



RCSI

Parental Leave

Purpose

RCSI is committed to being an employer of choice and to providing an inclusive and supportive environment with regard to personal situations and work life balance of staff.

The purpose of this policy is to explain the support you will receive from RCSI if you wish to take parental leave to enable you to take care of your young children. It explains the criteria and process of applying for, and receiving parental leave.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff whether they are full or part time employees, with one year's consecutive service who are -

- the natural parent of a child up to their 18th birthday
- the adoptive parent of a child up to their 18th birthday
- someone acting in loco parentis to a child up to their 18th birthday

Policy Statement

RCSI understands that there are times when a member of staff needs to take time out from their role to care for their child or children. It is committed to supporting any member of staff who is eligible to apply for Parental Leave.

The content of this policy and procedure complies with the **Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2019**.

All eligible RCSI staff are entitled to the following:

- a period of up to 26 weeks unpaid leave for each of your eligible children
- the option to take a combination of periods of leave up to a total of 26 weeks
- Parental leave is pro-rated aligned with hours of work

While on Parental Leave you retain your annual leave, public and privilege holiday entitlements. Contributions to the Pension Scheme will be suspended for the period of leave and benefit will be reduced by the period of service in question.

Procedure

You are encouraged to discuss your plans to apply for parental leave with your line manager at the earliest opportunity, not later than 6 weeks before you intend to take leave. This will give them the opportunity to provide you with the support you need and to plan activities during your leave period and on your return.

Once you and your line manager agree to both the timing and manner of your parental leave, you must submit Parental Leave, in the leave type section, on your CORE portal.

Duration of Parental Leave

You may take your Parental Leave as follows:

- one continuous period of 26 weeks
- a combination of lesser periods of leave, not to exceed the overall period of 26 weeks
- Please note - you are not obliged to take the full entitlement.

Confirming the Intention to take Parental Leave

Not later than **4 weeks** before the commencement of the parental leave, you must complete what is called a 'confirmation document' specifying the date of commencement of the leave and its duration.

Both you and a member of the Human Resources Department must sign the confirmation document and a copy will be returned and retained by you.

Once signed, no amendment can be made to this document without the agreement of both parties

Postponement of Parental Leave

While you will be facilitated as far as possible, RCSI may postpone parental leave if such leave would have a substantial adverse effect on the operation of the Department concerned.

You will be notified in writing of the need for RCSI to postpone your Parental Leave not later than **4 weeks** before the intended date of commencement of the leave and before the "confirmation" document is signed. The postponement may be to an agreed date, not later than 6 months from the date on which you had originally intended to start your parental leave.

Please be assured that Parental Leave will not be lost if, solely as a result of postponement, the child reaches the age threshold laid down in the Act.

Additional Information

- You must take Parental Leave before your child's 18th birthday.
- If you have more than one child under the age of 18 years, you should seek the consent of your Head of Department/Nominee if you wish to take more than 26 weeks Parental Leave in one 12 month period. The exception to this is in the case of multiple births (e.g. twins or triplets).
- The Parental Leave Acts states that, where both parents work for the same employer, up to 14 weeks can be transferred with the approval of the employer. RCSI supports this and you are encouraged to discuss this with Human Resource if applicable.
- If you are taken ill once your Parental Leave has started, you are entitled to suspend parental leave and transfer onto paid sick leave as outlined in RCSI's sick leave policy. You must notify Human Resources in the same way as would apply for usual sick leave.
- If you are within your probationary period at the start of parental leave, the period of probation will stand suspended during your absence on parental leave and will be completed by you on your return to work.

Approval of an Application

Human Resources will consider your application in line with legislation and make a final decision as to whether to approve your request for Parental Leave.

An application for parental leave may be refused where RCSI has reasonable grounds for believing that you do not have a legitimate entitlement under the terms of the Act.

You will be notified of the decision within 10 working days.

Social Welfare Arrangements

When you are on parental leave, you are covered by social insurance, and are entitled to credited PRSI contributions from the Department of Social Protection. This will preserve your record for social insurance purposes.

For further information please contact the Department of Social Protection on 01 7043000 or via their website (www.welfare.ie).

Your Right to Appeal

Should any element of the Parental Leave be refused or you feel that the legislation has not been adhered to you have the right to appeal.

You should appeal to the Human Resources in writing in the first instance clearly explaining the reason you believe the decision made was incorrect.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal, you have the right to raise your concerns with the Director of Human Resources whose decision at appeal is final.

Getting Further Help

The Human Resources department is available to support any member of staff in understanding the content of this policy and procedure and making an application.

Policy Review

The Human Resources Department will ensure that this policy will be monitored and kept under review.