



CHILLIWACK TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. How do I get my Record of Employment (ROE)?

A. Teacher Payroll will electronically send your ROE directly to Service Canada Employment Insurance. Once you have set up your account with EI, you will be able to look at your current claim on the internet and will be able to check payment dates, amounts etc.

Q. Do we have a 'paternity leave'?

A. There is no such thing as "paternity leave". Parental leave is not gender specific. However, parental benefits are paid for a maximum of 35 shared weeks plus 5 weeks for the spouse. This weekly benefit rate is 55% of the parent's average weekly insurable earnings up to a maximum of over \$600 a week.

Q. Can my partner and I share the parental leave (Parental Shared Benefits)?

A. Yes. You are eligible to share your parental leave with your partner. All parents have 40 weeks of parental leave. However, 5 of these weeks are specifically meant for the spouse to take time off to care for a newborn (see question above).

Q. What leaves are available to me?

A. Through the Collective Agreement between the Chilliwack Teachers' Association (CTA) and the Chilliwack School District you are eligible to certain leaves. The leaves are outlined in the following Articles:

- G.20 Sick Leave
- G.21 Pregnancy Leave (and Parental)
- G.22 Parenthood Leave
- G.23 Birth or Adoption Leave
- G.29 Extensive Leave of Absence

Q. What Health Benefits are available to me while I am on leave?

A. Health Benefits may be continued with payment of costs to the board. While on Pregnancy leave your EI payments will be topped up by the district to 100% for 16 weeks. Health Benefits will be deducted by the District from this amount. Once you move onto Parental leave, for up to a further 35 weeks, you will be responsible for 100% of the costs of Health Benefits. The Board office will send a letter detailing the amount.

Q. I am a teacher on the TTOC list. May I apply for pregnancy leave benefits?

A. Yes. You can inform the district of your unavailability due to pregnancy. As well, you may qualify for benefits under Employment Insurance depending upon the amount of work you have had in the last year. However, you will not receive the top up from the district. See our page on pregnancy/parental leave for TTOCs.

Q. What happens if I become ill while pregnant or before I start my pregnancy leave?

A. First talk to your doctor and see what they recommend. If your doctor feels that you should be off work leading up to the birth of your child then use your sick leave days. Get a medical note from your doctor and book your absences on the PowerSchool system. If you should run out of sick leave days then you can access additional sick leave coverage through the BCTF Salary Indemnity program. SIP forms can be found on the BCTF website. Call the CTA Office if you need help filling out the forms.

Q. What rights do I have in the case of adoption?

A. Under the Collective agreement parents who adopt a child are eligible to a leave of absence. Article G.23 specifically addresses this leave. As well, a person adopting a child is eligible for up to 35 weeks of EI under the parental leave provisions.

Q. Can I claim multiple benefits if I'm having multiple children?

A. No, Parents cannot both access the full range of parental benefits because there are two (or more) children born at the same time. This also applies when adopting two or more children at the same time.

Q. Can a parent take parental leave at the same time the other parent is taking pregnancy leave?

A. Yes. This is permissible under the Employment Standards Act and in line with policies in Service Canada

Q. How do I enroll my child in medical and other benefits?



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A. MSP - After the birth of your child the hospital will give you the forms to enroll your baby in the BC Medical Services Plan. (Baby Enrollment Form) Fill these out and return them. As well, let Teacher Payroll know that you want to add your child to your medical benefits.

Extended Health Benefits – Your child can be enrolled in the Blue Cross plan after birth. Let Teacher Payroll know that you want to add your child to your benefits.

Dental – Before the first appointment with the dentist check with Teacher Payroll to ensure your child has been added to your Dental Benefit Plan.

BCTF/BCTSA Group Life - You may want to change your beneficiary. Changes are made through Teacher Payroll.

Q. How does the leave affect my seniority and salary increments?

A. You will receive a salary increment credit for time taken for pregnancy and parental leave. You will not receive an increment for time taken as parenthood leave. For seniority purposes, continuity of service is not broken by pregnancy/parental leave. You will be given credit for 1 year of seniority for the first year of your leave. However no credit will be given for seniority or salary increment for those who choose to taken an additional parenthood leave.

Q. How does the leave affect my pension plan and how do I purchase the pension leave?

A. You may purchase pension credit for leave time taken for pregnancy leaves. Information can be found on the Teachers' Pension Plan website.

Q. When should I leave work?

A. That is a question best answered by your doctor/midwife. If you are medically fit to work, you may work up to the birth. However most find it better to have some time at home just before the due date of the child. If your doctor recommends this you can use sick leave to cover the time until you start the pregnancy leave when your child is born. Alternatively, you can start your Pregnancy Leave up to 11 weeks before the due date. However, if you are ill, you and your medical professional (including a midwife) may want to explore sick leave.

Q. How do I return to work?

A. Returning to work is again a conversation to be had with your doctor. Under the Collective Agreement provisions (Article G.21.1.b) you may return to work six weeks following the birth of your child as long as you have a medical note clearing you for return to work. The notice necessary to the School Board for you to return to work depends on whether you are on a pregnancy, parental or parenthood leave. We suggest you contact the CTA for information well in advance of your anticipated return date.

Q. What about my membership in the CTA or in the BCTF?

A. You will continue your membership in the CTA and the BCTF during your leave but will not pay dues during the leave.

Q. What about my membership in the Teacher Regulation Branch?

A. If your leave goes over the renewal of membership time (May), you will be responsible to arrange payment of the fees for a practicing member. More information will be available through the Government of BC website. Do not let your membership lapse as it can be very costly to reestablish your membership.

Q. Can I work while on leave?

A. Yes. You can work while receiving EI pregnancy benefits. The weekly earnings will reduce that week's EI benefits by \$.50 for every \$1 earned, until earnings reach 90% of weekly benefit (at which point benefit reduction is dollar for dollar).

Q. What benefits do surrogate and receiving parents get?

A. Surrogate: entitled to pregnancy benefits. This includes both the Employment Standards Act and the Employment Insurance Act. Parents: Only entitled to parental benefits. This includes both the Employment Standards Act and the Employment Insurance Act.

Note: There is no entitlement for parental benefits to start before the birth of the child, so receiving parents may need to access personal leave if they want to be present during the birth. In the CTA Collective Agreement this may include our Birth or Adoptive Leave (G.23).

Q. Do I return to the same position?

A. Not necessarily. The employer may return you to the same position, but possibly with a different assignment.