaders and organization. Active listening will help to ensure a common understanding and that expectations are managed. Part of this is also understanding the privacy and confidentiality boundaries of discussing leaves.

## For employees to consider after leave:

- »Consider if and how your career aspirations have changed and be sure to continue working towards open and transparent conversations with your leaders.
- »Be patient about being “ready to return to work.” Getting back into a professional routine and adjusting to changes in the work environment could take longer than expected. Feeling “normal” again will happen at your own pace.
- »Contact your Human Resources department and update your new dependent information—thinking about effects to benefits, insurance, working hours, and learn more about leave, flexible policies, time-off, and how you will balance your new home life with that of work expectations.
- »If you are thinking about continuing to extend your family, be sure to take what you have learned from this parental and maternity leave experience in order to ensure future leaves are smoother. If the situation allows, provide feedback to the leader and organization as well, so they can update and improve existing frameworks and policies.
- »If your organization has built employee resource groups for parents, be sure to join and share your experience and mentor others planning to take leave and those who are already balancing family life with that of working.
- »Request one-on-one check-ins with your leader. Write down questions and follow-up in your one-on-one check-in meetings. Meet with your leader to update your transition and career plan for returning from leave. Discuss potential projects, training opportunities, and any organizational and staffing changes.

## Concluding Remarks

Engineers Canada and Geoscientists Canada’s goal is to ensure the leave and the transition before, during and after maternity and parental leave is well-managed, thoughtful, and considerate for both the employers and the employees. It is acknowledged that legal requirements, leading practices, and the unique parental situations are dynamic and ever changing, and as such this is a living document with regular content updates.

If you have comments or questions, please contact Engineers Canada.

## Scenarios

### Introduction

These fictional personas will personalize the challenges that engineers and geoscientists may experience before, during, or on return to work from parental leave and also present a specific “learning scenario or vignette” for us to use to highlight content/options and ideas.

**Goal:** Learn approaches, actions, or interventions to better manage and empower the person experiencing the leave.

**Benefits:**

- »Increase understanding of the options, legal rights, entitlements, and best practices available to employers and employees.
- »Build knowledge of supports available before, during, and after leave for health and wellness, with a focus on reducing stigma and ensuring self-care practices are in place.
- »Develop awareness and empathy for the diversity of parental leave experiences with a goal of understanding and being able to respond to individual requests and/or circumstances.

## **Indira Balav (she/her): Navigating leave as a newcomer to Canada**

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### **Indira Balav (she/her)**

*Junior Engineer*

Age: 26

Years of Service: 2

I am originally from India and I came to Canada a couple years ago with my partner. I took a one-year education program and started working on a post-graduate work permit. We just had our first child. My husband travels often for work, so frequently during the weekdays I will be parenting solo while working full time.

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### **What I'm proud of and enjoy:**

I am proud of my degree in civil engineering and securing an engineering job in Canada. I am proud of what I have overcome to get where I am, and I appreciate the support I get from my family and the Muslim community.

### **My parental leave experience:**

My partner received an offer for a job in Canada, which was our catalyst to emigrate. I was a few weeks pregnant when I graduated, and I wasn't sure of how that might impact my job search, so I kept that to myself until I started work.

We are building our local network and settling into our new life. My employer was supportive of my leave (which required some research and learning for them, given my immigration status), and also communicated an expectation that I return to work as soon as I'm able to.

### **My struggles and challenges:**

I plan to have a larger family, but I already feel overwhelmed about returning to work – long hours and trips into the field with my child at daycare when my husband is away won't work, so I am developing relationships so that others can help with child care. My employer does not know of these struggles, as I am worried about losing my job if I ask for more flexibility. It would be easier to just stay at home, but we need the dual income, and I am keen to build a career.

### **How I wish my employer would support me:**

I've always been interested in flexible hours because it would support my ability to pray during the day. Now, flexible hours and working from home would help resolve my biggest source of stress as I'm not sure how I will manage child care when I return to work.

### **What steps I took:**

I reviewed my company's HR policies, and there was an absence of information about flexible hours, working from home or spiritual practice. I spoke to a lot of people at our mosque about their experiences and followed up on their tips, and also researched options for child care and financial support online. I talked with HR to confirm the process steps.

### **What I wish I had known:**

I wish I would have had a checklist of all the to-dos for taking parental leave in advance. There is a lot of information to be aware of, and I found myself tripping over things I did not expect, like tax and immigrant or citizenship status implications, and I was then overwhelmed with all the things I wasn't aware of that affected me and my family.

### **What I learned:**

Figuring out child-care costs, providers, getting on wait lists, etc. is a long and evolving process that has to start before the baby is born. I was very nervous about conversations with my employer but learned that people are generally supportive of professional women starting families. Finally, and most importantly, I learned that some of my challenges fell under the category of mental health, and that seeking support from the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is common and helpful and doesn't make me weak.

#### **What I'd share with others to make it easier:**

Having a child and becoming a working parent is beautiful but also has an unexpected side – stress, anxiety, depression. It's okay to not feel okay all the time and to seek help or support.

Work with your employer to plan both your leave and your longer-term career. Finally, prepare for child care (if needed) well in advance.

#### **Resources**

- » *What is an EAP?*
- » *Child care in Canada: Types, cost, and tips for newcomers*
- » *El maternity and parental benefits*
- » *Employment standards*

## **David Jenkins (he/they): Navigating leave when adopting**

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### **David Jenkins (he/they)**

*Mid-level Engineer*

Age: 31

Years of Service: 7

I am from Canada and in the process of adopting a little girl who has a physical disability. My partner and I will have to travel on short notice to pick up our child.

I am the first non-female at my workplace to take parental leave for an adoption.

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#### **What I'm proud of and enjoy:**

I cannot wait to start my family! We struggled with getting pregnant, which was hard on my relationship and on my partner's health. After many years, we have decided to adopt, and I am so excited that we passed the selection criteria. I am proud to be the first non-female employee on parental leave and hope the policies created will encourage more fathers and other parents to take leave.

#### **My parental leave experience:**

I have asked HR for advice regarding adoption leave, but they only have a policy for maternity leave, so they are getting back to me. I have searched the government websites for help, but there isn't as much information as I hoped. I have found a few online support groups, which seem to help. People at work don't seem to see that parental leave is as appropriate as maternity leave – I'm getting a lot more questions from co-workers than I expected.

#### **My struggles and challenges:**

I am a mid-level engineer and lead a team. I have a lot of demands that make me stay close to my cell phone even on evenings and weekends. I am worried that when we get the last-minute call to pick-up our daughter, the parental leave expectations won't be clear. My partner is putting pressure on me to make sure everything is ready, and it seems that my employer is moving very slowly. If I am struggling with this now, what happens when I may have questions around accommodations due to my child having disabilities?

#### **How I wish my employer would support me:**

My leader is struggling to give me answers, and my employer is slow to develop policy or guidelines for my adoption leave. I would appreciate knowing what the rules are. My work is fairly flexible and social but no one seems to really understand the stresses I have about accommodations plus I am about to be a parent to a child with a disability.

#### **What steps I took:**

In the absence of employer policy, I researched the provincial Employment Standards (adoption leave) and became familiar with the Human Rights legislation (protected ground of disability). I continue to work with my employer to ensure a policy is developed to enable clear expectations for all parties. I am finding I really need to advocate for myself and why I am making the choice to be the primary caregiver.

### **What I wish I had known:**

As soon as my partner and I started talking adoption, I wish I would have researched both the employer policies (or absence of) and the provincial legislation for understanding of accommodations and minimum entitlements. I also did not expect all the questions/judgement from others – I might have searched out an online support group earlier.

### **What I learned:**

The employer may not have documents prepared for every situation -communication and follow-up written documentation is very important. Drafting a transition plan for short notice leaves and discussing and assessing what is critical so that coverage could be ensured, allowed my employer to understand my situation, which led to them supporting me.

### **What I'd share with others to make it easier:**

In my situation, there are a lot of "moving parts" - write down what is needed and when, or use a checklist to support this. Talk to HR around EDI and accommodation policies – create this conversation, as often people will have different requirements based on their individual situations. Finally, connect with government agencies and support groups as they have likely been in similar situations – it is a safe place to ask the tough questions, especially if it is a new experience.

### **Resources**

- » *Paternity Leave: All the facts you need to know about Paternity Leave in Canada and why taking Paternity Leave is a good start to fatherhood.*
- » *How to Prepare for Paternity Leave*
- » *Employment standards*
- » *Planning Maternity or Paternity Leave: A Professional's Guide*
- » *Transition Plan Steps*

## **Jin Li (she/they): Navigating leave and career advancement**

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### **Jin Li (she/they)**

*Senior Engineer*

Age: 42

Years of Service: 15

I am pregnant for the second time – this time with twins!

I have worked hard to be a senior leader in my company and have eyes on C-Suite career opportunities.

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### **What I'm proud of and enjoy:**

I am very proud of the career I have established, the teams I have led, and the projects that I have successfully completed on budget and ahead of schedule. I have been working hard to be considered for promotions and should be given credit for how I have been balancing being a parent and a professional – this is not easy to do!

### **My parental leave experience:**

My first parental leave went fairly smooth, except that I was overlooked for a promotion. My leader isn't very empathetic and doesn't know the HR policies very well, as parental leaves at the more senior levels have not been common in the past. I have been back to work for eight months and I am getting set for my second leave; I heard there may be a promotional opportunity while I am away.

### **My struggles and challenges:**

During this parental leave, our company will be acquiring another company. During my first parental leave, I don't believe my leader even tabled my name for a promotion – I felt out of sight, out of mind. I am worried that with a re-org, my leader may not represent me. While I have expressed this to HR, it doesn't seem like there is much I can do. I am worried that assumptions will be made about my motivation and capacity based on being a mom of new twins, not how I have always shown up as a professional.

#### **How I wish my employer would support me:**

I wish my leader would see the skill set and abilities that I have. I am ready for a high-level position and have the confidence and support from my staff.

I do not believe my leader thinks I can be both a capable parent of a young family and an executive.

#### **What steps I took:**

I chose to adjust my approach with my leader and communicated that I would like to keep in touch on what's happening as well as kept current on the status of any re-orgs while I am on leave. During my conversations with HR, I reiterated that I would like to be eligible to apply for opportunities of interest. I am working to make sure that I will not be overlooked.

#### **What I wish I had known:**

There are providers who support parents in their desire to be a professional and a parent – to help mothers, their families, and their employers, turn the “motherhood penalty” into a leadership, growth, and talent retention advantage.

I wish I also would have initiated earlier conversations with my leader regarding my career hopes and aspirations. I expected they would naturally be conscious of this while I was away but learned that was not a correct assumption.

#### **What I learned:**

I've learned that I need to be confident to advocate for myself and challenge any unfair assumptions put onto people taking leave. I am an asset to my company and recognize that engineering needs more women and BIPOC employees and that I can work with my employer to achieve shared needs and objectives.

#### **What I'd share with others to make it easier:**

It IS possible to be both a professional and a parent. Ask for the flexibility you may need to deliver on your work accountabilities and on your parenting accountabilities.

Ensure supports are in place (both personally and at work) to stay in touch with the workplace if that's what you choose to do.

#### **Resources**

- » *Maternity leave planning – 16 essential questions to ask your employer*
- » *A pregnant pause: what I learnt taking maternity leave*
- » *Pros & Babes*
- » *Employment standards*

## **Cynthia Crowfoot (she/her): Taking leave to support family**

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### **Cynthia Crowfoot (she/her)**

*Field Engineer*

Age: 36

Years of Service: 12

I am a proud Cree mom of two and am set to be a kookum (grandmother).

I started out as a technologist and recently got my engineering degree and am starting in the field to gain experience.

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#### **What I'm proud of and enjoy:**

I am proud of my Cree culture and spiritual beliefs, as well as that I just recently received my engineering degree! I enjoy spending time with my daughter, and I am super excited to be a kookum.

### **My parental leave experience:**

I took my parental leaves while I was in technologist school (many years ago). It took me longer to get my diploma. Once I learned from others at work that I could transfer into engineering, I did that. I now want to take "grandparent time off" to help my daughter with the birth of her child. She is going to have her traditionally, at home, and needs prayer and family around her.

### **My struggles and challenges:**

There is a lot of aggression and discrimination toward me and other Black, Indigenous, people of colour, and under-represented groups within my workplace. I keep my head down and do my work, but there are a lot of hurtful comments, especially that I am going to be a kookum soon. I am proud though, and smudge and pray in secret.

### **How I wish my employer would support me:**

My employer doesn't seem to understand how family works for First Nations people. There is no category of time off for helping out for the birth of a granddaughter. I am still considered a junior employee and may have to take this as part of my two weeks of vacation time.

### **What steps I took:**

I decided to talk with my manager and HR (jointly) to inquire about possible leave and what options are available to me. On top of that, I researched provincial Human Rights Legislation and read that race is a protected ground. After learning this, I advised my manager and HR that I have been the subject of aggression and discrimination in the workplace - they supported me through this process.

### **What I wish I had known:**

There is protection and support for individuals who may experience racism in the workplace; I wish I would have reached out to HR earlier to discuss the situation as I feel I am an advocate not only to educate, but to teach and explain my culture and heritage to others in my workplace.

Although I am not taking a parental leave, there may be options available to support family members who may be taking maternity or parental leave - I wish I would have inquired sooner.

### **What I learned:**

That First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples have been oppressed in Canada and systemic racism exists - organizations are working to take up the Calls to Action and build equitable places for Indigenous Peoples.

I need to share my Truth in order to heal and for organizations to grow along with me.

Often non-Indigenous colleagues and leaders are still un-learning and are working up the courage to ask about my culture and my experiences.

### **What I'd share with others to make it easier:**

Be proud of your culture. Ensure you take time to heal and recover. Work to understand the culture of the organization and their approach on diversity, equity, and inclusion and understand how to convey my needs. Also, whenever you can, ensure you feel the company culture aligns with its policies.

### **Resources**

- » *Everything you need to know about anti-racism in the workplace*
- » *Centre for Race and Culture*
- » *Employment standards*
- » *Human Rights in Canada*

## **Ashley McVera (she/her): Navigating leave in a small company**

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### **Ashley McVera (she/her)**

*Field Engineer  
Mechanical EIT*

Age: 29  
Years of Service: 3

I am an engineer-in-training and recently found out I am pregnant!

I am currently on a fly in-out project and I am scared to tell my boss about this. I am concerned this could impact my employment or career options with this company and delay my P.Eng. application.

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### **What I'm proud of and enjoy:**

I am proud of graduating with a mechanical engineering degree. I am also excited to become a parent, though I was hoping to get a bit more work experience before starting a family and I am worried that it will affect my career aspirations.

### **My parental leave experience:**

I have never been on maternity or parental leave; I don't even know where to start finding information about being a parent or about budgetary implications. My field work doesn't give me much time to talk with HR (or do anything outside of work really!). I work in a small company and our HR person is only part-time too and I hardly see my boss. I feel overwhelmed by it all.

### **My struggles and challenges:**

I am more introverted, and my family calls me a "people pleaser." I am a planner and worry about many things - becoming a new parent, the effect this will have on my job - will I be dismissed or be sidelined?

I am still figuring out what to do with my career. I don't know my legal rights and I've heard others talk of prejudice - am I being stereotyped too? What do I do?

### **How I wish my employer would support me:**

I wish the workplace felt safe so I was comfortable talking about my worries with my boss, HR, or even just colleagues.

I tried googling and going to the company website, but there is nothing there to help.

### **What steps I took:**

I researched the provincial employment standards, the eligible benefits under the federal program (EI/QPIP) and our company policies. I then booked meetings with HR to ensure I understand what they needed and when - I also understood what I needed to disclose to my boss and when. I continued to work with HR to ensure I can safely fly in/out and perform my job while protecting myself and my baby.

### **What I wish I had known:**

Relax and stay calm! There is so much to figure out and getting anxious and worrying only makes it worse. I also would have talked with my doctor early on about the work I do. My doctor let me know what I can and cannot do and my employer may be able to accommodate me at all stages of my pregnancy. I also wish I had known it is okay to be scared - there are supports out there to help.

### **What I learned:**

I was viewing being pregnant as a liability to my employer, rather than a protected ground for accommodation. I learned that the employer is responsible to work with me and ideally have policies, procedures, and checklists in place to make this easier on everyone involved. There is responsibility on all parties, not just me.

### **What I'd share with others to make it easier:**

You are not in this alone - the employer is here to support and accommodate parents to-be. There are central online sources of information to assist individuals who may be taking maternity/parental leave. I encourage employers to educate and train employees and managers on their policies and procedures so that the offerings and benefits are inclusive to all employees in all situations.

### **Resources**

- » *Federal EI Program*
- » *Employment standards*

## Appendix 1: Legislative resources

### Alberta

*Alberta - Maternity and Parental leave*

*Alberta Employment Standards Code*

### British Columbia

*Government of British Columbia*

*Pregnancy leave - Act Part 6, Section 50*

*Parental Leave, Act Part 6, Section 51*

### Manitoba

*Manitoba Maternity Leave*

Maternity Leave Fact Sheet

Parental Leave Fact Sheet

### New Brunswick

*Government of New Brunswick -Maternity Leave and Child Care Leave*

### Newfoundland and Labrador

*Labour Standards Division Government of Newfoundland and Labrador*

*Labour Standards Act*

### Northwest Territories

*GNWT - Types of Leaves*

*Employment Standards Fact Sheet*

*Employment Standards Act*

### Nova Scotia

*Nova Scotia Labour, Skills and Immigration*

### Nunavut

*Nunavut Labour Standards Act*

### Ontario

*Ontario Pregnancy and parental leave*

### Prince Edward Island

*Government of Prince Edward Island*

*Guide to Employment Standards*

### Quebec

*CNESST Maternity leave*

Five-day Leave

*CNESST Paternity leave*

Québec Parental Insurance Plan

Labour Standards in Quebec

For a Safe Maternity Experience Program

## **Saskatchewan**

*Saskatchewan Family Leaves*

*Saskatchewan Requirements for All Leaves*

## **Yukon**

*Yukon - Find out about maternity and parental leave*

*Maternity and parental leave fact sheet*

## **Federal**

EI maternity and parental benefits

# **Endnotes**

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[15] Alison Grenier, “Supporting Working moms - Before, During and After Maternity Leave”, Great Places to Work Publication, 2017.

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[17] Government of Alberta, “Domestic violence in the workplace”, 2021.

[18] SHRM, “Managing Flexible Work Arrangements”.