

The Expecting Playbook

A playbook and pledge focused on supporting new parents in the workplace.

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Overview

The purpose of this playbook is to provide visibility into parental policies in tech companies, a topic that is often discussed behind closed doors. Similar to the way a football playbook is a “plan of action” or strategy used to move the ball down the field, The Expecting Playbook aims to be an out-of-the-box resource for startups, managers, and employees who are looking to start building their own parental leave policy at work.

By providing this resource, we hope to support equality and diversity in the workplace by allowing employees to have their families and careers run in parallel.

Who Is This Playbook Written For?

This Playbook is for small-to-medium sized startups, who are likely in a growth stage but do not yet have an HR leader. While the legal policies referenced in this playbook are specific to Canada, the philosophy of supporting new parents at work can be applied to any company regardless of geographic location.

Specifically, this playbook is written for founders, C-level executives, and key stakeholders of tech companies who have the ability to make tangible changes towards equitable workplaces.

Leading Tech with Thought Leadership:

As a policy implementer, you have the ability to drive community change through small action. Open sourcing parental policies set the expectations for our startup community to put thought into how they engage with parents in the workplace, and set precedents for these actions to be the standard.

Open and competitive parental policies are a tangible way to influence diversity and equity in tech:

- Providing all employees equal parental support and acting as a strong incentive for women to participate in the workforce while promoting gender equality.
- Transparency removes stress for employees that are family planning. Displaying this information upfront gives them a preemptive understanding of what they can expect from their employees
- An open and competitive policy serves as an incentive for attracting and retaining new talent.
- Removing uncertainty allows employees to put resources and time into work that is more valuable to the company.

Mothers in the Workplace

As early as the late 19th century in certain countries, taking a leave of absence was compulsory before and after birth for mothers. By the 1970s, as the ranks of working women rose, maternity leave was increasingly understood as a way to safeguard the health of women and children, giving mothers time to recover from childbirth and support their newborn children. Studies confirm that when women take maternity leave infant-mortality rates go down. (Liza Mundy, 2014)

Historically, women have taken on the role of leaving work to care for their children. While women have made significant strides towards gender equality in many areas, discrimination in the workplace due to pregnancy and breastfeeding continues to be a common occurrence. Since only women have the capacity to become pregnant, discrimination on the basis of pregnancy is a form of gender discrimination. (Ontario Human Rights Commission)

This discrimination can come in many forms. One form of discrimination includes employers who may choose to overlook a female candidate in favour someone who isn't interested in raising a family, and as a result women with children may struggle to advance in their workplace. Another type of discrimination can take the form of women who miss out on bonuses and pay increases while on leave (although it is prohibited by law to do so), consequently reinforcing the gender gap in compensation. Sociologist Shelley Correll's 2007 study shows that mothers are more heavily scrutinized

than both women without children and men with or without children. Her research demonstrates that motherhood results in biased evaluations of both competence and commitment to a job, that women with children can do the exact same quality work as those without children, and it will be perceived as less well done.

Advocating for Gender-Neutral Policies

Women have historically been faced with barriers to career advancement as a result of their gendered roles in family planning. In effect, we outline why gender-neutral policies are the strongest action towards leveling the playing field at work.¹

We encourage companies to extend their policies to their employees equally. In practice, this means providing any parental leave supports to your entire workforce regardless of gender, whether that includes baby bonuses, Top Ups, extended leaves, flexible work schedules, or any other supports you may have.

Extending policies to all employees builds equity in the workplace, as the biggest beneficiaries of these gender neutral policies are women. The World Economic Forum released its latest global gender-gap report, showing that countries with the strongest economies are those that have found ways to further women's careers, close the gender pay gap, and keep women tethered to the workforce after they become mothers. One strategy used by the highest-ranking countries is extending leaves to fathers or non-birthing partners. This is a

¹ It is our goal to be considerate in our language when providing this resource. We know that family planning comes in many forms, including adoptive parents, surrogate births, LGBTQ+ families, and blended families rather than nuclear families. Wherever possible, we use the word parental leave rather than maternity leave, and only reference birth/maternity when relaying historical content or specific policy.

form of social engineering: a behavior-modification tool that has been shown to boost male participation in the household, enhance female participation in the labor force, and promote gender equity in both domains. (Liza Mundy, 2014)

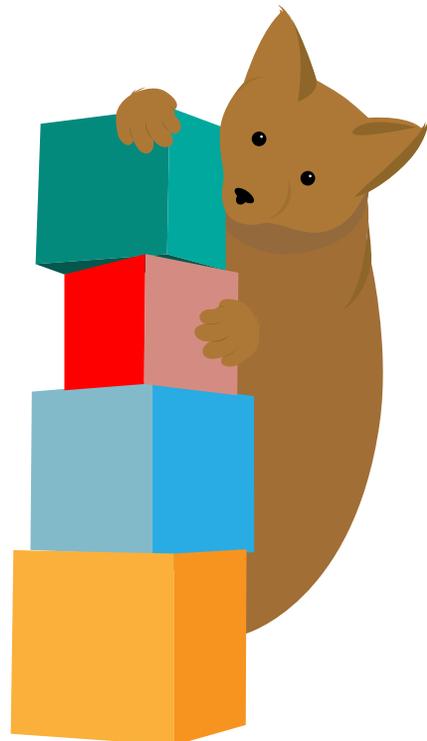
The policies that regulate parental leave in Ontario and Canada are inherently gender-neutral and are available to women and men equally (with the exception of added support for birthing mothers). However, seldom do men take advantage of these policies. As an employer, one thing you can do to impact equity in your workplace is to build policies that create space for both parents to be involved in child caretaking.

Family Planning and Talent Acquisition

In Toronto, we face an increasingly competitive hiring climate for technology. Competition for the best talent provides our city the opportunity to become a catalyst for change, as we shift towards providing increasingly competitive offerings in exchange for employee retention.

Adopting supportive policies around parental leave promote equity and diversity. Moreover it provides a signal to talented jobseekers that companies are invested in their success. It is important to consider the long-term economic benefits for tech-centric communities when investing in employees at work.

A growing body of research demonstrates that supportive workplace environments lead to dramatic benefits for employers, employees, and the bottom line. A [Gallup study](#) published in the [Harvard Business Review](#) showcases how disengaged workers had 37% higher absenteeism, 49% more accidents, and 60% more errors and defects.



Tools

- Do you know your legal obligations as an employer to support expecting parents? Start by reading the section titled [Brief Overview of Legal Requirements \(pg. 10\)](#).
 - Consider the size of your present team and your plans to grow your team over the next few years. How will this impact the policies you put forth?
 - Read through the [Parental Leave Policies Considerations \(pg. 16\)](#) to brainstorm policies that support parents at your company.
 - Crunch the numbers using the [Top Up Calculator \(pg. 06\)](#) to see how much Top Up to provide to your employees.
 - Edit the [Blank Parental Policy Template \(pg. 19\)](#) to build your own parental leave policy.
 - Stop and reflect on how your work is supporting your employees and the tech community as a whole!
 - Display your policy on your website's career page and share it with the Expecting Playbook team.
-

Top Up Calculator

When expecting parents take a leave from work, they apply for Employment Insurance (EI). EI is a government-run program that offers temporary financial assistance to unemployed workers. This assistance includes providing maternity benefits and parental benefits. For most people, the basic rate for calculating EI benefits is 55% of their average insurable weekly earnings, up to a maximum amount

of \$51,300. This means that most parents who are on parental leave are living off a fraction of their salary during their time away from work.

Many employers offer supplemental financial compensation for their employees that make up all or part of the difference of their salary. This is referred to as "Top Up".

Understanding Employment Insurance and Employee Standards Act

Below, we have included a chart that provides information about how much financial assistance and leave time employees are legally permitted.

	Employment Insurance ² Weeks of Government Assisted Financial Support	Employment Standards Act Weeks of Legally permitted Time Away from Work	Company Top-Up Supplemental Financial Support from Employer
Birthing Mothers Biological mothers, including surrogate mothers, who cannot work because they are pregnant or have recently given birth	16 Weeks	17 Weeks	Top-Ups See Section on Company Playbooks for recommendations on Top Ups Found on Page 9
All Parents* Including mothers, fathers, adoptive parents, etc.	35 Weeks	35 to 37 Weeks	
Max Total* This amount of weeks is designated per couple, meaning that two parents get to split the total amount of time off/compensation between themselves.	51 Weeks	52 Weeks	

² It is important to note that there is a one week waiting period for anyone applying to receive Employee Insurance, this week is unpaid.

How Much Will it Cost You to Top Up?

How to Read This Section:

Policy One

El Support: \$00,000

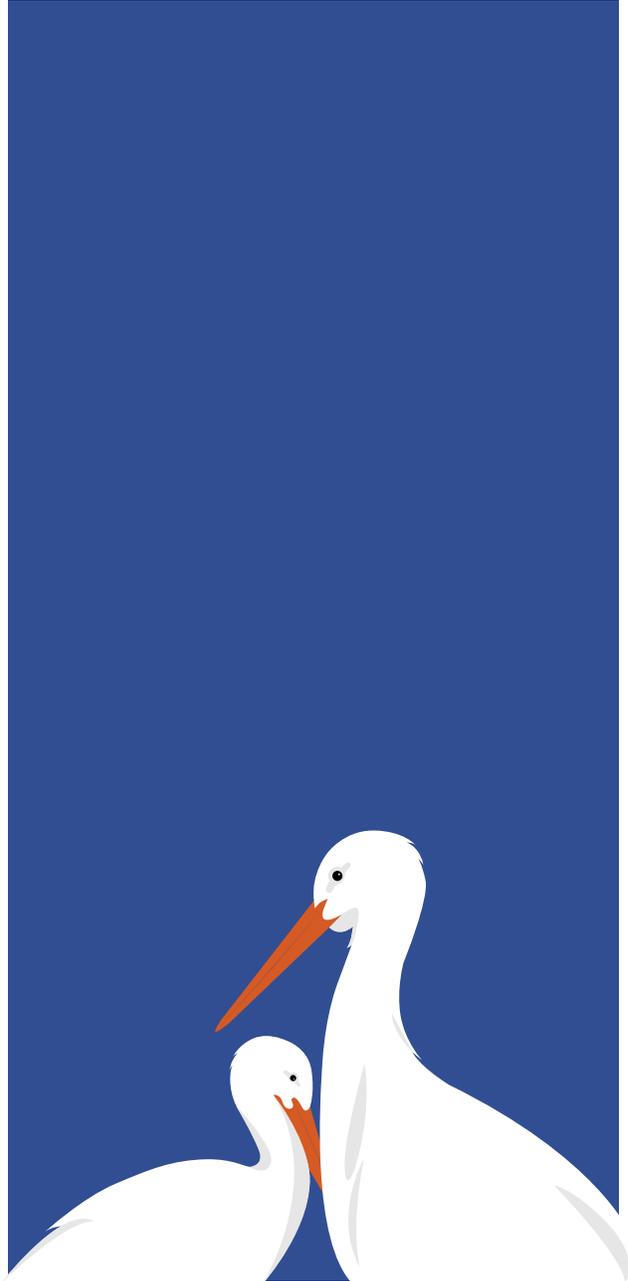
The maximum amount of El support and employee can receive

Top Up: \$00,000

What top up will cost you as an employer

Total: \$00,000

The total amount of money an employee will receive during their leave.



³ Top Up is capped at an employee's annual salary.

Birthing Mother makes \$100,000 per year, taking 52 weeks leave

Policy One 75% Top up for Three Months	Policy Two 100% Top up for Three Months	Policy Three 100% Top up for Six Months
El Support: \$51,300 Top Up: \$18,750 Total: \$76,300	El Support: \$51,300 Top Up: \$25,000 Total: \$76,300	El Support: \$51,300 Top Up: \$50,000 Total: \$100,000 ³

Non-Birthing Parent makes \$100,000 per year, taking 35 weeks leave

Policy One 75% Top up for Three Months	Policy Two 100% Top up for Three Months	Policy Three 100% Top up for Six Months
El Support: \$19,005 Top Up: \$18,750 Total: \$37,755	El Support: \$19,005 Top Up: \$25,000 Total: \$44,005	El Support: \$19,005 Top Up: \$50,000 Total: \$69,005

Birthing Mother makes \$50,000 per year, taking 52 weeks leave

Policy One 75% Top up for Three Months	Policy Two 100% Top up for Three Months	Policy Three 100% Top up for Six Months
El Support: \$27,500 Top Up: \$9,375 Total: \$36,875	El Support: \$27,500 Top Up: \$12,500 Total: \$40,000	El Support: \$27,500 Top Up: \$25,000 Total: \$50,000*

Non-Birthing Parent makes \$50,000 per year, taking 35 weeks leave

Policy One 75% Top up for Three Months	Policy Two 100% Top up for Three Months	Policy Three 100% Top up for Six Months
El Support: \$18,480 Top Up: \$9,375 Total: \$27,855	El Support: \$18,480 Top Up: \$12,500 Total: \$30,980	El Support: \$18,480 Top Up: \$25,000 Total: \$43,480

Brief Overview of Legal Requirements

Please note that this section is meant to be a lightweight overview of regulations surrounding pregnancy and parental leave. It is your responsibility as an employer to be well versed on regulations that apply to your employees.

Here are three main sources of information on legal requirements for Ontario employers when it comes to parental leave policies:

- [Ontario Ministry of Labour Employment Standards Act](#)
- [Government of Canada Employee Insurance Benefits](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)

Government of Ontario Employment Standards Act

Time Away from Work for New Parents

[The Employment Standards Act, 2000 \(ESA\)](#) provides eligible employees who are pregnant or are new parents with the right to take unpaid time off work.

This is different from the rules regarding the payment of maternity benefits and parental benefits under the Employment Insurance Act. To qualify for parental or pregnancy leave under the ESA, an expecting parents needs to have started their employment at least 13 weeks before the date a baby is expected to be born.⁴

The Employee Standards Act outlines two types of leave under the Employee Standards Act:

- [Employee Standards Act Pregnancy Leave](#)
- [Employee Standards Act Parental Leave](#)

Pregnancy Leave

Pregnant employees have the right to take pregnancy leave of up to 17 weeks (or longer in certain circumstances) of unpaid time off work.

Parental Leave

Additionally, both new parents have the right to take parental leave of up to 35 or 37 weeks of unpaid time off work. A birthing mother is able to combine her pregnancy leave of 17 weeks followed by a parental leave of 35 weeks, towards a total of 52 weeks of leave from work.

Government of Canada Employee Insurance Benefits

Supplemental Pay for New Parents

[The Employment Insurance \(EI\)](#) program offers temporary financial assistance to unemployed workers. This assistance includes providing maternity benefits and parental benefits.

The Government of Canada outlines two types of insurance benefits for new parents:

- [EI Maternity Benefits](#)
- [EI Parental Benefits](#)

⁴ Note that an employee does not have to actively work the 13 weeks prior to the due date to be eligible for pregnancy/parental leave. It is only necessary that they have commenced employment at least 13 weeks before the baby is expected to be born.

EI Maternity Benefits:

Are offered to biological mothers, including surrogate mothers, who cannot work because they are pregnant or have recently given birth.

Maternity benefits are payable only to the biological mother who is unable to work because she is pregnant or has recently given birth. To receive maternity benefits, employees need to prove their pregnancy by signing a statement declaring the expected due date or the actual date of birth.

EI Parental Benefits:

Are offered to parents who are caring for a newborn or newly adopted child or children.

EI parental benefits are payable only to the biological, adoptive, or legally recognized parents while they are caring for their newborn or newly adopted child. To receive parental benefits, employees must sign a statement declaring the newborn's date of birth or, when there is an adoption, the child's date of placement for the purposes of the adoption and the name and address of the adoption authority.

Difference in Maternity versus Parental Benefits:

The individual maximums for each benefit type are:

- 15 weeks for maternity benefits
- 35 weeks for parental benefits

A maximum of 50 weeks of benefits can be paid in the benefit period, when these benefit plans are combined.

Are my Employees Eligible for EI?

The following information is a guideline. Please direct your employees to apply for EI benefits so an official

processing agent can determine if they are eligible.

- They are employed in insurable employment
- They meet the specific criteria for receiving EI maternity or parental benefits
- Their normal weekly earnings are reduced by more than 40%
- They have accumulated at least 600 hours of insurable employment during the qualifying period.

How Much Financial Support Will My Employees Receive from EI?

While it is difficult to provide an exact amount for how much financial support employees receive before they submit an EI application, for most people, the basic rate for calculating EI benefits is 55% of their average insurable weekly earnings, up to a maximum amount. As of January 1, 2017, the maximum yearly insurable earnings amount is \$51,300. This means that new parents working at your company can receive a maximum amount of \$543 per week from the Government of Canada.

Ontario Human Rights Commission

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has two central policies that address humans rights around pregnancy leave, parental leave, and breastfeeding at work.

- [Policy on discrimination because of pregnancy and breastfeeding \(2008\)](#)
- [Policy on preventing discrimination because of pregnancy and breastfeeding \(2014\)](#)

Human Rights ‘Good-To-Knows’

As an employer,

- You must address any discrimination or harassment related to pregnancy that may arise within your organization.
- You may have to change policies, rules, requirements, or practices to allow pregnant women equal opportunities. This could include more washroom breaks, a flexible schedule, or changes in job duties during pregnancy.
- You should accommodate any needs for nursing parents after a baby is born.
- You must ensure that a pregnant woman has the same right to health and disability benefits given to other employees if she is unable to work for health reasons related to pregnancy and childbirth.
- You must ensure that employees on parental leave are provided their benefits under employment-related benefit plans including pension, life insurance, accidental death, extended health and dental plans, etc.
- You must ensure that a flexible work schedule can be provided to accommodate medical appointments for expecting parents, including treatment for infertility, as well as breastfeeding needs.
- You may receive notice as late as up to 2 weeks before the start of their parental leave, with no obligation to disclose sooner.

As an employer,

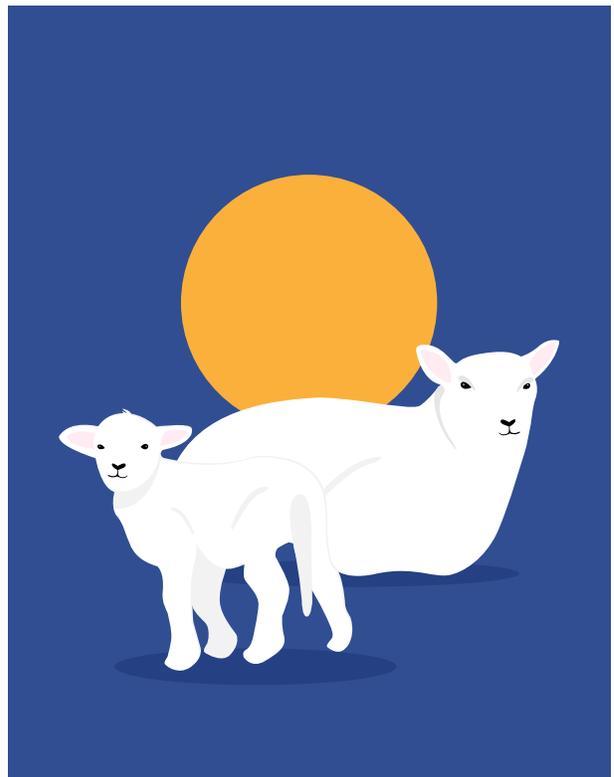
- You can not ask if an employee is pregnant, has a family, or plans to have a family.
- You can not refuse to hire, fire, demote, or lay a woman off because she is, was, or may become

pregnant.

- You should not ask pregnant women to provide documentation of changes that are obvious, or normal and natural to any pregnancy. This includes the need for more frequent washroom breaks, reduced ability to stand for lengthy periods, or the need to attend regular medical appointments.

Parental Leave Timeline for Managers

It is important to consider that there is no set formula for people who might need accommodation because of pregnancy, breastfeeding, or parental leave. Each person's needs are unique and must be considered when a parental leave plan is made. While some plans may only meet one person's needs, managers may find this timeline helpful to support new parents at work.



Timeline	Action	Resources
Prepared Before Parental Leave		
	Your career website explicitly states the company parental leave policy.	See the following sites for examples: Nulogy, HackerYou, WealthSimple, TunnelBear
	Your parental leave policy is included in a new employee onboarding package.	
	All employees know how to access the company parental leave policy without needing to ask anyone else for it.	
	You have designated a lockable space for nursing mothers to breastfeed/pump in private, or have explored all reasonable options to make this available.	
	Parents are informed which company events are kid-friendly or family-friendly.	
	Leaders at the company act as role models for taking advantage of parental policies and bringing children into the	
	Ensure that any fertility support you offer is clearly documented in your benefits plan.	

Timeline	Action	Resources
Employee Announces Parental Leave		
	<p>Book a meeting to explain how parental policy works at your company. This includes running through the differences between EI and ESA, and what kind of supports you offer in addition.</p>	<p>You can use the resources in this playbook as a starting point to having this conversation.</p>
	<p>Discuss with the expecting parent when and how they wish to share the news.</p>	
	<p>Send your employee with the parental leave policy and make yourself available to answer questions.</p>	
	<p>Ask about their expected timelines for parental leave including leave and return dates.</p>	
	<p>Connect your employee to the appropriate HR resources.</p>	
	<p>Discuss their wishes regarding arrangements for keeping in contact during their parental leave.</p>	<p>Do they want to be tagged in slack, included in email threads, on project boards, sent invites to company events, etc?</p>
	<p>In the instance that there is a compensation review scheduled while they are gone, provide an opportunity to opt-in or delay their review until they return with no obligations to do either. Include offering the ability to conduct this remotely.</p>	

During Parental Leave		
	<p>Check that you have notified payroll about any changes in the parental leave start date for an expecting employee. This includes ensuring that your employee provide their leave dates in writing, with the understanding from you that they may shift dependent on birth date or adoption date.</p>	<p>You can use the resources in this playbook as a starting point to having this conversation.</p>
	<p>Create written transition plan, accessible both by manager and employee.</p>	
	<p>Set a clear expectation between yourself and employee on how often they would like to check in during parental leave, if at all.</p>	
	<p>If there are changes to an employee's role, team, or team lead provide them with as much notice as possible of those changes.</p>	
Upon Returning from Parental Leave		
	<p>Discuss any changes/updates with the company. Re-introduce your employee to the team and members of the company that have joined since their leave.</p>	
	<p>Explicitly ask what kind of support new parents need. Openly discuss what flexible work options are available.</p>	<p>It is a legal requirement to not disadvantage anyone on leave for being on a leave.</p>
	<p>Schedule a compensation review within 60 days of return from parental leave to ensure compensation is consistent with market trends.</p>	

Parental Leave Policies and Considerations

Below are some considerations that you can do as an employer to create a workplace that supports parents. Many of these policies do not require any change to budget, and can be implemented immediately.

- Dedicate a lockable, private space as a nursing/pumping room.
- Provide parking permits for pregnant employees who drive.

Parent-friendly Environment

- Start a parenting community like a meetup group or Slack channel at your organization where parents can share articles, ask questions, and plan events.
- Plan and explicitly state which company events are child-friendly.
- Have company leaders act as role models for taking advantage of parental policies and bringing children into the workplace.

Financial Support

- Support employees financially with a Top Up.⁵
- Supply "Baby Cash," a financial bonus effective after birth/adoption of a child, to support with upfront new parent expenses.
- Provide a daycare subsidy.

Health Benefits

- In-Vitro (IVF) coverage for treatment and medicine.
- Insurance coverage for dependents and spouses.

New Parent Supports

- Create an explicit work from home policy during pregnancy for soon-to-be parents outlining specific timelines.
- Allow for flexible start and leave times for parents who may need to pick up children after work.
- Provide remote, work from home, or half-day transition options upon return from parental leave to help employees integrate back to work with their families.



⁵ To learn more, please see the 'Top Up Calculator' section on page 6.

TunnelBear

At TunnelBear, we think the Internet is a much better place when everyone can browse privately, and browse the same Internet as everyone else. Since 2011, TunnelBear has introduced online privacy to over 18 Million people with our incredibly simple apps. TunnelBear is proudly bootstrapped, has 37 employees and is based in Toronto, Canada.

Top Up Benefit

TunnelBear Inc. will provide eligible staff with 100% Top Up for the first 8 weeks of pregnancy and/or parental leave, and 60% for the following 8 weeks.

This parental leave benefit will apply to full time employees that have worked for at least six consecutive months at TunnelBear in a full-time position. Employees must also be eligible to receive maternity/parental benefits as established by Service Canada.

This policy applies to the biological, adoptive, or legally recognized parents while they are caring for their newborn or newly adopted child. Any situations not covered under the maternity/parental leave provision by Service Canada, will be reviewed by TunnelBear on a case by case basis.

We will also ensure that your medical benefits will remain active for the duration of the pregnancy and/or parental leave (up to 52 weeks) to ensure the coverage of incurred medical expenses. Vacation will continue to accrue and employee stock options will continue to vest.

In-Vitro Support

TunnelBear will provide a one time support of up to \$10,000.00 towards in-vitro medical expenses. This benefit is available for employees that have been employed full-time by TunnelBear for at least six consecutive months.

Other Fertility Support

TunnelBear will provide a one time support of up to \$3,000.00 towards procedure fees and drugs related to fertility procedures such as Artificial Insemination, Intra-Uterine Insemination, or Fertility Preservation. This benefit is available for employees that have been employed full-time by TunnelBear for at least six consecutive months.

Nulogy

Nulogy is a Toronto-based SaaS company that builds software with the goal of dramatically reducing waste in the global supply chain. The company was founded in 2002, and as of September 2017, they have around 150 full-time employees. Nulogy prides themselves on being a company that has a strong work-life balance and provides opportunities for employees to bring their whole selves to work, as their mantra is "It's Not Just Business, It's Personal."

Your family is important to us!

We, at Nulogy, are excited for the new addition to your family. We understand the importance of family responsibilities and the following benefits are provided to help employees achieve real work life balance with (1) planning their maternity and parental leave and (2) returning to work. Remember, to us, it's not just business, it's personal.

Benefits Plan

During your leave your benefits plan will remain intact and your usual benefits contribution will be deducted from top up pay. Following the completion of your top up pay, but while you're on leave, Nulogy will cover the portion of your usual benefits contribution that covers health and dental benefits for you. This is the largest part of the contribution, and there are tax benefits to you if you continue to make the remaining contributions for the Life Insurance, LTD and AD+D benefits.

Extras

You can keep your equipment (mobile, laptop, etc.) during your leave. This does not mean we expect you to work while on leave. You and your manager will discuss your expectations before your leave and stay in touch during your leave.

You will receive \$750 for takeout food, a personal chef, house cleaning or toward any extra help to make your family life easier during your leave. The first \$500 of this reimbursement does not get deemed to be a taxable benefit for you, so we encourage you to use it fully.

What You Can Do

Notify your manager of your expected date to commence your leave. We understand things change, so just keep us in the loop. Please let us know when the new member of your family arrives as well, and we can help you update your benefits accordingly (if that's what you want).

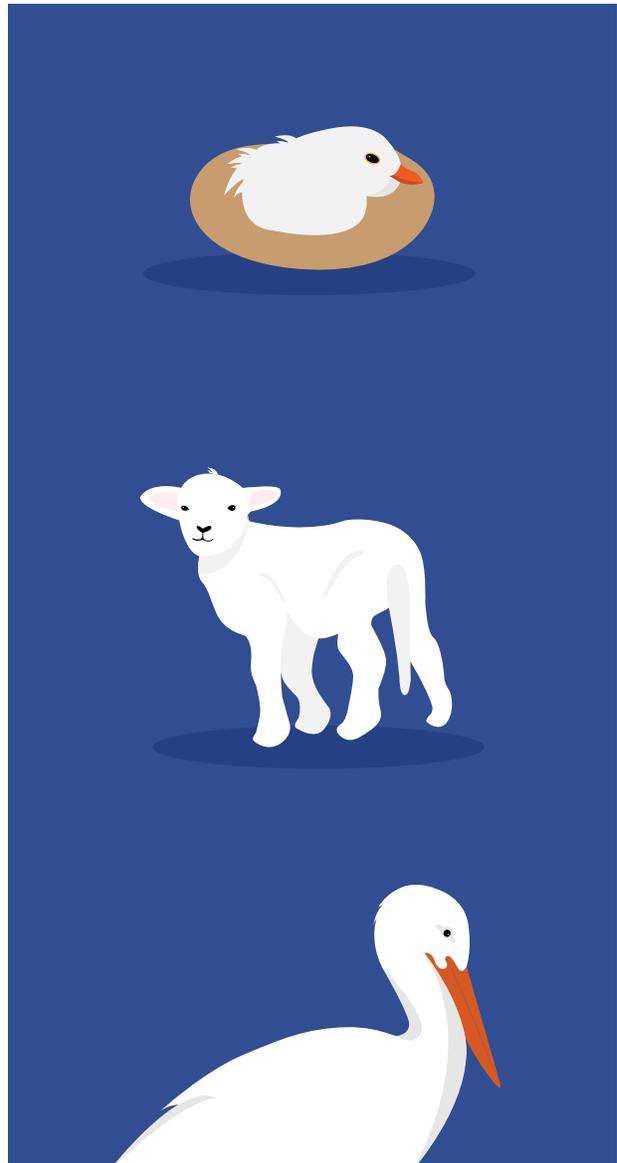
Important Links to Learn More

Here are some links to understand your rights to pregnancy and parental leave and information on eligibility and how to apply for employment insurance

(EI) during your leave. Feel free to schedule time with your manager to review or ask any questions.

Ministry of Labour on Pregnancy and Parental Leave:
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/guide/pregnancy.php>

Information and Application Forms for Employment Insurance Maternity and Parental Benefits:
<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/benefits/maternityparental.shtml>



Build Your Own Parental Leave Policy

The following is a sample parental leave policy that is written by a legal team. It is meant to be used as a starting point for teams that are looking to write their own parental leave policy. Feel free to edit it to represent the tone and voice of your organization.

This template does not constitute legal advice, nor is anything contained herein intended as legal advice. If you have any questions or concerns about how to apply this Policy to your organization, please seek the assistance of a lawyer. Legislation and employment law in Ontario and Canada is constantly evolving and accordingly, this draft, sample Policy may require tailoring to suit your organization and/or updating before implementation. This Policy was created by Lauren Chang MacLean, who was a lawyer at Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP, which is a management-side labour and employment law firm. The Policy was last modified by Daina Search on April 7, 2017. Daina is a lawyer at Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP. Daina can be reached at 416-408-4540 or dsearch@filion.on.ca. She would be pleased to help ensure your organization puts in place a policy that reflects your organization's specific needs and the current state of the law. Many thanks to Heather Payne, Founder and CEO of HackerYou, who generously shared this template with the Expecting Playbook Team.

[Organization Name] Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy

[Note: All red text should be removed from this Policy or replaced with your company's information before implementation] The following sets out [Organization name]'s policy with respect to pregnancy and parental leave.

A. General

[Organization name] is committed to equal treatment of parents who are welcoming a child into their lives. While pregnancy leave is available only to women who have given birth to a child, parental leave is available to all eligible new parents, of both biological and adopted children, regardless of the gender of the parent and regardless of the parent's relationship with any co-parent.

[Organization name] grants employees pregnancy and parental leave in accordance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000 (the "ESA"). The ESA provides employees who take pregnancy and/or parental leave with many rights and benefits, not all of which are explained in this policy.

To better understand your legal rights regarding pregnancy and parental leave as an employee, it is recommended that you consult the ESA and/or the Ontario Ministry of Labour's Guide to Pregnancy and Parental Leave, which is attached to this Policy. As set out in this Policy, [Organization name] also provides some benefits to its employees above and beyond the requirements of the ESA.

B. Pregnancy Leave

1. Pregnancy leave is available to eligible employees in accordance with the ESA. Pregnancy leave is unpaid, unless the employee opts to receive the ["Supplemental Unemployment Benefit"](#) ("SUB") outlined in Section E of this Policy.
2. Employees who have been employed for at least 13 weeks prior to the baby's due date are eligible to take up to 17 weeks of pregnancy leave.
3. An employee may begin pregnancy leave as early as 17 weeks before her due date. The latest that an employee may begin pregnancy leave is the baby's due date or the day the employee gives birth, whichever is earlier.
4. An employee who wishes to take pregnancy leave is required to provide [Organization name] with:
 - Written notice that the employee intends to take pregnancy leave at least two weeks before the pregnancy leave is to begin;
 - Written notice with respect to whether the

- employee intends to also take parental leave, following their pregnancy leave;
- [optional] a certificate from a legally qualified medical practitioner (for example, the employee's doctor or midwife) stating the expected due date; and
 - if known, the employee's expected return to work date.
5. Pregnancy leave must be taken as one continuous period, and ends 17 weeks after it began. An employee who qualifies for parental leave, and who intends to take parental leave following pregnancy leave, is required to take parental leave immediately following pregnancy leave.

C. Parental Leave

1. Parental leave is available to eligible employees in accordance with the ESA. A parental leave is unpaid, unless the employee opts to receive the SUB outlined in Section E of this policy.
2. For employees who are on pregnancy leave, and who wish to take parental leave, parental leave begins immediately following pregnancy leave, and may continue for up to 35 weeks.
3. Employees who do not take pregnancy leave, who have been employed for at least 13 weeks, and who are a parent of a child, are eligible to take up to 37 weeks of parental leave following the birth of the child or the coming of the child into the employee's custody, care and control for the first time. This includes parents of adopted children.
4. An employee may begin parental leave no later than 52 weeks after the day the child is born or comes into the employee's custody, care and control.
5. Parental leave must be taken as one continuous period.

6. An employee who wishes to take parental leave is required to provide [Organization name] with:
 - Written notice that the employee intends to take parental leave at least two weeks before the parental leave is to begin
 - If known, the employee's expected return to work date
7. The start date of parental leave may be modified by providing at least two weeks' written notice. If an employee stops working because a child comes into the employee's custody, care or control for the first time earlier than expected, the employee's parental leave begins on the day the employee stops working. The employee must provide written notice that he or she is taking parental leave within two weeks of stopping work.

D. Returning to Work from Pregnancy or Parental Leave

1. If an employee has not provided an expected return to work date, or if the employee has provided a return to work date and he or she wishes to change that date, he or she must provide at least four weeks' written notice.
2. If an employee does not wish to return to work and wishes to terminate his or her employment while on leave, he or she may do so upon providing four weeks' written notice.
3. When returning to work at the end of pregnancy and/or parental leave, an employee will be returned to his or her former position, unless the position no longer exists, in which case, the employee will be placed in a comparable position.

E. Benefits during Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave

1. Employment benefits will continue during pregnancy and/or parental leave, unless the employee provides written notice that he or she does not wish any such benefit(s) to continue.
2. [Organization name] will continue to make the employer's contributions to any benefits plans the employee participates in. The employee will be required to pay the employee's contributions, if any, unless he or she has notified the employer that he or she does not wish for any benefit(s) to continue. If the employee does not pay his or her premiums, the employee's benefits will be terminated for the duration of the leave. [optional] The employee is required to provide [Organization name] with a payment for the total amount of his or her benefits contribution when commencing leave. Any amount that is not applied toward the employee's benefits contribution (for example, if the employee returns to work earlier than expected) will be returned to the employee upon his or her return to work.
3. If an employee is eligible for "maternity benefits" and/or "parental benefits" under the Employment Insurance Act ("EI Benefits"), that employee can choose to receive an enhancement to his or her EI Benefits. The enhancement will consist of [Organization name] topping-up the employee's EI benefits to a maximum of __% [95% is the maximum permitted by law] of the employee's earnings, as of the date the employee's pregnancy or

parental leave commences. This EI benefit enhancement will be referred to as the SUB.

[Note: Employers must submit a SUB Plan to Service Canada before implementing this benefit]

To receive the Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB), an employee must:

- provide proof they are in receipt of, or will be receiving EI benefits; and
- request in writing that they wish to receive the SUB.
- [Employer to choose one of the following options] An employee will not receive any SUB during the first week of his or her leave (i.e. during the EI benefits waiting period). OR [Organization name] will provide SUB to Top Up the employee's earnings to __% [95% is the maximum permitted by law] during the first week of the employee's leave (i.e. during the EI benefits waiting period).
- The SUB will be provided for a maximum of __ weeks.
- As applicable, employees on pregnancy and/or parental leave will continue to earn credit toward length of employment, length of service and/or seniority during their leave. Entitlements (such as vacation credit) that accrue in accordance with an employee's service and/or seniority will continue to accrue during the leave. [optional] Vacation pay will continue to be calculated based on an employee's actual earnings during the leave.
- Employees on pregnancy and/or parental leave, whether in receipt of the SUB or otherwise, are not eligible for paid holidays.

Contact Information

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Anna is a developer at Nudge.ai. When not at work, she enjoys sharing her passion for development as a Javascript mentor at HackerYou and at Ladies Learning Code. In 2016, she founded Business as Usual, a networking initiative designed to amplify women's voices and aid in career development. Currently, she is on the board of #MoveTheDial and actively working to change the face of tech leadership in Canada.

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Ella works at Nulogy, a Toronto-based software company, where she combines her background in education, tech, and non-profits to support their community development. She is a co-organizer of the Link Apprenticeship, a paid technical mentorship for women-identified developers at Nulogy. Additionally, she is a community manager at Women Who Code Toronto.

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Special Thank You

The Expecting Playbook was made possible by Steven Pulver and Daniel Levine, who run Fireside Conf, an off-grid retreat for startup founders and VC firms.

Additionally, a very special thank you goes out to all of the people involved in supporting this initiative and those who were so willing to contribute to this open source project to better our community.

Heather Payne

for her guidance and advice

Maria Cartagena

and the team at Nulogy

Nora Jenkins

and the team at WealthSimple

Ryan Dochuk

and the team at TunnelBear

Andréa Crofts

Website and report design

Jodi Kovitz

and the team at MoveTheDial

Steve Woods & Paul Teshima

and the team at Nudge.ai



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