

## Leaves and benefits for new and expecting parents

Ontario's Employment Standards Act gives **unpaid pregnancy** and **parental leaves**. Parents can also get **paid** Employment Insurance (EI) **maternity** and **parental benefits**.

Reason for time off	Who's eligible?	Pregnancy leave	EI maternity benefits	Important dates
<b>Pregnancy</b>	<p>People who are pregnant or have just given birth.</p> <p>To take <b>the leave</b>, you worked for your employer for at least <b>13 weeks</b> before your due date.</p> <p>To get <b>EI benefits</b>, your weekly earnings went down by <b>more than 40%</b>.</p>	<p>Lasts up to <b>17 weeks</b>.</p> <p>If you have a miscarriage or a stillbirth, your leave can continue for at least 12 weeks after that happens.</p> <p>This means that your leave could be <b>longer</b> than 17 weeks.</p>	<p>55% of what you earned before getting EI, up to a maximum amount. For 2026, the maximum amount is <b>\$729 a week</b>.</p> <p>Last up to <b>15 weeks</b>.</p>	<p><b>Earliest you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>start <b>your leave</b> is 17 weeks before your baby's due date or on the day your baby is born, whichever is earlier</li> <li>get <b>EI benefits</b> is 12 weeks before your baby's due date or the week your baby is born, whichever is earlier</li> </ul> <p><b>Latest you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>start <b>your leave</b> is on the baby's due date, or on the day your baby is born if they're born early</li> <li>get <b>EI benefits</b> is 17 weeks after your baby's due date, or 17 weeks after the week your baby is born if they're born early *</li> </ul> <p>* To get the full 15 weeks of benefits, apply no later than <b>one week</b> after your baby is due or born.</p>

For more about workers' rights, visit [stepstojustice.ca/emp-work](https://stepstojustice.ca/emp-work). This is general information for people in Ontario, Canada. It's not legal advice.

For more details, read **Taking time off work: For new and expecting parents** at [cleo.on.ca/new-parents](https://cleo.on.ca/new-parents).

Reason for time off	Who's eligible?	Parental leave	EI parental benefits	Important dates
<p><b>Newborn or newly adopted child</b></p>	<p>To take <b>the leave</b>, you worked for your employer for at least <b>13 weeks</b>.</p> <p>Applies to any parent of the child, including someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is in a “relationship of some permanence” with the parent of the child, and</li> <li>• is going to treat the child as their own.</li> </ul> <p>To get <b>EI benefits</b>, your weekly earnings went down by more than 40%.</p> <p>Applies to biological parents, parents who adopt, and others who the law sees as parents.</p>	<p>Lasts up to <b>61 weeks</b> if you gave birth.</p> <p>Lasts up to <b>63 weeks</b> if you did not give birth.</p>	<p><b>Standard benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55% of what you earn before getting EI, up to a maximum amount</li> <li>• last up to <b>35 weeks</b></li> </ul> <p>For 2026, the most you can get is <b>\$729 a week</b>. You get an extra <b>5 weeks</b> if you share with another parent. But no one can take more than <b>35 weeks</b>.</p> <p><b>Extended benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33% of what you earned before getting EI, up to a maximum amount</li> <li>• last up to <b>61 weeks</b></li> </ul> <p>For 2026, the most you can get is <b>\$437 a week</b>. You get an extra <b>8 weeks</b> if you share with another parent. But no one can take more than <b>61 weeks</b>.</p>	<p><b>Earliest you can start your leave or get EI benefits is the day your child:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is born, or</li> <li>• comes into your care</li> </ul> <p><b>Latest you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• start <b>your leave</b> is 78 weeks after the day your child is born or comes into your care</li> <li>• apply for <b>EI benefits</b> and get the maximum amount is 16 weeks after the week your child is born or comes into your care</li> </ul>