

10 Steps to help Dads prepare for paternity leave

Taking paternity leave helps kids, dads, and moms. It can also be scary if you're not sure how it works or what to expect. Follow this checklist to know what's right for your situation and maximize the transition to fatherhood.

1 **Speak to your spouse/partner**
Decide what you both want/need, identify fears and concerns, express your feelings about taking leave including the length of time to take

2 **Contact Service Canada**
Ask about benefits, eligibility, amount you can receive and any special circumstances you may have. Service Canada general number: 1-800-622-6232

3 **Talk to your boss**
Approach the conversation with curiosity and respect for the employer's needs. Ask how you can work together. If told you can't go on leave, know your rights and be prepared to advocate for them.

From the Government of Canada site:
"Your employer must give you a minimum number of weeks for maternity, parental and adoption leave. The number of weeks you get varies by province and territory. However, employers don't have to pay you during this time."

4 **Create a plan for work**
Meet with your boss, employees, or colleagues to ensure agreement on how your responsibilities are completed, delegated, reassigned, or put on hold during your leave

5 **Contact your HR Department**
Get clear about what additional benefits are available, or how your current benefits may change during your leave.

6 **Create a budget**
Check out this [financial checklist when having children](#) from the Government of Canada to help you make a financial plan.

7 **Know the EI Application Process**
Review any forms and timelines. Complete all forms and applications ahead of deadlines.
application process can be started at this link:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental/apply.html>

8 **Check in with your spouse**
Keep your partner informed and included in the process. Ask for help if needed, and be open to discussing changes either one of you may be feeling through the planning process.

9 **Prepare yourself**
If you're a first time dad, prepare yourself for becoming a father (check out [newdadmanual.ca](#)). For repeat dads, reflect on what you hope to achieve and make a plan to achieve it.

10 **Recruit help**
Recruit supportive family, friends, co-workers to be a sounding board and resource as you adjust to the new reality of having a family.