

**BLACKBIRD**



**BLACKBIRD VENTURES  
PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY**

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# Parental Leave Policy

This parental leave policy applies with effect from 1 January 2022.

## Purpose

We want to support you to not only do the best work of your lives but also support your special life moments, such as welcoming a child to your family through birth, adoption, or surrogacy.

## Eligibility

You're eligible for the benefits under this policy if you:

- are an Australian permanent or fixed-term, full- or part-time Blackbird employee; and
- have, or will have responsibility, for the care of a new child.

To make it clear beyond any doubt, eligible parents include same sex or de-facto couples and single parents.

Blackbird has no minimum service requirements to take parental leave.

Casual employees with 12 months' service and a reasonable expectation of continuing employment on a regular and systematic basis may access the unpaid benefits provided by this policy together with the Commonwealth Government's paid parental leave scheme.

## Primary vs. Secondary caregiver designation

We strongly believe that parents should have equal opportunity to bond with their new family member, and don't believe in forcing a parent to designate themselves as a "primary" or "secondary" caregiver. We believe these designations create a false dichotomy that doesn't reflect the modern family, and doesn't reflect our values of diversity and equality; especially when we know that these designations typically disadvantage the careers of women more than men in the workplace.

We may still need a designation for Australian Government leave purposes, depending on legislative requirements, as varied from time to time, but we won't need it for our own Blackbird Parental Leave Policy.

So our policy is designed around bonding time, which will be equal for all parents, but also recognising the medical aspect of birth-giving that a parent experiences.

## Leave applications

Your right to privacy is important, but to help the team to plan for absences we require:

- that you let your manager know at least 10 weeks' notice before the intended start date of leave, which includes your intended start and end date of the leave. If this is not practicable, you must let your manager know as soon as practicable (which may be at a time after the leave has started); and

- that you re-confirm your intended start and end dates with your manager 4 weeks before your intended start date (or) advise your manager of any changes to the intended start and end dates of your leave, unless it is not practicable to do so.

This includes maternity leave, paternity and partner leave and adoption leave.

## **Paid Parental Leave**

Blackbird will provide you with 20 weeks of fully paid parental leave.

You can take this during the first two years of birth, adopting or fostering, and up to six weeks prior. We don't differentiate between primary and secondary carers at Blackbird, and all parents equally have access to this. You can take this leave either as a single block, or in several blocks.

Blackbird will additionally provide eligible birth-giving parents with an additional 4 weeks of paid leave.

Parental leave that isn't used within this period can't be carried over and/ or cashed out.

## **Paid Pre-Adoption or IVF Leave**

Prior to any Paid Parental Leave, if you are adopting a child, you will be entitled to two days of paid pre-adoption leave per annum to go to interviews to get approval for the adoption of the child. This same entitlement also applies to surrogacy planning.

If you are undergoing IVF treatment, you will be entitled to two days of paid IVF leave per annum to go to medical or other appointments associated with the treatment.

## **Additional Parental Leave entitlements under the Fair Work Act**

Under the Fair Work Act, and in addition to what Blackbird offers above, if you're an Australian employee, you may also be entitled to:

- Transfer to a safe job prior to parental leave
- Paid or unpaid no safe job leave in the event of a transfer not being possible
- Up to 18 weeks Government Parental Leave pay
- Up to 10 paid 'keep in touch' days during parental leave to use for office visits, team events and meetings
- Up to 12 months of unpaid parental leave (inclusive of your paid leave periods). You can also request an additional 12 months of unpaid parental leave by 4 weeks' notice in writing. Blackbird's decision as to whether that will be acceptable or not will be determined by Blackbird on reasonable business grounds with those reasons provided in writing.

You are eligible for parental leave under the *Fair Work Act* if you're an employee in Australia, and:

- Have worked with your employer for at least 12 months and the leave is associated with the birth of your child or your spouse or de facto partner's child, or the leave is associated with a child being placed with you for adoption, and
- Have, or will have responsibility, for the care of the child.

You may also be eligible for payment under the Australian Government Paid Parental Leave scheme, as varied from time to time, which includes 18 weeks of Parental Leave Pay or two weeks of Dad and Partner Pay.

In summary, you are entitled to a maximum of 24 months' parental leave, including all paid and unpaid components. When you return from unpaid parental leave, under the *Fair Work Act* you are entitled to return to your pre-parental leave job. If your job no longer exists, we'll consult with you during your leave about that change and you will be entitled to an available position for which you are qualified and suited, nearest in status and pay to the pre-parental leave position.

## **Other entitlements**

Annual leave continues to accrue during paid leave absences only.

Sick leave and superannuation continue to accrue during paid and unpaid leave absences up to a maximum of 12 months per child.

Carried interest vesting will continue during paid and unpaid leave absences up to a maximum of 12 months per child.

## **Returning to work**

When returning to work, for up to three months after returning from parental leave, you can choose to work four days per week, but be paid for a full five-day week.

Alternatively, you also have a right to request other flexible work arrangements, which Blackbird will consider on reasonable business grounds with a response provided to you in writing within 21 days of your request.

**Trigger warning.** The next section relates to pregnancy loss.

## **Special maternity leave**

Stillbirth or neonatal death is one of the most traumatic experiences a parent can experience. In these tragic circumstances, we will support you in every way we can. No two experiences are alike, and we will support you in the way that is best for you, but we wanted to outline the baseline entitlements.

In the tragic event of a stillbirth (from 20 weeks of pregnancy), or neonatal death (within 28 days of birth), you will still have access to Paid Parental Leave. You won't need to resubmit a new leave application, and the original application will still apply.

Miscarriages prior to 20 weeks of pregnancy will be eligible for Compassionate Leave, which is four weeks.

In the case of stillbirth or neonatal death, you may (at your full discretion) request to return to work by giving four weeks written notice to your manager.

Aside from the provisions of this policy relating to stillbirth or the death of a child, employees can still access unpaid parental leave in accordance with the provisions of the *Fair Work Act*.