



BENEFITS & ECONOMIC SERVICES DIVISION

Newfoundland and Labrador
Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road
St. John's NL A1B 1W1

www.nlta.nl.ca

Tel: 709-726-3223
1-800-563-3599
Fax: 709-726-4302
1-877-711-6582

GOING ON MATERNITY LEAVE ????

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Under the Collective Agreement, you are required to request maternity leave from your school board at least four months before your expected delivery date. **Birth mothers can access paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period (generally six weeks) following delivery for recuperation from childbirth.** The only prerequisites for this are a doctor's note and you must have sufficient sick leave available to you. We recommend that teachers advise the board in advance that they plan to access paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period following delivery and that a doctor's note will be provided. We have developed a form letter for this, a copy of which is attached for you. Then, you just provide the board with a note from your doctor after your baby is born. Some Districts will actually provide a standard form for your doctor to complete.

Your Record of Employment from the board should state your last paid day and your entitlement to Employment Insurance benefits would start after that date. If you take sick leave following delivery, then when you apply for EI benefits, make sure to tell the agent that you are coming off a period of paid sick leave as they will then count your last two weeks of paid sick leave as your waiting period. **It is important to understand that accessing sick leave does not extend the time you have to claim the 50 weeks of EI benefits.** These benefits (15 weeks maternity and 35

weeks parental) can only be claimed during the 52 week period immediately following the date of birth of your baby. So, counting the waiting period, a woman who takes six weeks of sick leave would, in a sense, give up four weeks of EI benefits. However, most people feel that six weeks of full pay and benefits is better than four weeks of EI and a two week unpaid waiting period. (Please note, paid sick leave cannot be accessed for any reason during the non-teaching periods - ie. summer, Christmas, Easter. For example, a teacher who gives birth on July 1 should just file for EI benefits right away.)

This all has nothing to do with any sick leave you may need to take prior to delivery. If you need to go off a few weeks before the baby is born, take some time for medical appointments, etc., this would not impact on your entitlement to paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period after delivery as long as, of course, you have sufficient sick leave available.

Some other things to remember on maternity leave include making arrangements with Johnson's for payment of your group insurance premiums through an automatic bank debit. The government will still continue to pay its share of your premiums while you are on maternity leave. If you do not pay your premiums while

on maternity leave, you will be deemed to have opted out of the group plan and will not be able to get back in when you return to work unless you can provide medical proof of insurability. Also, you will need to pay NLTA fees during your leave. NLTA fees for teachers on unpaid leave, including maternity leave, are only \$2 per month. Most people send in one cheque made out to NLTA for the full amount, to the attention of Jim Fox, our treasurer, with a note indicating that it is for payment of your NLTA fees while on maternity leave. When you go back to work, you should also make arrangements to buy back your period of unpaid leave to have it count for pensionable service. If you make arrangements to do this within six months of returning to work, all you will have to pay back are the pension contributions you would have made if you had been working. If you wait longer than six months, you will be charged full actuarial value, which is much more expensive and the cost will increase the longer you wait.

This may seem like a lot of information to digest at a very busy and exciting time in your life, so please refer to the following checklist to make sure you don't forget anything:

MATERNITY LEAVE “TO DO” CHECKLIST

- Give your school board a written request** for maternity leave at least four months in advance of your expected delivery date. It is your option to access paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period following delivery. The letter should be addressed to the Assistant Director (Human Resources) and copied to your school principal. A sample letter is attached.
- Once you have had your baby**, see your doctor and request a medical note putting you off work for recovery from childbirth (normally six weeks is recommended). Submit the note to your school board and send a copy to your principal.
- When you are nearing the end of your recovery period** (sick leave), contact your school board to request your Record of Employment, which you will need for filing an EI claim.
- At the end of your recovery period** (sick leave), submit your application for EI benefits. Make sure to advise the agent that you have just finished a period of sick leave and want to have the last two weeks of this counted as your EI waiting period.
- Contact Johnson Incorporated** to arrange for continued payment of your group insurance premiums - 737-1639/1559 or 1-800-563-1528.
- Contact NLTA** to arrange for payment of your Association dues during your leave - 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.
- Relax and enjoy time with your new baby!!! 😊**
- You have six months after your return to work** to contact the Department of Finance, Pensions Division, to make arrangements to buy-back your period of leave for pensionable service. You can fax Pensions Divisions, providing your name, SIN and mailing address, at 729-6790.

*If at any time you need clarification, have other questions, etc.,
please do not hesitate to contact an
Administrative Officer in the NLTA Benefits and Economic Services Division.*

[Street Address]
[City], [Province]
[Postal Code]

[Date]

[Name]

Assistant Director of Education, Human Resources

[School District]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to request maternity leave as per Article 17 of the Provincial Collective Agreement. My expected date of delivery is [Date], and I am anticipating accessing paid sick leave, if necessary, for a period of time from my delivery date until I am medically cleared to return to work. A medical note will be provided for this period.

From that point, I am requesting maternity leave, with an expected return to work on [Date].

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[School]

copy to: [School principal]