

Are You a Teacher with an Expectant Spouse or Partner?



You may be entitled to some time off for the birth of your child. Check your collective agreement for details. Note that if you are considering sharing parental leave with your spouse or partner, you should contact Teacher Employment Services for help requesting leave from your employer.

Are You a Part-Time or Substitute Teacher?

If you work part-time and are planning a pregnancy or are already pregnant, keep a log of any time you spend doing work outside the normal school day. (For example, first bell rings at 8:45 AM but you've been there since 6:30 AM preparing the science room for an experiment, or students leave at 3:35 PM but you stay until 5:30 PM marking papers.) Items listed in your log should also include time spent on lesson planning, classroom and materials maintenance, curricular activities, marking, report cards, supervision, consultations with teachers and others, professional development, and administrative duties (administrative designations only). The log should be verified by school administration regularly.

Teacher Employment Services has assisted teachers with denied EI claims relating to a shortage of hours. In these cases, teachers kept accurate and detailed records of hours worked beyond normal instructional hours and were able to prove that they qualified for benefits.

Information Sources and Important Messages

- ❑ More detailed information is available on the Association's website (www.teachers.ab.ca).
- ❑ Service Canada has detailed information regarding employment insurance.
- ❑ The Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) administers the teachers' pension plan. While on unpaid leave, teachers do not accrue pension time or pay into their pension plans. However, once teachers return to work, they can purchase back that service. Contact ATRF directly at 1-800-661-9582 for information.
- ❑ Ensure seamless benefits coverage. Complete the necessary paperwork in a timely manner to maintain your benefits while on leave.
- ❑ Association membership dues are not submitted on your behalf during your leave. The Association will bill you after your leave commences (dues are \$8 per month). There is no need to remit dues prior to receiving a bill.

Contact Us

For more information, and if you have specific questions, contact the Alberta Teachers' Association's Teacher Employment Services program area.

Mailing address: 11010 142 Street NW,
Edmonton, AB, T5N 2R1

Phone: 780-447-9400 in Edmonton;
1-800-232-7208 from elsewhere in Alberta

Fax: 780-455-6481

E-mail: tes@ata.ab.ca

Website: www.teachers.ab.ca

Everything you need to know about maternity leave



Read this brochure if you are pregnant or planning to conceive.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

Time Off

❑ Collective Agreement

All collective agreements contain information about (1) time off—how much leave is available, (2) eligibility—who qualifies for leave, (3) rules for notification—when leaving and when returning, and (4) pay and benefits.

All teachers have access to some time off for the period surrounding the birth. Teachers with more than one year of continuous service have access to up to 78 weeks (18 months) of leave and may start and end their leave at any time within those 78 weeks (18 months). Options for teachers with probationary or temporary contracts are not as clear. Therefore, you are strongly urged to contact Teacher Employment Services for clarification.

❑ Obtain proof of pregnancy

Obtain a medical certificate or note from your doctor or registered midwife confirming your due date. Depending on your collective agreement, you may also need certificates for the length of time you will be off work before and after the delivery for health-related reasons.

Employment Insurance (EI)

❑ Apply for EI

EI applications are completed online and must be done within 10 days of the baby's birth. However, in some instances, mothers may need to apply prior to the birth. Please contact Teacher Employment Services to determine what is in your best interest.

The application will require your salary calculations, direct deposit information and social insurance number. Note that the Service Canada website application may request a record of employment (ROE); however, you do not need it to apply for benefits. Some employers submit ROEs electronically. Contact your employer for your ROE. It is a good idea to retain a copy of your ROE for your records.

Supplemental Unemployment/ Employment Benefit (SUB/SEB)

- ❑ Most collective agreements contain provisions for SUB/SEB plans (top-up) for teachers on contract. These SUB/SEB plans work in conjunction with EI benefits.

It is important to note that you do not have to participate in SUB/SEB plans that are not sanctioned by your collective agreement. Also, because teachers are paid only for days worked, SUB/SEB plans are likewise payable only during teaching periods and not during summer, Christmas or spring breaks.

- ❑ **Fixed plans.** Your employer will top up your EI benefits to a sum equivalent to your regular weekly earnings for a set number of weeks. Sick leave may be taken as an alternative (for the fixed period stated in the collective agreement) to fixed SUB/SEB plans.
- ❑ **Health-related.** The time (both prior to and following the delivery) when you are not well enough to work is called the health-related portion of your maternity leave. The length of

time you receive pay is based on the amount of sick leave you are entitled to when you stop work. A doctor's note is required to start a sick leave. SUB/SEB will be paid once the baby is born.

❑ Contact the Association

Contact Teacher Employment Services for assistance with interpreting your collective agreement and writing a letter to notify the school district of your maternity and parental leave requirements. Find out which option is in your best interest.

Benefits

- ❑ All teachers on contract are entitled to receive benefits for 16 weeks of maternity leave and for 36 weeks of parental leave. If your leave is for more than one year, prepay or repay options are in place in the collective agreement for you to continue benefits. Contact Teacher Employment Services for details.
- ❑ **Maintain all your benefits**
To protect yourself and your family during your unpaid leave and after you return to work, maintain **all** your benefits. Other options exist but are not recommended.
- ❑ **Add your baby to your benefits**
Within 30 days of having your baby, add baby to your benefits by completing the form provided by your benefits provider.