

Letter of approval of extension of parental leave

Under the National Employment Standards, eligible employees are entitled to 12 months' unpaid parental leave. An employee on parental leave can also request to extend their unpaid leave by an additional 12 months (up to a total of 24 months from the date of birth or placement of the child).

You can use this letter to advise an employee that their request for additional unpaid parental leave has been approved in the following situations:

- the employee is requesting an additional 12 months' leave, or
- the employee is requesting an extension within the initial 12 months.

For detailed information about parental leave entitlements and obligations, visit www.fairwork.gov.au/leave.

You can refuse an employee's request to extend unpaid parental leave beyond 12 months on reasonable business grounds. If you are refusing a request, see the Letter of refusal of extension of parental leave.

Suggested steps for preparing a letter of approval of extension of parental leave

If at any time you need more information or assistance, call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fairwork.gov.au.

Step 1: Consider the employee's request

An employee who wishes to extend their parental leave needs to provide the request in writing at least 4 weeks before the end date of the original period of leave.

An employee on unpaid parental leave is entitled to extend their unpaid parental leave to a total of 12 months. You can not refuse their first request to extend their parental leave. The employee can make additional requests to extend their parental leave within the first 12 months with your approval.

Employees on unpaid parental leave can request an additional 12 months' unpaid parental leave, with your approval. Find out more at www.fairwork.gov.au/leave.

Step 2: Talk to the employee

It is a good idea to keep in regular contact with employees who are on parental leave. Talking to the employee about their request is an opportunity for you to:

- advise them that you have approved their request, and
- keep them up-to-date about what is happening in the workplace.

The [Best Practice Guide on work & family](#) can help you provide flexible work strategies to allow your employees to balance their work and family responsibilities once they return to work.

Step 3: Create your letter of approval of extension of parental leave

If you approve an employee's request to extend their parental leave, you must provide a written response within 21 days.

The response must state that you have approved the request, and it is also a good idea to confirm the start and end dates of the leave in the letter.

You do not need to provide a written response if the employee is requesting an extension of parental leave within the first 12 months. However, it is best practice to respond to all requests in writing.

This template has been colour coded to assist you to complete it accurately. You simply need to replace the red < > writing with what applies to your employee and situation. Explanatory information is shown in blue italics to assist you and should be deleted once you have finished the letter.

Step 4: Provide the letter to the employee and keep a copy for your records

Provide the letter to the employee, ensuring they receive it within 21 days of their request.

You should also keep a copy of the letter for your records.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing you with advice that you can rely on.

The information contained in this template is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or a workplace relations professional.

<Print on your business letterhead>

<Date>

Private and confidential

<Insert employee's full name>

<Insert employee's residential address>

Dear <insert name>

Approval of extension of parental leave

In accordance with the requirements outlined under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, I am writing to advise that your application for an extension of unpaid parental leave has been approved.

To confirm, the dates that you have proposed are as follows:

Start date of extended leave: <Insert date>

End date of extended leave: <Insert date>

Please ensure that you notify me of any further changes to your situation.

Should you have any questions in relation to this request, please contact me on <insert phone number>.

Yours sincerely,

<Insert name>

<Insert position>

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS LETTER FOR YOUR RECORDS