

Work/Life Balance 1: Support for Parents & Carers

Teachers are able to access provisions which assist them in achieving a work/life balance. Employees with caring or parenting responsibilities, in particular, have a number of entitlements available to them.

Refer Section D – Leave, of the ACT DET Union Collective Agreement 2007-2009 at www.aeuact.asn.au/info-centre/working-conditions/index.html

Leave for Parents and Carers:

- *Maternity Leave* – 14 weeks paid maternity leave at full pay, 28 weeks at half pay, or used in conjunction with Long Service Leave.
- *Parental Leave* – up to a maximum of 40 weeks unpaid parental leave in addition to maternity or primary care giver leave.
- *Primary Care Giver Leave* – for the care of a new born or adopted child, 14 weeks paid leave.
- *Parenting Leave without pay* – up to 7 years of parenting leave without pay for teachers.
- *Bonding Leave* – 5 days paid bonding leave at the time of the birth or adoption of your child.

Regular Part-Time Employment Following Maternity or Parental Leave

Employees returning from maternity or parental leave will be entitled to access regular part-time employment for a period up to two years from the birth or adoption of their child.

Nursing Mothers:

Employees who are breastfeeding will be provided with the facilities and support necessary to enable them to combine a continuation of such breastfeeding with their employment. Up to one hour paid lactation breaks per day will be available for nursing mothers.

Family Care Costs:

Where an employee is directed to work outside their regular pattern of work, the Delegate will authorise reimbursement to the employee by receipt for some or all of the costs of additional family care arrangements.

Employees with Caring Responsibilities:

Carers are employees who provide, in addition to their normal family responsibilities, care and support on a regular basis to other family members or other persons who are sick or ageing, have an injury, have physical or mental illness, or a disability. Family members may include children, brothers or sisters, domestic partner, parents, grandparents and close relatives. In some cases, employees may be responsible for providing care to a neighbour or a friend who has no one to assist with day-to-day care. The department recognises that carer responsibilities vary considerably, depending on the level of care and assistance required and may be suddenly imposed, or may increase gradually. It is also recognised that, generally, employees are able to provide care and assistance outside normal working hours. However, there are times they are required to provide more support or assistance because of illness, injury or disability. To assist employees in balancing their work and carer responsibilities flexible working and leave arrangements are provided.

Examples of these flexible working and leave arrangements include, but are not limited to:

- [a] flexible starting and finishing times;
- [b] ability to take a few hours off work, and make it up later;
- [c] access to breast feeding facilities;
- [d] access to personal leave for caring purposes for members of immediate family or household;
- [e] home based work on a short or long term basis;
- [f] part-time work;
- [g] job sharing;
- [h] purchased leave;
- [i] annual leave;
- [j] long service leave;
- [k] leave without pay; and
- [l] leave not provided for elsewhere.

Employee Assistance Program:

The Department supports teachers through the provision of access to an Employee Assistance Program. Davidson Trahaire [telephone 6285-2382] is an independent agency contracted by DET to provide free, professional, confidential counselling to employees on work or personal matters.