

13 May 2019

Andrea Vance  
Senior Journalist  
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REF: OIA-4991

Dear Andrea

**Request made under the Official Information Act 1982**

Thank you for your email of Thursday 11 April 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

'...parental leave policies, procedure and arrangements for your organisation. This should include: parental leave payments and 'top-ups', leave for partners' or secondary carers, pay review while on leave, any payments on leave accrued while on parental leave (is this the full rate?), flexible work arrangements, Kiwisaver contributions, and any contributions towards childcare.'

Employees of the New Zealand Transport Agency are entitled to parental leave as per the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987 (the Act). Coverage under the Act is specified in both the Transport Agency's Collective and Individual Employment Agreements, rather than separately specified in a stand-alone policy.

The Transport Agency provides basic guidance to employees on paid parental leave through our intranet. For further guidance, the Transport Agency directs employees to the Employment New Zealand website (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) where required. This information is available at <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/> and <https://www.employment.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/tools-and-resources/documents/280418ff05/parental-leave-and-payment-eligibility-factsheet.pdf>

Employees are entitled to up to 22 weeks of paid parental leave and are asked to request parental leave in writing three months before the expected date of the baby's arrival. The way that paid parental leave is allocated between the parents, in accordance with the Act, is at the sole discretion of the individuals (as per the primary caregiver allocation) and is therefore not determined by the Transport Agency.

In accordance with the Act, the Transport Agency offers unpaid 'extended leave' to employees who take paid parental leave, during which time the Transport Agency will hold open their position for a maximum of 52 weeks (including the period of paid parental leave). Again, this leave amount is at the sole discretion of the parents as per the primary caregiver allocation.

Annual leave is accrued while on parental leave, but the value of leave payments is calculated on a 12-month average earnings basis. From 1 July 2019, annual leave accrued while on parental leave will be based on the employees' base rate, rather than their 12-month earnings average.

While on parental leave, employees' KiwiSaver contributions and employer contributions pause. These resume when the employee returns to work. Employees who are on parental leave are eligible for the annual remuneration review.

The Transport Agency offers an ex gratia payment to permanent employees who have taken paid parental leave, entitling them to a lump sum payment equivalent to 30 working days' base salary, once they have returned to work and completed a further six months of service after a period of parental leave. If the employee is on parental leave for less than 30 working days, they will receive a reduced payment equivalent to the period of absence.

The Transport Agency does not make any contributions towards childcare.

The Transport Agency works with individuals on their return to work to provide for any required flexible working arrangements, such as flexible work hours, work days, location, job share, or another arrangement agreed between both parties.

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact Andrew Knackstedt, Senior Manager, Media, by email to [andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz) or by phone on 04 894 6285.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Bird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end of the word "Bird".

Linda Bird  
Interim Lead of People Group