

THE CO-PARENT

PARENTAL LEAVE AAU

A guide for the meetings
- before your parental leave

The co-parent



AALBORG
UNIVERSITET

02

ABOUT THE MEETINGS

At Aalborg University, meetings are held with all employees (VIP and TAP), men as well as women, both before and after long-term maternity or parental leave of more than 12 weeks. In addition, employees are offered a meeting during maternity or parental leave before returning to work.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETINGS

- Helps to retain employees in a phase of life that may give rise to opt-out of an academic career
- Creates dialogue between manager and employee about work-life balance
- Ensures a good transition from work to maternity/parental leave and from maternity/parental leave to work
- Challenges gender stereotypes and increases the incentive to take parental leave regardless of gender

03 BEFORE LEAVE

WHAT

When you announce your parental leave due to your partner's pregnancy or your adoption, your manager will invite you for a meeting, if you are to take parental leave for more than 12 weeks. At the meeting you will focus on your expectations for the period up to your parental leave and the period after, both personally and professionally.

WHEN

The meeting is held no later than 10 weeks before your parental leave.

WHO

The co-parent and primary manager.

QUESTIONS

NOTES

What expectations do you have for the time leading up to your parental leave in relation to your work tasks/your research, time-frames and the transition to your parental leave, personally and professionally?

What do you need from your manager leading up to your parental leave?

What expectations do you currently have of your time on parental leave, personally and professionally?

What are your thoughts on being away from your professional role/research?

How much contact do you expect to have with your manager during your parental leave?

How would you like to be contacted during your parental leave?

What are your thoughts on returning to work after your parental leave and Aalborg University's offer regarding part of your semester being research-free/teaching-free, extending the term of your postdoc or assistant professor role and increasing your opportunities for flexible working conditions? (Requires a minimum of 12 weeks leave).

04 BEFORE LEAVE

SUMMARY AGREEMENTS

05 GUIDANCE - BEFORE LEAVE

The meeting you will have with your manager before your upcoming parental leave is all about your well-being and what your thoughts and expectations are, both professionally and personally, in the period leading up to and during your parental leave. Your thoughts and expectations may be different from your manager's, so it is important to create an open dialogue during the meeting and to coordinate your expectations. This will create the best possible conditions for both of you before, during and after your parental leave. We therefore recommend that you prepare answers to the questions before your meeting. Notes and agreements from the meeting are journaled on your personnel case (case group 221) with insight for only you and your manager.

Below is a guide to the different questions and what you can cover.

What are your expectations for the period leading up to your parental leave in relation to your work/research, timeframes and the transition to your parental leave?

Here, you and your manager can establish what expectations you both have for the period before you go on parental leave.

Going on parental might cause you to experience new worries and needs, which can affect your working life and your expectations of it, and many experience uncertainty in terms of whether they can do what is expected of them, what is going to happen to their work/research, and whether there will be a substitute and if so who.

It may also be that you are engaged in an exciting field of work or are in a crucial period for your research, and so you are wondering how your parental leave will affect this and to what extent.

This is also your opportunity to plan the tasks you are working on right now, including deciding whether some tasks need to be prioritized differently, adjusted or put on hold for the coming period. It may also be that you are thinking about how you can best ensure a good transition to your parental leave, including how both your manager and possibly your colleagues can be of help.

Share your thoughts, concerns and needs with your manager so that he/she can better help you in the period leading up to your parental leave.

What do you need from your manager leading up to your parental leave?

Here, you and your manager can work out what your manager can do for you in the coming period before your parental leave. It may be that you need more status meetings regarding your work/research, that you generally need more communication about your work and your well-being, or that you essentially do not see any need for change but will happily reach out yourself if the need arises.

06 GUIDANCE - BEFORE LEAVE

What expectations do you currently have of your time on parental leave, personally and professionally?

While the first questions are aimed at the time leading up to your parental leave, this is an opportunity for you and your manager to talk about what expectations you have for your time on parental leave, and your expectations of becoming a parent, both personally and professionally.

You might be expecting your parental leave to strengthen you professionally. You might be expecting it to change the way you prioritise. You might be expecting that it will be difficult to let go of your work/research, but you might also see it as a unique opportunity for a period of reflection.

Some might also find it difficult to leave their work/research, why some might wish to keep some degree of involvement in their work/research during their leave. If you wish, this meeting can be your opportunity to talk to your manager about how to best implement this. Bearing in mind, of course, that this may change during your parental leave, and that at no time will your manager expect you to work during your parental leave.

What are your thoughts on being away from your professional role/research?

Here, you can give your manager an insight into what it means to you personally and professionally that you will be away from your work/research.

You might be concerned about how being away from your work/research will affect you professionally, including whether it will affect your career development, your responsibilities and so on.

You can also talk about any thoughts you have about how they are managing/continuing your work/research while you are on parental leave. You might have special requests for how tasks should be handled/what should happen with your research. If this is the case, you can share these with your manager as he/she is in the best position to implement your wishes, which can help you both before and after your parental leave.

07 GUIDANCE - BEFORE LEAVE

How much contact do you expect to have with your manager during your parental leave?

Here, you and your manager can talk about how you should communicate during your parental leave and how much. This can of course change along the way, but focus on what you currently think is a reasonable starting point. Some might like to have short check-ins with their manager on a regular basis, while others find it appropriate to have just one meeting during their parental leave.

You can also let your manager know if you would like to be informed if there are changes on your team or changes regarding important work tasks, or that you would like to be invited to special meetings, seminars and presentations where you can participate with your child.

It might also be the case that you don't see any need for further contact with your manager and that you will happily reach out yourself if the need arises.

Whatever you choose, your manager understands that every employee have different needs and that the most important thing is that everything suits the employee.

How would you like to be contacted during your parental leave?

We can all have very different preferences when it comes to being contacted during parental leave. You therefore have the opportunity to tell your manager what you would prefer in the event that they need to contact you. You might prefer to communicate via your private email rather than your work email. Or maybe you'd like to receive a phone call or a text message so that you can call back.

What are your thoughts on returning after your parental leave and taking advantage of what Aalborg University can offer you in this regard?

It might be a good idea to put into words already what expectations you have for after your parental leave. This can of course change along the way, but focus on your current thoughts on work tasks, working hours, new requirements and so on.

You and your manager should also talk about what Aalborg University offers employees who return after an extended parental leave of over 12 weeks.

Depending on your employment, you can discuss the possibility of:

- Not teaching or doing research for part of the semester;
- Extending the term of your postdoc or assistant professor role by up to one year;
- Increasing opportunities for flexible working conditions.

You can read more about what Aalborg University offers [here](#).

Write down your specific wishes for the period after your parental leave.

If you are concerned about how your wishes for the period after your parental leave will affect your career, your research and/or your development, then this is also a good opportunity to share these concerns with your manager.