

Request to extend unpaid parental leave beyond initial 12 months – template letter

Who can use this template

Employees can use this template to request up to an additional 12 months of unpaid parental leave immediately following the end of their initial 12-month period of leave.

The total period of unpaid parental leave with the extension can't be more than 24 months from the date of birth or placement of the child.

We update our templates from time to time. Make sure you're using the [latest version](#) from fairwork.gov.au/templates



IMPORTANT

You should not use this template if:

- you have taken less than 12 months of unpaid parental leave and the date you wish to extend to is still within the initial 12-month period. Instead, use the [Request to vary unpaid parental leave within initial 12 months template](#) available at fairwork.gov.au/templates
- your initial 12-month period of unpaid parental leave has already ended, and you have returned to work. If this is the case, you may not be eligible for an extension of parental leave. For more information see our [Parental leave section](#) at fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave

How to request an extension

You need to give your employer a **written request** that you want to extend your unpaid parental leave beyond the initial 12 months. You need to give this request to your employer **at least 4 weeks** before the first period of unpaid parental leave ends. Your request should specify what length of extension you are requesting.

How should my employer respond?

Employers must respond to all requests for an extension of unpaid parental leave within 21 days in writing, setting out whether they approve your request, agree to a varied extended leave period following discussion with you, or refuse the request.

They can't refuse your request unless they have reasonable business grounds and they have taken certain steps, including discussing and genuinely trying to reach an agreement with you first.

Visit our [Parental leave section](#) at fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave for information about the steps employers need to take, what counts as reasonable business grounds, and what needs to be in the written response.

Can I challenge their decision?

There are steps you can take if:

- your request has been refused, or
- your employer has not provided a written response to your request within 21 days.

In the first instance, you must try to resolve disputes about requests to extend unpaid parental leave by having discussions at the workplace level.

The Fair Work Commission can assist with resolving the dispute if you and your employer have been unsuccessful in trying to resolve the dispute at the workplace level.

For more information visit the [Fair Work Commission's website](https://www.fwc.gov.au/issues-we-help) at [fwc.gov.au/issues-we-help](https://www.fwc.gov.au/issues-we-help)

Need more help with parental leave?

- Visit our [Parental leave section](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave) at [fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave)
- Submit an enquiry online through [My account](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/register) at [fairwork.gov.au/register](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/register)

Check out our other resources



- Explore our [interactive template tools, downloadable templates and letters](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/templates) available at [fairwork.gov.au/templates](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/templates)
- Complete our [free online courses](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/learning) available at [fairwork.gov.au/learning](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/learning) to develop skills and strategies to help you at work



IMPORTANT

This template has been colour coded to help you to complete it. You simply need to replace the **red < > writing** with the information that applies to your situation. You should change all the text to **black** when you're finished.

The **purple writing** shows you extra explanatory information and should also be deleted.

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.

TEMPLATE LETTER – Request to extend unpaid parental leave beyond initial 12 months

<Date>

Private and confidential

<Your name>

<Contact details>

<Job title>

Dear <insert manager's name>

Request to extend unpaid parental leave beyond initial 12 months

In accordance with section 76 of the Fair Work Act (FW Act) I would like to request an extension of my unpaid parental leave beyond the initial 12-month period. The details of my request are as follows:

- **Original parental leave start date:** <insert date>
- **Original parental leave end date:** <insert date>
- **Proposed new return to work date:** <insert date – cannot be more than 24 months from the date of your child's birth or placement>
- **Total additional period of leave:** <insert number of weeks/days>
- **Total period of leave:** <insert number of weeks/days – cannot exceed 24 months>

I look forward to your response to this request within 21 days of today's date, in accordance with section 76A of the FW Act. You can find more information about the steps you need to take to respond to my request in the Fair Work Ombudsman's [Parental leave section](#) at fairwork.gov.au/parentalleave

I am happy to discuss this matter at a time that is convenient if necessary. Please contact me on <insert contact details>.

Yours sincerely,

<Insert name>

<Insert position>

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS LETTER FOR YOUR RECORDS