



Fact Sheet – 26 for Babies

Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Six Months' Paid Leave and Work Contact Hours) Amendment Bill

Summary of the Bill

1. Sue Moroney, Labour MP, has introduced a Member's Bill that would extend paid parental leave from 18 weeks to 26 weeks and enable parents to return to work for a set amount of time without losing their entitlement to paid parental leave.

Why is this important

2. While most parents are entitled to parental leave for a year, the reality is that most families cannot afford to do this beyond the paid parental leave period – many are forced back to work early for financial reasons.
3. 26 weeks or six months is the recommended time for breast-feeding from the World Health Organisation – important for babies' health and development – and a critical time for parents to bond with their new-born children.
4. New Zealanders' entitlement to paid parental leave lags well behind other comparable OECD countries, which have recognised the value of supporting parents in the early years of their children's lives.

How you can help

5. The Bill is expected to start its first reading on Wednesday 26 August. Your organisation can join the coalition to help build support and momentum leading up to this event. To find out more, you can get in touch with 26 for Babies by phoning the Convenor, Rebecca Matthews, on (04) 382 2830 or 027 471 7411, or by emailing the coalition by filling in the online form on the 26 for Babies' website: <http://26forbabies.org/about/>.
6. When the Bill passes its first reading, then it will be important to let the select committee know how much New Zealanders want this extra time for new families. We will need volunteers to write submissions and even be prepared to speak at a select committee – we can help to support you through this process.

About Us: 26 for Babies

7. 26 for babies is a coalition that brings together child and parent advocates, breastfeeding organisations, health bodies, and representatives of women and working women in a campaign focused on our smallest citizens – new-born infants. 26 for Babies will continue to work to build public awareness and encourage the Government to ensure that the principal objective of Sue Moroney's Bill is achieved: longer paid parental leave in the interests of babies and their families.