Hello!



Our Progyny Care Advocates (PCAs), Clinical Educators, and other leading experts created this Parental Leave Toolkit for you. This kit will help you prepare for going out on leave and support you in returning to work post-leave.

In it, you'll find detailed recommendations, tips, and plans for:

- **Disclosing your leave at work**
- **Aligning on a transition plan with your manager**
- **Preparing for your return to work**
- **Being back in the office or working from home**

While these may feel like big undertakings, we know you can do it!

Just remember, you have unlimited access to your PCA, who is there to support you throughout your pregnancy and postpartum experiences. Feel free to contact them if you have questions about the toolkit, or anything else.



In good health,

Your Progyny Team
888-597-5065

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Disclosure At Work

You've got this! Here's a handy checklist to help make sure you have what you need for this conversation. You may also want to practice it with a friend or partner first to get comfortable.

Keep in mind, there's no "perfect time" to tell your manager. While many expecting parents do so between three to four months along, do what's best for your situation.

Before you to talk to your manager 1

- ☐ Gather the family leave benefits and policies at your company and check your state's laws too.
- ☐ Collect insights from colleagues. If there's someone you trust who's been in your shoes, they can be an invaluable resource.

Talking to your manager 2

- ☐ If you work in an office, remotely, or in a hybrid style, communicate with them how you usually do when sharing important information – whether it's in person, a video chat, or an email.
- ☐ Share your baby's due date and when you expect or prefer to start and end your leave. Ask who you should speak to in HR regarding your company's benefits, if needed.

After you talk to your manager 3

- ☐ Once you've shared the news, confirm it in writing so your manager knows the plan.
- ☐ After confirmation, work with your manager to decide on a plan to share the news with your co-workers and direct reports.

Top tips ☆

- ☐ It's never too early to start thinking about childcare, as many places have waitlists.
- ☐ If you can, pick a leave date and stick to it. It's good for you to have a date you're working against and for your organization to have a date for planning and preparing your backup.
- ☐ Flexibility! Only so many things can be planned, so ideally it goes both ways.

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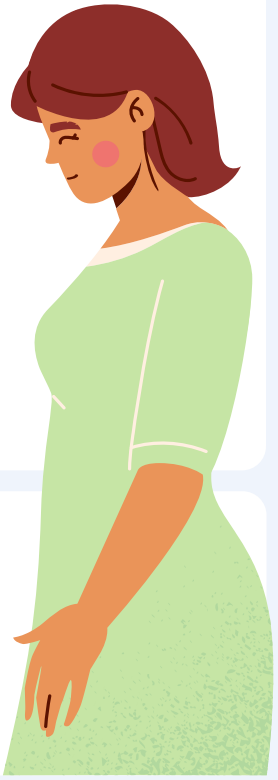
Align On Your Transition Plan

There's a lot to consider, but we created this helpful worksheet to help you prepare. We recommend gathering information and envisioning what you want and need before meeting with your manager.

First trimester

☐ **Gather information at work.**

- Get the nitty gritty details on leave policies.
- What are the policies re: your job?
  - Will it be the same on your return or an equivalent role? What do they consider equivalent?
- Confirm that you have maternal/parental leave.
  - Is it paid, unpaid, or a combination?
  - How long is it? Does it need to be taken all at once or within a certain time period?
  - Check if your state provides leave coverage as well and how that will work with your employer's leave.



☐ **Gather information at home.**

- If partnered, what is your partner's leave policy? Can you stagger your leave with your partner's?
- What will childcare look like? Do you have family and/or close friends available to help?

☐ **Envision your "ideal" plan.**

- How long do you want to go on leave? Do you have PTO/sick time that could be added on?
- How do you want to return? If you can, negotiate a gradual return to ease back in: days in, work from home, hours, etc.
- For your return, do you want part- or full-time? Do you want the same role and responsibilities? Is an equivalent role acceptable?

Second trimester

☐ **Prepare a flexible transition proposal or talking points.**

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☐ **Schedule a meeting to talk with your manager.**



☐ **Meet with your manager.**

- Share your expected leave and return dates.
- Most managers will be thinking, "Who's going to do the work while you're out?"
  - Offer your help in either training or transferring knowledge.
- Walk through your plan proposal or talking points with your manager.
  - Since the only constant is change, can you build in some flexibility?
  - Discuss communications during your leave: not a peep? only big news? bi-weekly check-ins?
- Send an email that details your discussion and schedule follow-up meetings if needed.

Third trimester

☐ **Schedule a meeting with HR.**

- When and how does your baby or adopted child get added to insurance?
  - Adding a new child to your family is considered a qualifying life event, which means you can make changes to your benefits outside the once-a-year Open Enrollment period.
  - Check your current benefit elections to see if they're the right fit for your expanding family.
  - Make sure you're aware of the deadline and requirements to register your new child with your health insurance company.
- Ask about all available benefits, such as an Employee Assistance program.
  - If you're planning to chestfeed, ask what space is available to pump, clean your pump supplies, and store your milk.
    - How is the space reserved, how is it accessed, and is there an allotted amount of time to pump?
- What paperwork needs to be filled out and when?



☐ **Get the complete plan approved and finalized (in writing) six weeks before your due or leave date.**

If you have any questions or just want to talk through these actions, please call your Progyny Care Advocate at **888-597-5065** or send them a message through the member portal.

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Prepare For Your Return to Work

Whether you return to work full-time or part-time, going back to your professional life is a big adjustment. With preparation, you can reduce the pressure you may feel.

Home-focused preparations

☐ **Coordinate childcare.**

- Start childcare a few days before you return so you're not doing all the big things on the same day, if possible.
- Confirm care plans and details: facility costs, hours, pick-up/drop-off policy, etc.
- Confirm your arrangements if care will be provided by family or friends.
- Create an outline of your child's routine to share with your childcare provider.
- Craft a back-up care plan.



☐ **Be upfront about your needs.**

- If care or house duties need attention, talk it out with your partner or support system.
- Decide who will take on each task and how often that task needs to be done.

☐ **Keep communicating with your partner or support system!**
Change is constant, especially with a new child.

☐ **What will your new morning routine look like?**
Do a trial run or two, including packing your bag and leaving the house. Preparation is the solution, or at least part of the solution.

☐ **Are you chestfeeding? Get your baby used to bottles and start building up supply.**
Freshly expressed milk can be stored with proper supplies:

- In an insulated cooler with ice packs for up to one day.
- In the back of your fridge for up to three days.
- In the back of your freezer for up to six months.

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Work-focused preparations

☐ **Schedule return calls with manager.**

- Were there any changes while on leave?
- Are you returning to the same job?
- Update or confirm your return date and schedule.
  - Ask about returning on a Wednesday to ease back into working.

☐ **Connect with HR to remind them of your return date and notify them if you need any accommodations.**

- What are the legal and organizational policies?
- If you're chestfeeding and planning to pump at work, confirm your office's pumping location and its accessibility, plus where you'll clean your pump supplies and store your breast milk.



Remember, this is a major life event and it's important to give yourself some grace. Many new parents experience a range of emotions, sometimes all at once, and that's totally normal.

You can do this!

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Welcome to Working Parent 101

Whether you work full-time or part-time, from home or in the office, returning to your professional life can stir up a lot of feelings and that's okay. We're here to help!

You're already better at your job!

Did you know that being a parent makes us better at work? If you find that hard to believe, research studies have shown the benefits.

- Better relationships: You have high-quality connections with other working parents, adding new networks that help you work more efficiently.
- Better manager: You're more likely to lead collaboratively, with empathy, and delegate duties that others can handle.
- Better self: New parents typically improve their problem-solving skills, approach work with a bigger perspective, and have stronger resilience.

How are you feeling about your home life?

☐ **Do you feel good about the care that your child is getting?**

☐ **Is there anything that isn't making you feel good about it?**

- Do you have other options? If not, try talking to other parents to find potential alternatives.

☐ **How is your partnership, if partnered?**

- Does your relationship feel balanced?
- Do you see yourself doing too much or too little?
- Are you communicating? It's vital to work as a team.

☐ Self-care may be the very last thing on your list. Take a minute to step outside and take a deep breath – **you've got this.**

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Managing your work/life

☐ **How can you create some structure that allows you to focus on work and focus on your life?**

- What boundaries are you setting around work?
- What boundaries are you setting around life outside of work?

☐ **If you're working from home, can you create a separate space dedicated for work?** That could be a whole room, corner of your living room, or a table in the laundry area.

☐ Some people like to toggle between work and home throughout the day. Others really need to shut work down and focus on home. **Knowing which one you are can be a big help to you and those around you.**



One last thing...

Accept that problems will come up and nothing will be perfect. Forget what you see on social media. Doing your best is all you can do! Your baby is lucky to have you. 🩷