

## Grants Policy and Procedure

### HRB Policy on the Payment of Social Benefits

In 2005, in response to the provisions of the Protection of Employees (Fixed-term Work) Act the Standing Committee of Irish Funding Agencies agreed to contribute to social benefit costs for employees on research grants funded by them. This policy refers to maternity leave, adoptive leave and paid sick leave and applies to all HRB contracts issued from January 2005.

#### 1. Salaried staff with PRSI eligibility

- 1.1 For employees on HRB-funded contracts, who satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions for maternity and adoptive leave<sup>1</sup> or for paid sick leave<sup>2</sup> and can avail of social welfare maternity benefit, social welfare adoptive benefit or sickness benefit, the HRB will provide *additional* funding for the duration of statutory entitlement in the case of maternity and adoptive leave (see Section 3 below for these durations).
- 1.2 For paid sick leave, the HRB will provide *additional* funding, in accordance with the policies of the Host Institution, for the period for which the Host Institution makes provision for paid sick leave.
- 1.3 **'Additional'** in Clause 1.1 refers to the difference between social welfare maternity benefit or social welfare adoptive benefit and the salary stipulated for that employee in the HRB contract. In the case of paid sick leave (Clause 1.2), and in accordance with the policies in place in the Host Institution, the **'additional'** amount may be less than the difference between social welfare sickness benefit and salary.
- 1.4 The employee is responsible for ensuring that social welfare maternity benefit, social welfare adoptive benefit or sickness benefit is claimed from Social Welfare in a timely manner.
- 1.5 The HRB will reimburse the Host Institution at the end of the leave period, on receipt of written confirmation that the claimant has returned to work, for the cost of providing *additional* funding, as described in Clause 1.3 above.
- 1.6 Approval of an extension to the award for a period equivalent to the maternity leave, adoptive leave or paid sick leave will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be dependent on the project and whether such an extension is necessary to ensure that all deliverables are met. It is the responsibility of the HRB grant holder to request an extension of the grant duration on the Request for Social Benefits Form.

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<sup>1</sup> Eligible persons are those who have at least 39 weeks PRSI paid contributions in the 12 month period before the first day of maternity leave or date of placement of your child or at least 39 weeks PRSI paid contributions since first starting work **and** at least 39 weeks PRSI paid or credited contributions in the relevant tax year or in the year following the relevant tax year. Alternatively you must have at least 26 weeks PRSI paid contributions in the relevant tax year **and** at least 26 weeks PRSI paid contributions in the tax year prior to the relevant tax year. Only PRSI Classes A, E and H count

<sup>2</sup> Eligible persons are those who have at least 52 weeks PRSI contributions paid since they first started work and 39 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the relevant tax year. Alternatively they must have 26 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the relevant tax year and 26 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year.

## **2. Post-graduate students and salaried staff without PRSI eligibility**

- 2.1 For post-graduate students or employees who do not satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions for maternity and adoptive leave or for paid sick leave, the HRB will provide the salary amount (salaried staff) or stipend amount (post-graduate students) to persons on maternity and adoptive leave for the duration of the statutory entitlement (see Section 3 below for those durations).
- 2.2 For paid sick leave, the HRB will provide funding, in accordance with the policies of the Host Institution, for the period and amount for which the Host Institution makes provision for paid sick leave.
- 2.3 The Host Institution is responsible for verifying the ineligibility for social welfare maternity benefit, social welfare adoptive benefit or sickness benefit of the employee or student.
- 2.4 The HRB will reimburse the Host Institution at the end of the leave period, on provision of an invoice and of proof for ineligibility for the relevant social welfare benefit, for the cost of providing the salary or stipend, as described in Clause 2.1 and 2.2 above.
- 2.5 Where required, the HRB will cover the cost of post-graduate registration fees up to a maximum of 1 additional academic year for post-graduate students, as awarded in the contract, who have taken maternity or adoptive leave or paid sick leave.
- 2.6 Approval for an extension to the award for a period equivalent to the maternity leave, adoptive leave or paid sick leave may be made on a case-by-case basis and will be dependent on the project and whether such an extension is necessary to ensure that all deliverables are met. It is the responsibility of the HRB grant holder to request an extension to the grant duration on the Request for Social Benefits Form.

## **3. Statutory entitlements to paid leave**

### **3.1 Maternity Leave**

- 0 weeks for employees who do not satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions
- 26 consecutive weeks for employees who satisfy the PRSI contributions, whose contracts of employment (associated with HRB funding) have 26 weeks or longer to run.
- For employees with less that 26 weeks left in their contract (associated with HRB funding), their entitlement to paid Maternity Leave only extends to the end of their contract.
- Employees also have the right to an additional period of 16 weeks **unpaid** leave, which must be taken immediately following the maternity leave period. There is no entitlement to social welfare maternity benefit for the additional sixteen weeks leave.

### **3.2 Adoptive Leave**

- 0 weeks for employees who do not satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions

- 24 consecutive weeks for employees who satisfy the PRSI contributions, whose contracts of employment (associated with HRB funding) have 24 weeks or longer to run.
- For employees with less than 24 weeks left in their contract (associated with HRB funding), their entitlement to paid Adoptive Leave only extends to the end of their contract.
- Employees also have the right to an additional period of 16 weeks **unpaid** leave, which must be taken immediately following the adoptive leave period. There is no entitlement to social welfare adoptive benefit for the additional sixteen weeks leave.

In the case of a foreign adoption, some or all of the sixteen weeks additional adoptive leave may be taken immediately before the date of placement. There is no entitlement to social welfare adoptive benefit for the additional sixteen weeks leave.

All notifications of maternity leave, adoptive leave and paid sick leave and requests for extensions to a grant (along with a Social Benefit Payment Request Form) should be sent to: [grantchanges@hrb.ie](mailto:grantchanges@hrb.ie)

The HRB **will not** process any Social Benefit requests which are submitted after the end date of the grant. In such cases, all HRB funding remaining unspent at the end date of the grant must be returned to the HRB.