

...because there's more to leave  
than just policies, processes,  
and paperwork

# LEAVE GUIDE

BEFORE, DURING, RETURN-TO-WORK



## Before Leave



### At work:

- Speak to your manager and team for support and preparation
- Create a document outlining your projects/workload tasks
- Make process documents, reference sheets, and templates for your team
- Assign & transition work tasks before leave start date
- Pre-schedule anything you can
- Organize any folders, archive old versions, leave clear naming conventions, etc.
- Wrap up the projects and tasks that you can
- Update email auto-replies, status', and voicemails
- Leave a list for yourself for priorities or projects you want to follow-up on upon your return
- Ask your manager and team to flag any important emails and communications for you

### At home:

- **Prepare your home and space for leave**
  - Set up and organize your recovery space, bedroom, medications, appointments, routines, etc.
  - If pregnancy or parental leave - finish your babies nursery, set up and organize all baby's necessities, declutter and organize the home, etc.
  - Meal prep before leave
- **Have a support system in place**
  - Ask family or friends for support
    - Meals, helping with childcare, chores, etc.
    - Set boundaries with family and friends (no kissing baby, calling before visiting, etc.)
  - Create a plan with your partner/support system for routines, appointments, chores, baby feedings, night routines, meal prepping, etc.
  - Discuss what you'll need or appreciate for emotional and mental support from your partner/support system while recovering
  - Take classes from your local hospital for pregnancy/parental related leaves
- **Organize important documents**
  - Insurance info, medical records, emergency contacts, etc.
- **Set up auto-pay for utilities and other bills**
- **Automate deliveries for household/baby necessities**
- **Go over budgets - claims can sometimes be delayed or denied**



## During Leave



- **Truly take the time to disconnect from work**
  - Stay away from your work station if you worked from home
  - Keep work devices off and out of sight
  - Remind yourself that everything at work is handled
  - Mentally and physically separate yourself from work
- **Use your support system for any mental, emotional, and physical support you need**
  - Meals, chores, social interaction, errands, childcare, appointments, grocery shopping
- **Have a simple and gentle routine in place while you recover or transition into a new normal**
  - Wake up times, meal times, outdoor time if possible, small tasks or chores
  - Rest and focus on your health, wellbeing, and/or your family
- **Keep medications and necessities organized and near**
- **List appointment day/times where you can be reminded easily**
- **Take advantage of post-partum programs offered by your hospital or provider**
  - Lactation services, mental health support, etc.
- **Maintain boundaries with family and friends: visitations, advice, opinions, baby rules**
- **Stay on top of your budget if any claims are delayed or denied**



## Returning To Work



### *At Home:*

- **Start your morning work routine a couple weeks before you return to work to help ease you back into your regular work routine**
- **Organize or refresh your work station if you work from home**
- **Plan arrangements for childcare, school drop-offs, pick-ups**
- **If you're returning from a pregnancy or parental leave, have your baby/child get used to their new routines a couple weeks in advance also**
  - Nanny? Have them come part-time for a week or two in advance so your baby can get familiar with them
- **Lean on your support system**
- **Meal prep breakfast, lunches, and even dinner**

*At work:*

- **Give yourself grace, it may feel overwhelming, be patient with yourself and take it one day at a time. Lean on your team for support.**
- **Meet with your manager and team to understand current landscape**
- **Ask your manager/team to help you catch up**
  - Meeting recordings, documents, organizational changes, and any other important items
  - Understand what's changed, what's new, what's urgent, and what things can wait
  - Clarify expectations with your manager
  - Let your manager know what you have on your mind
    - Your position, career aspirations, etc. - sometimes when you are away from work for a long period of time, you get a chance to reflect on your job and career aspirations
- **Prioritize flagged emails, voicemails**
- **Avoid back to back meetings, block times off your schedule for just 'catching up' on items**
- **End your day at your normal work shift time**
  - It's easy to do 'just one more thing' when you're trying to catch up the first few days.
- **Build momentum slowly**
- **If you feel overwhelmed and need additional support, let your manager know**