Parental Leave HR Policy C26 - Addendum

Purpose: To outline additional paid parental leave provisions administratively applied to employee Resident Medical Officers (RMOs).

Application: This policy applies to eligible RMOs employed within:
- the Department of Health
- non-prescribed Hospital and Health Services
- prescribed Hospital and Health Services.

1 Relationship to Parental Leave HR Policy C26

This addendum forms part of, and is to be read in conjunction with, the Parental Leave HR Policy C26.

2 Resident medical officer employment

The employment arrangements for resident medical officers (RMOs) are unique in the context of employment within the Queensland public sector.

Under their award, RMOs can only be employed on a temporary basis, engaged under fixed term employment contracts usually of 52 weeks in duration. Generally, these temporary employment contracts commence and finish in February each year as part of the cyclical recruitment and placement process for junior doctors, also known as the RMO Campaign.

Existing RMO temporary employment contracts are not renewed or extended. Each year RMOs are required to make an annual application to the RMO Campaign to be allocated a new 52 week placement, either within Queensland Health (the department or a hospital and health service (HHS)), or with an external health provider. Placements are not guaranteed.

The nature of these mandated, temporary employment contract arrangements place RMOs at a disadvantage when accessing paid parental leave entitlements. Temporary employees cannot be granted leave of any kind beyond the end date of their temporary employment contract. However an employee’s past, present or likely pregnancy is not to influence a decision on the renewal of a temporary employee’s contract. As RMO temporary contracts are not able to be ‘renewed’, an RMO who has utilised less than the full 14 weeks of paid parental leave entitlement immediately before their contract end date, foregoes any balance.

3 RMO access to 14 weeks paid parental leave

The following administrative arrangements apply to employee RMOs only.

When an RMO who has met the qualifying service period of at least 12 months recognised service, commences on paid parental leave prior to the end of their temporary employment contract, the RMO is to continue to receive the full 14 weeks (or 28 weeks half pay) paid parental leave entitlement. In these circumstances, the RMO’s temporary employment contract is to be extended by their current Queensland Health employer to accommodate the payment of the full 14 weeks’ paid parental leave.
Responsibility for the payment of the full 14 weeks’ paid parental leave remains with the departmental division/HHS with whom the RMO initiated paid parental leave.

Eligible part-time RMOs are paid leave on a pro rata basis.

Definitions:

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<th>Recognised service</th>
<th>Is a period of employment, other than employment as a casual, of at least 12 months’ employment in total with Queensland Government Departments, public service offices or Queensland statutory authorities subject to these arrangements but any break in service is not to exceed 12 months. Refer also Recognition of previous service for long service and sick leave purposes HR Policy C55 (QH-POL-211).</th>
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| Resident medical officer | Includes the following classifications of medical officers:  
- Interns  
- Junior House Officers  
- Senior House Officers  
- Principal House Officers  
- Registrars  
- Senior Registrars. |

History:

| November 2016 | Policy amended to:  
- administratively provide eligible resident medical officer (RMO) employees only with guaranteed access to the full 14 weeks of paid parental leave entitlement  
- determine responsibility for payment of the full 14 weeks of paid parental leave to an RMO. |