



Paid Parental Leave Time to Deliver

The proposed Federal Government Paid Parental Leave scheme will provide some financial security to those working parents who are unable to access employer funded maternity leave.

Legislation enacting the Paid Parental Leave is to be considered by Parliament within the next couple of months. It is imperative that the Paid Parental Leave Scheme be approved for implementation from 1 January 2011 as proposed.

IEUA members are encourage to participate in the ACTU petition to all Ministers of Parliament calling for their support for a paid parental leave scheme to be operational from 1 January 2011.

Background

While IEUA members have had many successes in negotiating paid maternity leave, these successes have been achieved through high union membership activity when negotiating working conditions. However, access to paid maternity leave varies in terms of length of leave entitlement or eligibility criteria. More problematic is the reality that there remains a substantial number of staff in non-government schools who do not have access to any paid maternity leave.

The IEUA has welcomed the Federal Government's proposal for an 18-week paid parental leave scheme to be implemented in January 2011

It is a particularly positive initiative for members who are working in casual, temporary positions or who have worked short term contracts or who have worked short term contracts with multiple employers.

The federal government paid parental scheme will be payable at the federal minimum wage of \$543.78 for 18 weeks.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for the proposed scheme, the primary care giver must have:

- must have worked continuously with one or more employers for at least 10 of the 13 months before the expected date of birth or adoption;
- must have worked at least 330 hours in those 10 months (equivalent to around one full day of work each week).

Interaction with Employer Funded Paid Maternity Leave

IEUA members who are eligible for Paid Parental Scheme will be able to continue to access employer-funded leave around the time of the birth or adoption of a child. This includes employer funded paid maternity leave and annual leave.

Importantly, employers who provide paid maternity leave through an industrial instrument cannot withdraw that entitlement for the life of that instrument.

Campaign continues.

There is still much work to be done in order to ensure that appropriate legislation secures the proposed Paid Parental Scheme. IEUA members are encouraged to circulate the ACTU petition seeking support for a fully operational Paid Parental Leave scheme by 1 January 2011 and returned it to their IEUA Branch **by 26 May 2010.**