Tip Sheet Preparing for Leave – New Parents

Research

Research as much as you can about the Family Friendly Work Options for New Parents. You may want to do this as early as you can.

You should also research your benefits under the FMLA Policy. If you need to speak with someone regarding family and/or medical leave, contact Employee Relations at (404) 727-7625. For specific questions regarding leave options, you may also want to consult with your supervisor or your local HR Representative. Please note that the WorkLife Resource Center does not administer leave programs.

If you elected Short Term Disability insurance, research this as well. Short Term Disability allows you some additional paid time off if you meet the requirements.

Instruction Manual

Prepare instructions for the person handling your job responsibilities while you are out. Make this list as detailed as possible and easy to follow. Be sure to include necessary dates, times, passwords, etc. After you have created your instructions, review them with the individual covering for you, as well as your supervisor. Be sure they understand them. Put them in a folder in a designated spot where your supervisor and the covering employee knows where to find it.

Take Care of Paperwork

You may find it easier to complete all Human Resources paperwork before you take your leave if you can. Take care of any insurance changes, tax information, leave forms, etc. early so you don’t forget or leave it to the last minute and end up in early labor and unable to complete them. Once the baby arrives, you want to spend your time with your family, not filling out paperwork.

Finalize Leave Plan

Decide on your leave date and discuss it with your supervisor and Human Resources. This date may change as your pregnancy moves along. Be sure to keep them up to date.

Open Lines of Communication

Keep the lines of communication open with your boss concerning your doctor appointments and your maternity leave.
Make a Child Care Plan (Do This Early!)

Research and confirm child care plans before you go on maternity leave. This can be a time consuming and stressful decision. Starting this process after your child is born can be difficult. You may change your mind a few times about where you feel is best for your new baby or if you want to return to work at all. But finding quality affordable child care is difficult to do in any large metropolitan city and Atlanta is no exception. You may want to use the Dependent Care Referral Form from BrownRichards & Associates. Put your name on waiting lists or reserve a spot. You are better off doing this and canceling it if you need to, than not having a spot when you need it. Be sure to review their waiting list policy.

Education Yourself on Lactation Resources

If you plan to continue nursing after you return to work, look at the options your employer has in place to help you do this. Emory has a Lactation Support Program Policy and many lactation locations.

Discuss your desire to continue nursing with your supervisor before you go on maternity leave and after your return to work. Breastfeeding while working can be difficult to do without being organized, causing many women a good deal of stress. Having this taken care of prior to leave can help reduce the stress.

Vacation Time

You may want to save as much vacation time as you can so you have it available to you once your baby is born.

Other Helpful Tips

- Keep the lines of communication open with your partner during the pregnancy. Discuss each others’ beliefs and wishes when it comes to issues of child care, babysitting, household responsibilities, finances, workplace flexibility, asking others for help, family, etc.

- You may want to prepare some simple meals and freeze them so they are ready to prepare after the baby arrives. Your time may be limited for the first several months and you may get little sleep.

- Get your house in order and set up the nursery so you feel less stress doing it after the baby arrives. Buy extra supplies, if you can, to have the house stocked and prevent you from having to make many trips to the store. Items such as laundry detergent, diapers, paper towels, formula (if needed), etc.