

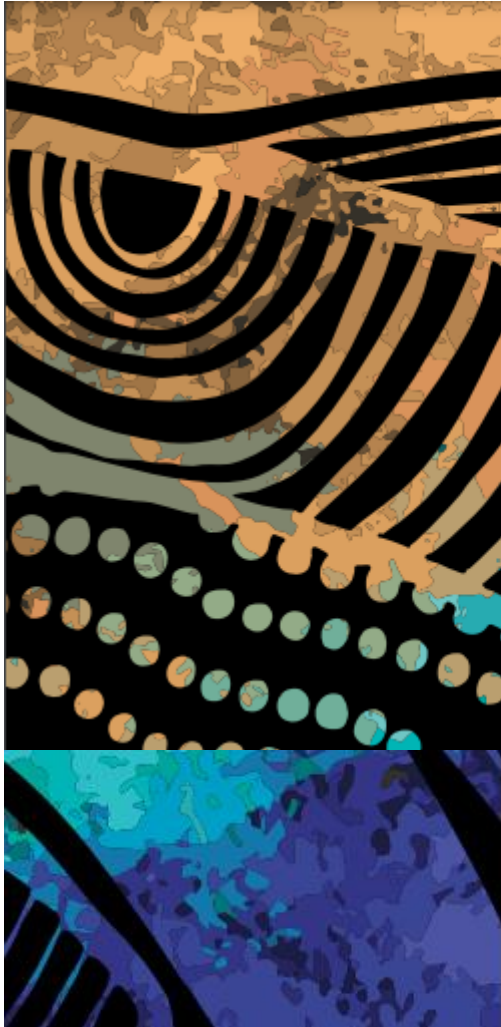


Flinders University

Parental and Caring Support Guide



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which its campuses are located, these are the Traditional Lands of the Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the Southeast, First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people. We honour their Elders and Custodians past, present and emerging.

We also acknowledge and pay respect to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are from.

Artwork credit

Elizabeth Yanyi Close
Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara, 2020

The artwork both explores Connection to Country and speaks to the Landscape around Flinders University, but it also deeply explores and speaks to the concept of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people travelling to undertake their studies bringing with them knowledge, wisdom and understanding of their own Language Groups and standing together as one.

Contents

Section 1 – Parental leave and support.....	7
Conversations and timing	8
Parental Leave	9
Eligibility.....	9
Leave.....	9
Parental Leave Payment.....	9
Parental leave can be taken flexibly	10
When to apply for Parental Leave	10
When should leave commence?	10
How to apply, extend or amend an application for parental leave	11
Workplace Adjustments and Support.....	11
Flexible Work	11
Transfer/or light duties	11
Parking	11
Midwifery support.....	11
Unplanned Pregnancy Events	12
Premature birth	12
Defined late pregnancy miscarriage and stillbirth	12
During Parental Leave.....	13
Keeping in touch	13
Interruption to parental leave.....	13
Superannuation.....	13
Returning to Work.....	13
Contact prior to recommencement	13
Flexible Work	14
Purchased Leave	14
Child and Parenting Facilities	14
Family Friendly Breastfeeding Accreditation.....	15
On-Campus Childcare.....	15
Training and Career Support	15
Training.....	16
Promotion	16
Parental leave Research support scheme.....	16
Franklin Women.....	16
Further Support or Assistance	16
Section 2- Caring and Support.....	23
Leave Options	24
Personal/Carers Leave	24

Compassionate Leave	24
Purchased Leave	24
Superannuation.....	24
Support for Staff in the Event of a Family Member’s Death.....	25
Domestic Violence.....	25
Cultural Leave	25
Maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship/community links	25
Health and Wellbeing	26
MetLife 360 Health.....	26
On-Campus Medical Centre.....	26
BUPA – Flinders University Health Plan	26
EAP	26
Flinders Sport & Fitness.....	27
How to Access Support	27
Contact P&C Business Partnering Team	27
Speak to your supervisor	27
Carer Gateway.....	27
Australian Human Rights Commission – Supervisor checklist/Guide	27
Parental Leave Checklist - Staff.....	
Parental Leave Guide - Supervisors	

Family and caring at Flinders

The importance of family and caring responsibilities is recognised, valued and supported at Flinders University.

We are dedicated to supporting our staff through various life circumstances. By being aware of the available supports and resources, you can better manage your work-life balance and ensure your wellbeing and that of your loved ones.

We offer a range of gender-neutral policies and support structures to assist in managing individual family and caregiving needs, while remaining engaged in University life and excelling in your chosen careers.

This guide has been designed to support both employees and supervisors in navigating the various resources and information available, and to help facilitate conversations, decisions, and actions to assist staff in balancing their working and caregiving responsibilities.

For more information or support, please visit the Flinders University Family and Caring website or contact your supervisor, or your local P&C Business Partnering team.



The guide is separated into two sections: 1) Parental leave and support, and 2) Caring for others.

Section 1 - Parental leave and support

Information on the processes, policies, support and resources available for staff who are parents or parents to be, along with checklists for staff and supervisors are available here. This includes information in relation to pregnancy, adoption, medically defined late pregnancy miscarriage and stillbirth.

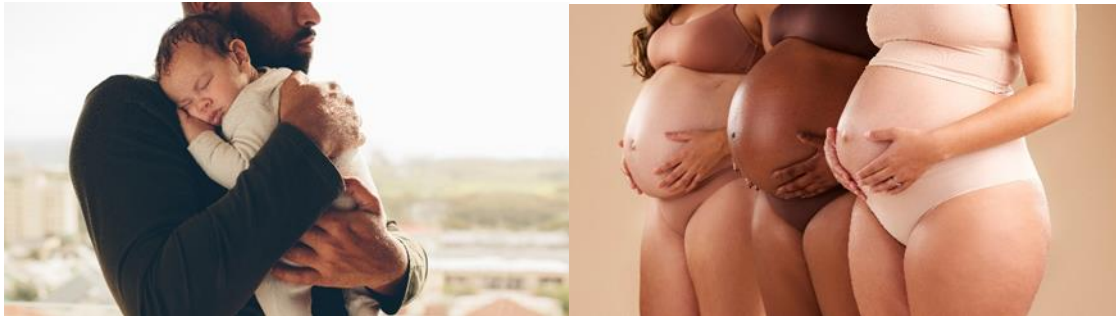
Section 2 - Caring for Others

In this section, staff and supervisors can find information about the types of leave and resources available for staff with responsibilities of caring for others. Our definition of “Family Members” is broad and inclusive recognising:

- immediate relatives by blood, marriage, adoption, fostering, parenting, traditional kinship (including guardian, ward, grandparent, foster-grandparent, step-grandparent and in-law relative); or
- a person who stands in a bona fide domestic or household relationship with a staff member including same sex partner, or
- situation in which there is implied some dependency or support role for the staff member.

This guide is intended to be read in conjunction with the information and relevant policies and procedures available on the Flinders University Family and Caring webpage.

Section 1 – Parental leave and support



At Flinders, we promote equality and non-discrimination in the workplace. We recognise that parental and caregiving responsibilities are non-gendered. Our gender-neutral parental leave policies ensure that access to paid parental leave is available to all new parents, regardless of gender identity.

We acknowledge that each family's work and care arrangements are distinct. Our leave options are designed to be flexible, giving families the option to share Parental Leave to help manage work and care arrangements.

Conversations and timing

The timing of initial discussions between staff and supervisors planning parental leave will depend on each staff members individual circumstances. For example, staff who are experiencing high-risk pregnancy, illness with pregnancy or those working in conditions potentially hazardous to the pregnancy (such as manual handling, working with chemicals, animals or other biological hazards), will need to have discussions with their supervisor as soon as practicable, so that adjustments can be made to allow the staff member to continue to work safely.

Whilst timing and how staff share information about their parental journey is an individual choice, to support timely workplace support and adjustments, we encourage discussions between staff and supervisor prior to staff announcing their news more broadly to work colleagues.

Conversations should be held in a private space within a suitable timeframe prior to taking leave. Topics discussed may include:

- any leave which may be planned such as Annual, Long Service leave Adoption pre-placement and Antenatal.
- If any support is required before, during or after parental leave regarding projects, teaching or research.
- How and when you are going to share your news with Colleagues.

Preparing for the conversation ahead of time will allow supervisors and staff to have more informed and meaningful conversations.

To assist with these discussions, comprehensive checklists are available for both staff and supervisors. These checklists help guide and assist discussions, navigate the application process, and ensure awareness of the workplace adjustments and support options available to staff before, during and after parental leave – accessible [here](#)

Parental Leave



Eligibility

To be eligible for paid parental leave, a staff member must have completed twelve (12) months or more of continuous service with the university before the expected date of birth or placement of a child.

For further information on eligibility and entitlement please refer to clause 33.1 of the Flinders University [Enterprise Agreement 2023 - 2026](#).

Leave

Understanding the types of leave options available is an important part of planning for the arrival of a baby or placement of a child.

Flinders offers a range of leave to support parents including:

- Primary Carer
- Partner
- Antenatal
- Adoption
- Adoption (pre-placement)
- Medically defined late pregnancy miscarriage or still birth
- Death of child

Paid Antenatal leave is available for eligible staff during the pregnancy for reasons associated with the pregnancy, up to the time of commencing primary carer leave. Accessing (unpaid) adoption pre-placement leave can assist with attending interview, workshops, court attendances or medical examinations.

Prior to beginning parental leave, staff are able to access Annual, Long Service and Sick leave.

Further information regarding a range of leave options can be accessed at the following [link](#).

Parental Leave Payment

Staff who have worked for twelve (12) months or more of continuous service with the university before the expected date of birth or placement of a child will be eligible for a period of paid parental leave. Staff who reach their first anniversary date with the University during the allocated paid portion of Primary or Adoption leave are entitled to a balance of payment.

Staff may also be eligible for the Australian Government Parental Leave Pay (PLP) managed by Services Australia. More information on this payment, including eligibility criteria, can be found on Services Australia website. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/parental-leave-pay>

Parental leave can be taken flexibly

Parental leave can be taken as a single continuous period, flexibly across the parental leave period, or a mixture of both.

For example, entitlement of parental leave does not depend on that leave being continuous. A staff member who, for any reason, returns to work after taking less than the full entitlement for primary carer or adoption leave (either paid or unpaid) may apply to take the balance of the leave later within the fifty-two (52) week period.

Staff who are eligible for parental leave can also access 12 months of parental leave initially and then request up to a further 12 months of unpaid parental leave. This means that staff can access up to 24 months of parental leave.

Paid primary carer or adoption leave may be taken on half pay, in which case the period of paid leave will be doubled.

Further information including paid and unpaid entitlements can be found in clause 33 of [Flinders Enterprise Agreement 2023 - 2026](#).

When to apply for Parental Leave

Staff are required to apply for parental leave no later than 10 weeks prior to the expected date of birth or adoption placement.

Staff requiring access to **pre-placement** Adoption leave are encouraged to apply as soon as practicable so that any necessary work adjustments such as temporary assignment of work allocation can be facilitated.

When should leave commence?

Whilst the following summarises when parental leave should commence, it should be also be noted that staff are able to access existing leave entitlements, such as personal leave and annual leave prior to commencing any type of parental leave.

If you are pregnant, you must commence parental leave six weeks from the expected date of birth. If you are planning to work within the six weeks prior to the expected date of birth, a medical certificate of fitness for work from a registered medical practitioner or certified midwife must be provided, together with written confirmation from your supervisor verifying that your workplace and practices meet worker safety requirements. The same requirement to provide a medical certificate applies if you wish to return to work within the first six weeks after the birth.

Adoption leave will commence from the date of placement and commencement dates relating to medically defined late pregnancy miscarriage or stillbirth will be dependent on each circumstance.

How to apply, extend or amend an application for parental leave

Applications for applying, extending and amending parental leave are submitted through [Service One](#). Links to a series of informative fact sheets to support you through these processes are below:

- [How to apply for Parental Leave](#)
- [How to request an amendment to Parental Leave](#)
- [How to apply for Parental Leave extension](#)

**Partner and Antenatal leave are booked via Workday:

- Applying for Partner and Antenatal leave, instructions are available [here](#)

Workplace Adjustments and Support

Flexible Work

The University is committed to providing a working environment which is sufficiently flexible to meet the operational requirements of the University and workload demands while accommodating, where possible, the needs of its staff members. Staff may wish to explore the options of flexible work options leading up to a period of parental leave. Flexible work options can be accessed on short, medium, or longer-term basis. They may include adjustments such as leaving or starting earlier or reducing hours.

Flinders [Flexible Employment](#) website provides further information in relation to procedures, checklists and relevant associated policies.

Transfer to safe job /or light duties

Options will be made available to modify duties or transfer to a safe job where illness or risks arising out of pregnancy, or hazards connected with the work assigned to the pregnant employee (such as hazardous chemicals) make it inadvisable for the employee to continue in their present duties.

- Further information can be found [here](#):

Parking

A short-term disability parking permit is available to pregnant staff from 30 weeks gestation onwards by visiting the Practice Nurse at [Health and Counselling](#). Where a medical condition requires parking support prior to 30 weeks, a written recommendation from a treating medical professional is required. Permits are only valid when displayed with an annual, semester or day permit.

Midwifery support

Flinders University offers midwifery support to staff via a midwifery student. As part of their education, midwifery students follow staff members through their pregnancy, birth and

postnatal period under the direct supervision of a registered midwife. These students learn about pregnancy, birth and the first weeks at home with a new baby. This helps them understand from in practice more of what midwifery is about and how they can better work with parents. More information can be found [here](#)



Unplanned Pregnancy Events

Premature birth

Having a child arrive prematurely can sometimes mean that periods of planned leave may change, however noting, that you will be able to access Primary Carer leave at this time.

Should this occur please contact your supervisor or local P&C Business Partner to discuss any required adjustment to leave dates and any additional support you may require.

Defined late pregnancy miscarriage and stillbirth

Flinders University offers several support options during this difficult time. It is important to contact your supervisor or [local P&C Business Partner](#) to facilitate any necessary changes to leave or access additional support, noting there are entitlements available under the Enterprise Agreement for such circumstances. If you prefer not to make contact yourself, you may have someone else reach out on your behalf. Your supervisor can help manage how and when you inform colleagues about your loss and assist in supporting your return to work.

Flinders staff are able to refer themselves directly to one of the designated psychologists available through our free Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Our Manager Assist program runs in parallel with the EAP program and is designed to confidentially provide support to people managers. Further information about both programs can be found at the following [link](#).

During Parental Leave

Keeping in touch

Staff may wish to keep in touch with what is happening at work while they are away. Keeping in touch days can be used in a variety of ways to keep in touch including, participating in a planning day, attending training or a conference. They are not intended to undertake periods of work associated with your role such as research, teaching, supervision and are unable to be accessed in the first 14 day's of a child's birth or placement.

Not everyone wants or needs the same level of contact. Employees and employers need to agree on the employee working on a keeping in touch day. An employee doesn't have to use keeping in touch days if they don't want to.

To assist staff and supervisors and staff to plan the level, means and frequency of contact before going on leave, it is suggested meeting prior to the staff member going on leave. Whilst staff are not obliged to complete a keeping in touch plan, supervisors should make the offer and undertake discussion even if a plan is not completed.

To assist and guide this discussion, further information can be accessed via the Fair Work Australia website at the following [link](#).

Interruption to parental leave

Entitlement to parental leave does not depend on that leave being continuous. A staff member who, for any reason, returns to work after taking less than the full entitlement for primary carer or adoption leave (either paid or unpaid) may apply to take the balance of leave later, however noting that the paid component for certain types of parental leave need to be taken within the 52 week period (from the commencement of Parental Leave).

Please contact your supervisor or local P&C Business Partner should you wish to discuss an early return to work.

Superannuation

Superannuation contributions are maintained by Flinders for paid parental leave. Staff who are members of UniSuper (Flinders default superannuation fund) defined benefit fund have the option to maintain and fund both employer and employee contributions for periods of unpaid parental leave. For further information on superannuation at Flinders as well as links to the UniSuper website is available [here](#).

Returning to Work

Contact prior to recommencement

6 weeks prior to your scheduled return to work, following a period of parental leave, a member our Employment Services (ES) Team will contact you to discuss and support you in your transition back to work. This is an opportune time to ask any questions you may have about returning to work, extending your leave or seeking access to flexible work options.

Flexible Work

As detailed earlier Flexible work options can be accessed on short, medium, or longer-term basis. They may include adjustments such as leaving or starting earlier or reducing hours.

Flinders [Flexible Employment](#) website provides further information in relation to procedures, checklists and relevant associated policies, including information about Flinders Conversion of Appointment to Part-Time for Family Care Purposes Policy:

<https://www.flinders.edu.au/content/dam/documents/staff/policies/people-culture/conversions-parttime-family.pdf>

Purchased Leave

Purchased Leave, also described as part year employment, is an arrangement whereby staff may take an agreed amount of leave without pay for a number of weeks per year, with their reduced salary then averaged and paid over the year.

Staff sometimes find this arrangement useful to support providing care over school holiday periods or when sharing the care of elderly parents with other family members.

Information regarding purchased leave is [here](#).

Child and Parenting Facilities



Family Friendly Breastfeeding Accreditation

Flinders supports all employees who wish to combine breastfeeding (breastfeeding an infant or expressing breastmilk) and paid work. This applies to all employees and may include employees returning from parental leave, new employees who may be breastfeeding, employees who may be re-lactating and pre-adoptive employees who may wish to establish a milk supply prior to their child's placement.

Lactation breaks are to be made available to employees to breastfeed (go to the baby or have the baby brought onto campus) or express breastmilk during work hours. Employees wishing to combine work and breastfeeding should negotiate their conditions as soon as practicable, with their supervisor – ideally this should occur prior to returning from leave.

Flinders is accredited by the Australian Breastfeeding Association as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. Further information on the location of available facilities, related policies and procedures, and resources are available [here](#).

- **Checklist for managers**²

On-Campus Childcare

Flinders operates on several Sites across Australia with our main campus being located at Bedford Park. There are two community child care centres that operate from Flinders University and Flinders Medical Centre sites at Bedford Park:

- [Flinders University Child Care Centre](#)
- [Flinders Medical Centre Community Child Care Centre](#)

Most centres have a waiting list for new children. Depending on when you wish to return to work, you may need to put your name on waiting lists even before your child is born. When considering the locations of childcare centres, think about whether it will be more convenient for your child to be closer to home or closer to work.

[Family Day Care](#) provides another option for childcare. Care is provided in a person's home, and providers are qualified educators of children.

Training and Career Support

We understand that carer responsibilities, whether parental or otherwise, can sometimes reduce capacity to attend conferences and seminars, networking events and after hours activities. It is recognised that sometimes this in turn has the potential to impact on the ability to form collaborations and build networks and that time available to conduct research, write and publish manuscripts may also be reduced.

In recognition of this Flinders offer a range of supports to reduce barriers and achieve equality of opportunity. These include:

Training

Appropriate training will be provided to staff returning from an extended period of parental leave.

Promotion

Flinders University is committed to ensuring equal opportunity to career growth and promotion is available to all Academics. The ability for applicants to detail special circumstances, i.e. output relative to opportunity is embedded into our promotion process. This allows the Committee an opportunity to consider any impact that parental or caring responsibilities may have had for the applicant over a period of time, and take that into account when considering the applicants achievements/outputs. Further information can be found [here](#).

Parental leave Research support scheme

This unique parental research support scheme has been established to support academic staff maintain or reestablish their research careers during or following a period of parental leave.

Teaching and Research and Research Academic staff who are on parental leave, with a contract of three years or longer and at least 18 months remaining are eligible to apply.

Funding of up to \$50,000 is available to successful applicants for the duration of the research program and can be used for research assistance, equipment, professional development, or to engage casual teachers. Further information is available [here](#).

Franklin Women

Flinders University is proud to be the first South Australian university to become a partner organization of Franklin Women (FW), a professional community dedicated to advancing the careers of women in the health and medical research fields. As a partner, Flinders staff can access various initiatives at a discounted rate, including mentorship programs, caregiving support to attend conferences, and more. For further information, visit the [Franklin Women](#) website, use the coupon code FWxFLINDERS024 to unlock access to the discounts on offer.

Further Support or Assistance

Open communication helps to facilitate the provision of support and relevant information.

Your supervisor or [local P&C Business Partnering Team](#) can be contacted for information and assistance regarding leave options, flexible working arrangements, and general support, for your individual circumstances

If you have any questions about equity, diversity and inclusion, please contact a member of the [Organisational, Development and Diversity team](#).

Parental Leave Checklist - Staff

Flinders University is dedicated to supporting parents throughout their journey into parenthood and seamless transition back to work.

Whether you are expecting a baby, adopting, or are the birth parent, primary carer, or partner, this checklist is intended to provide practical support and guidance to assist with your preparations for, taking, and returning from leave.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact your College/Portfolio [People and Culture Business Partnering team](#).

PREPARATION

Review Parental Leave and Parental and Support Guide

Reviewing the information in the Parental and Support Guide and accessing the Flinders Enterprise Agreement (Clause 33) prior to commencing parental leave will provide information, on eligibility and entitlement for the various leave and support options available before, during and after parental leave,

- **Parental and Support Guide**
- [Flinders Parental and Caring Webpage](#)
- [Leave Entitlements](#)
- [Flexible Employment](#)

Familiarise Yourself with Application Processes.

- Service One is used to request amend or extend parental leave
- Antenatal and Adoption Leave is booked through Workday.

Detailed infographics, FAQ's and information can be found [here](#) under parental leave.

Australian Government Parental Leave Pay Scheme

- Determine your eligibility by reviewing the [Department of Human Services Webpage](#)

Child Care

- Child Care Centres typically have long wait lists so if you are requiring care then putting your name down as soon as practicable at the centre of your choice is advisable.

Once you have advised your supervisor of your intention to access parental leave, your supervisor will schedule a time to discuss in more detail your planned commencement and return dates for parental leave.

Prior to this discussion it is beneficial to consider the following:

Leave:

- Commencement and return dates for Parental leave.
- Antenatal appointment arrangements.
- Adoption (pre-placement) appointments including interviews, workshops, court attendances or medical examinations.
- Annual or LSL.
- When you intend to submit your application for leave.

Workplace Adjustments and Support

- Any concerns you have around health and safety or required workplace adjustments.
- Any medical conditions associated with your pregnancy.
- Flexible work arrangements.

Transition to Handover

- Updates you may have in relation to key projects you are working on.
- Academic and Research staff – any student supervision, project milestones, or deadlines.
- Where notes for handover will be saved.

Keeping In Touch

- Discuss how much and what type of contact you would like to have with your supervisor and team.
- Use of 'keeping in touch days' if needed.
- Your preferred contact details.

Sharing News with Colleagues

- Discuss how and when the staff member would like their parental news shared to other Colleagues.

Expectations/Plans for Returning To Work

- Discuss what your plans are for returning to work – i.e., when you will return and at what proposed fraction.

Parental Leave Research Support Scheme

If you are an Academic Research staff member planning to apply for funding through this scheme to maintain research momentum and minimise career disruption, your application must be submitted by either April 30 or November 30 each year and discussed with your supervisor before submission.

GOING ON PARENTAL LEAVE

Before taking parental leave, several administrative tasks need to be completed. These tasks, along with other considerations, are detailed below.

Application for Parental leave

- Submit your application for parental leave at least 10 weeks prior to taking leave.
- Applications for applying, extending and amending parental leave are submitted through Service One.
- Detailed information including FAQ's and fact sheets can be accessed via the parental leave dropdown menu at the following [link](#).

Handover and Transition Plans

- Ensure that any transition and handover plans have been finalised and your supervisor is aware of where they are saved.
- Set up your out of office email and voicemail advising who to contact in your absence.
- Ensure your contact details in Workday have been updated or you have provided your supervisor with your preferred alternative contact details whilst on leave.

Superannuation

- Submit application to contribute employer and staff contributions for unpaid portion of leave (if you have chosen to do so).

RETURNING TO WORK

At approximately 6 weeks prior to your nominated date of return date, Flinders Employment Services Team will contact you to discuss if there are any changes to your return date or submitted work pattern/flexibility (if returning at a reduced FTE).

To ensure a smooth and supportive return to work, consider discussing the following points with your supervisor during your transition back.

Transition.

- Discuss any support you may require for lactation breaks to feed your baby or to express milk.
- Any training or support you may require to transition successfully from an extended period of parental leave.
- **Regular Check-ins**
- Your supervisor will schedule regular check-in conversations discuss work-load and well-being.
- Do not hesitate to contact your supervisor outside of these scheduled times if you have any urgent concerns.

Employee Assistance Program

- Adjusting to work with additional caregiving responsibilities can be challenging. If you need extra support, confidential assistance is available through our EAP program.

Parental Leave Guide - Supervisors

Flinders University is dedicated to supporting parents throughout their journey into parenthood and seamless transition back to work.

Whether your staff member is expecting a baby, adopting, or is the birth parent, primary carer, or partner, this guide will provide practical support to help you to navigate your role and responsibilities as a supervisor.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact your College/Portfolio [People and Culture Business Partnering team](#).

PREPARATION

Prior to meeting with your staff member to discuss their proposed leave and return to work plan, it is important to first familiarise yourself with the various Parental and Caring Supports available. Taking the time to prepare will enable a more informed and productive discussion to occur.

Understand Discrimination Policy

Set aside time to review the [Equal Opportunity information for supervisors](#) page. Here you will find important Information about pregnancy and pregnancy discrimination and the ways you as a supervisor can help prevent pregnancy discrimination.

Review Parental Leave and Parental and Support Guide

Reviewing the information in the Parental and Support Guide and accessing the Flinders Enterprise Agreement (Clause 33) prior to commencing parental leave will provide information, on eligibility and entitlement for the various leave and support options available before, during and after parental leave,

- **Parental and Support Guide**
- [Flinders Parental and Caring Webpage](#)
- [Leave Entitlements](#)
- [Flexible Employment](#)

Familiarise Yourself With Application Processes.

- Service One is used to request amend or extend parental leave.
- Antenatal and Adoption Leave is booked through Workday.

Schedule a meeting

Be sure to schedule a meeting with the **staff member** within a sufficient time frame to discuss options and support available before, during and after leave.

Ensure the meeting is held in a quiet and private space and the employee feels comfortable and supported. Demonstrate empathy and understanding throughout the discussion, maintain confidentiality, and be, as far as operationally practical, flexible and accommodating to the staff member's needs.

See below for various discussion points and matters for consideration.

Discuss Leave Details

- Intended parental leave dates / length.
- Fitness for work (certificate required if working during 6 weeks prior to due date).
- Anticipated dates to support planning handover/backfill.
- Ensure understanding of eligibility, entitlements (including antenatal leave), and application process.

Keeping In touch / Maintaining Career Continuity

- Discuss how staff would like to keep in touch, acknowledging some staff will prefer no communication during their time on leave. Develop a plan by exploring:
 - Do they want to receive regular updates (if so, discuss preferred communication method, frequency, and type of information)?
 - Do they want to attend any conferences / workshops while on leave?
 - Do they want support to apply for academic promotion while on leave?
 - Do they want to access formal Keeping in Touch Days (staff can access up to 10 days to support training and connection while on unpaid parental leave – more information on the [Flinders Keeping In Touch](#) and [Fair Work websites](#))?
- Are there any other activities staff want to engage in to support career continuity?

Flexible Work Arrangements (if required)

- Staff can request flexible working arrangements during pregnancy (change to hours, work pattern, location).
- Ensure awareness of antenatal leave entitlements to provide flexibility for pregnancy related reasons (e.g., attending appointments).

Plan for Handover and Backfill of Duties.

- Ask staff member to outline key responsibilities and ongoing duties.
- Determine key deadlines and important milestones.
- Request staff member to document important processes and procedures.
- Develop a preliminary handover plan together.

Sharing News with Colleagues

- Discuss how and when the staff member would like their parental news shared to other Colleagues.

Recruitment and Backfilling

- At the conclusion of this initial meeting supervisors commence consideration for any backfill requirements.
- Recruitment - commence preliminary discussions with relevant College/Portfolio staff and local P&C Business Partnering team.
- Backfilling from existing staff – consider training and access to resources, systems and support requirements.
- Explore funding support scheme eligibility and process (including replacement fund / research support scheme)
- Introduce temporary points of contact to stakeholders/clients.

RETURNING TO WORK

At approximately 6 weeks prior to the staff member's nominated return date, Flinders Employment Services team will touch base with the staff member to discuss:

- Any changes to return date, and provide instructions to submit extension (if required).
- Any changes to submitted work pattern / flexibility (if returning at reduced FTE).

To assist in a seamless and supportive transition back to work the following areas should be given consideration for staff returning to work from parental leave:

Support Transition.

- Contact staff member prior to return to discuss any additional support required
- Allow the employee time to reacclimate to their role.
- provide time to catch up (e.g. check emails, complete required training, familiarise themselves with new processes, meet new team members).
- Ensure support is provided for feeding (e.g. avoid scheduling back to back classes, meetings etc). Supervisors should also review the ['Supporting Breastfeeding Employees: Checklist for Managers'](#).
- Provide any necessary training or updates (e.g. new systems).
- Ensure allocation of work/handover is clearly communicated.
- Where possible ensure team meetings are scheduled to support staff with caring responsibilities (i.e. avoid early or late meetings), and encourage a family friendly work environment for all staff.

Regular Check-ins

- Schedule regular check-in conversations discuss work-load and well-being.

Seek Feedback

- Ask for feedback on their experience with the leave process, transition back to work.

Celebrate the Return

- Acknowledge and celebrate their return to foster a positive work environment.

Section 2- Caring and Support



At Flinders we are committed to providing a working environment which is flexible and responsive to a staff member’s family and caring responsibilities and dedicated to supporting our staff in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Recognising that family extends beyond traditional definitions, Flinders policies embrace a broad and inclusive definition of family to ensure comprehensive support for staff with caregiving responsibilities.

Flinders definition of “Family member” includes an immediate relatives by blood, marriage, adoption, fostering, parenting, traditional kinship (including guardian, ward, grandparent, foster-grandparent, step-grand-parent, and in-law relative); or a person who stands in a bona fide domestic or household relationship with a staff member including same sex partner, or situation in which there is implied some dependency or support role for the staff member..

This inclusive approach allows staff to access leave and support services not only for spouses and children but also for elderly parents, siblings, and other loved ones. By acknowledging diverse family structures, Flinders University fosters a compassionate and accommodating work environment, empowering staff to balance their professional and caregiving duties effectively.

Whether you need planned, or emergency leave to care for children, elderly parents, or family members with disability, mental or chronic illness, or injury, this guide will outline the many gender-neutral support options available for you to access.

Leave Options

Personal/Carers Leave

Flinders staff receive an annual entitlement of paid personal/carer's leave which accrues progressively throughout the year and carries forward from year to year.

This entitlement can either be utilised to take time off due to personal illness or to provide care or support to family members who have experienced a personal illness, injury, or an emergency.

Should entitlement to paid personal/carer's leave be exhausted then there are options to access unpaid carer's leave or utilise annual leave and/or long service leave to provide payment in lieu of unpaid carer's leave.

Should you wish to apply for paid or unpaid carer leave be sure to inform your supervisor as soon as possible, apply through Workday and provide any required documentation.

The workday instruction guide can be found at the following [link](#).

Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave (up to 2 days per occasion) is available for staff if they need to spend time with a seriously ill family member or in the event of a family member's death. This leave is separate from personal leave entitlements and can be applied for through Workday.

Purchased Leave

Purchased Leave, also described as part year employment, is an arrangement whereby members of staff may take an agreed amount of leave without pay for a number of weeks per year, with their reduced salary then averaged and paid over the year.

Staff sometimes find this arrangement useful to help support them to provide care over the school holiday period or to share the care of elderly parents with other family members.

Superannuation

Superannuation contributions are maintained by Flinders for periods of paid leave. Staff who are members of UniSuper (Flinders default superannuation fund) defined benefit fund have the option to maintain and fund both employer and employee contributions for any periods of authorised leave without pay.

Staff who are members of UniSuper and temporarily reduce their fraction for family care purposes are also able to maintain and fund both employee and employer contributions applying to the difference between their substantive salary and the reduced part-time salary.

Further information about Superannuation at Flinders and direct links to the UniSuper website are available [here](#).

Support for Staff in the Event of a Family Member's Death

Flinders University offers compassionate support to staff dealing with the death of a family member. Employees are entitled to compassionate and special paid leave, allowing them to take time off to grieve and manage personal affairs. Additional support services, including counselling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), are also available to help staff navigate this difficult time.

Domestic Violence

Flinders university is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all staff and students. If you or someone you know has been the victim of domestic or family abuse, free and confidential support is available, further information can be found [here](#).

Staff are able to access leave for matters arising from or as a result of family or domestic violence.

For information is available in Clause 36 of Flinders 2023 – 2026 Enterprise Agreement. Staff are also encouraged to speak with their supervisor or P&C Business Partner for further information and support.

Cultural Leave

We understand that cultural connections and traditions are an important in maintaining family and community connections. To support this, special paid leave is available for staff to participate in, fulfill obligations and/or celebrate religious and national days to the culture which staff or their family members identify.

Maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship/community links

At Flinders we recognise the significance of traditional kinship and community connections in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. To support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in maintaining these important connections, five days of special paid leave per year is available for this purpose.



Health and Wellbeing

Caring for others can sometimes mean there is less of a focus on caring for yourself. It is important that we all take the time to care for ourselves as well as one another.

At Flinders we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment that supports a holistic approach to health and well-being. An annual calendar of health and wellbeing activities addressing both physical and mental health is offered to help support staff balance their health and well-being. Further information about this and other various health and wellbeing resources, including workshops, online resources, and access to fitness facilities can be found [here](#).

MetLife 360 Health

Flinders University staff their partner, children or parents are able to access a suite of health services from nutrition, mental health, fitness and recovery advice at no cost through our partnership with UniSuper and MetLife 360Health. Further information can be accessed [here](#).

On-Campus Medical Centre

A confidential health service is also located at our Bedford Park campus and all eligible consultations are bulk-billed further information is available [here](#)

BUPA – Flinders University Health Plan

Flinders has partnered with BUPA to offer the BUPA-Flinders University Health Plan. This health plan enables staff to receive a discount on premiums and access a range of other benefits. Further information can be found at the following link or by calling BUPA direct 1300 662 074.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

As part of our Employee Assistance Program staff are able to access a strictly confidential and self-referring service through an external service provider. Support can be provided for a variety of personal, emotional or work related problems including:

- Marital or family problems
- Stress
- Sleeping difficulties

- Grief and trauma
- Anxiety and depression, and general emotional problems

Further information can be found [here](#)

Flinders Sport & Fitness

To maintain health and fitness and keep it accessible and interesting wellness programs are offered, at very low cost, including the very popular reformer Pilates, yoga and sporting opportunities. Members can also access a ladies only gym, infrared sauna and state of the art massage chairs. To find out more visit [here](#).

How to Access Support

Contact P&C Business Partnering Team

For information and assistance regarding leave options, flexible working arrangements, and general support, contact your [local P&C Business Partnering Team](#). They can provide guidance and help you navigate available resources.

Speak to your supervisor

Discuss your needs with your supervisor to explore possible adjustments to your work schedule or duties. Open communication can help find mutually beneficial solutions.

Carer Gateway

Help and support for carers is also available from the Australian Government and other organisations. The governments website “Carer Gateway” provides emotional and practical services and support for carers and can be accessed [here](#).

Australian Human Rights Commission – Supervisor checklist/Guide

The Australian Human Rights Commission has produced a comprehensive toolkit to support caring in the Workplace. This toolkit includes a practical and informative guide to assist both supervisors and staff with conversations regarding requests for caring support and development of individual plans. For further information and access visit the Human Rights commission webpage at the following [link](#).