

Parental Leave Pathways

A planner for expectant parents

PRESENTED BY  **Parento**



We're glad you're here!

Through your employer, you and your partner can access the Parento Experience Program, a program designed to give high-touch personalized support to working parents. The Parental Leave Pathways is one of our support tools for parents, just like you.



But if you need extra support, have questions, or want to chat about this next stage, schedule a coaching session.

[Talk to a Coach](#)



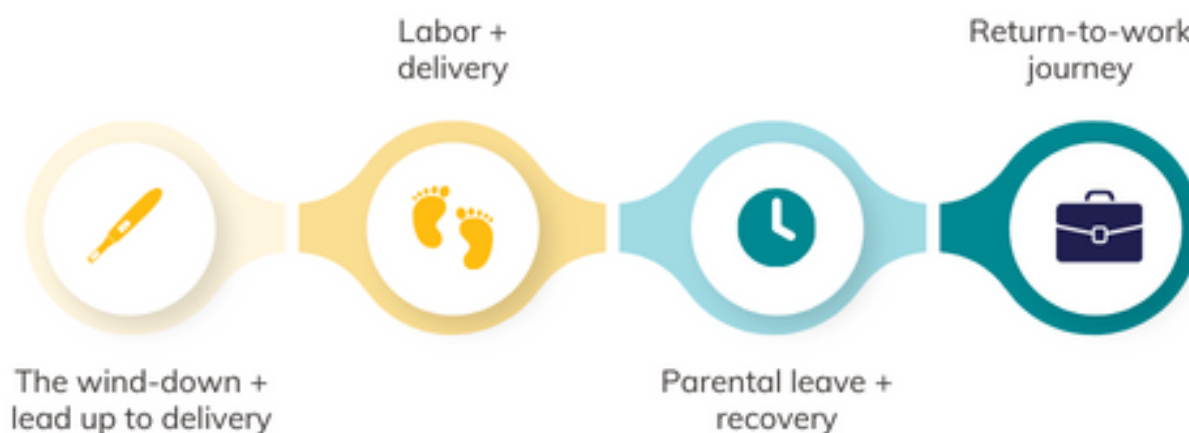
Go at your own pace and bring in support when needed.

Building your Pathway

How to Use Pathways

With so much happening, it's helpful to start with the high level basics. Pathways is here to guide you from before your leave all the way through your return-to-work and beyond. Parenthood is a process and it ebbs and flows, with highs and lows. We're here for you along the way.

You can work on this plan independently or alongside our parent coaches and postpartum experts. Whichever route you choose, we hope that you feel empowered, encouraged and supported every step of the way. You can do this!



Throughout the Pathway spot additional resources to help you along the way:

- **Worksheets and Templates:** Use these to organize your thoughts and dig deeper into your plan
- **Parento Library:** Dive into articles that explore concepts related to your parental leave and beyond
- **Coaching:** We aren't meant to parent alone! Start building your team now by meeting with one of our coaches
- **Leave Concierge:** Questions about paperwork and getting paid? Our leave concierge will make sure you have all the info you need

Navigating Pathways

05 Understanding your Paid Parental Leave

Centralize your policy information alongside important dates and milestones.

10 My Parental Leave Plan

Logistical plans, guidelines, and worksheets to help you prepare for leave in a way that sets you and your co-workers up for success.

16 My New Parent Plan

Tools to help you navigate the transition to becoming a parent, and five steps to building a parenting mindset.

20 Early Weeks

Congratulations: your baby's here! This section includes suggested reading during the early days of new parenthood.

23 My Return to Work Plan

Steps and strategies to navigate your final weeks of parental leave and transition back to work confidently.

27 Resources

An overview of resources available to you through Parento.

29 Appendix

Blank templates and worksheets that are referenced through the document.

Understanding your Paid Parental Leave

Kickstart your planning, with information found in your employee handbook, the company Paid Parental Leave Policy, and/or the Welcome packet from Parento:

Eligibility

Check in with your HR department to verify your eligibility.

Length of Leave

How many weeks of leave and when you can take it are all in the policy. Note if you must take your leave all at once (continuous) or if it can be divided over a certain time period (intermittent).

Pay During Leave

You may receive pay from your employer, your state (PFL and/or SDI), and, if giving birth, a short-term disability (STD) provider. Refer to your Parento Welcome Packet or your HR department to see what you are entitled to.

Paid Parental Leave Organizer

Organize Key Information	My Paid Leave	My Partner's Paid Leave
I am eligible for paid parental leave		
I am able to take up to ___ weeks of leave		
I can take my leave continuously / intermittently / either		
My leave must be completed within ___ months		
I will receive __% of my pay up to \$____/ week		
My pay will include short-term disability		
My pay will include <u>state benefits</u> (PFL / SDI)		
There is a waiting period for STD or PFL		
I have to use PTO/sick days before taking Paid Leave		



PFL, STD, FMLA, QE, EDD - so many acronyms! Here is a cheat sheet of PPL terminology.


Paid Parental Leave Organizer

Let's start with the big stuff: making sure that your family is taken care of financially while you are on leave. Use this checklist to make sure you don't miss a thing.

Before You Go on Leave

- Review your company's paid parental leave policy. Ask HR if there are other family friendly benefits, perks, and resources available
- Time to share the big news! Notify your HR & manager of your intentions. If that feels daunting, your coach has strategies to help you create the vibe you want
- Tell Parento your plans: anticipated start and return dates as well as if you are taking leave continuously or intermittently. You can update your leaves on the Portal if your company provides access or via email, parents@parentoleave.com
- Confirm the best email address for Parento to reach you when you are on leave. Tip: use a personal email if your work email will be limited during leave

Upon the Start of Leave

- File for any state or STD benefits, if applicable
 - Short Term Disability (STD)
 - State paid family leave (PFL) or state disability benefits (SDI)
 - Submit requested documentation to Parento in the Parento Portal or via email:
 - Child's birth verification (birth certificate or letter from hospital/medical provider)
 - Updated leave dates. Don't worry, we know these may change again.
 - State and STD benefit approval letters and explanation of benefits
 - Contact your Human Resources for assistance adding your new child to your company health insurance and other benefits if applicable
- 
- Request your Parento Care Package - OK, that's not a MUST do but who doesn't love a little extra TLC?

After Returning to Work

- Let Parento know that you have returned and double check to make sure that you've submitted all required paperwork

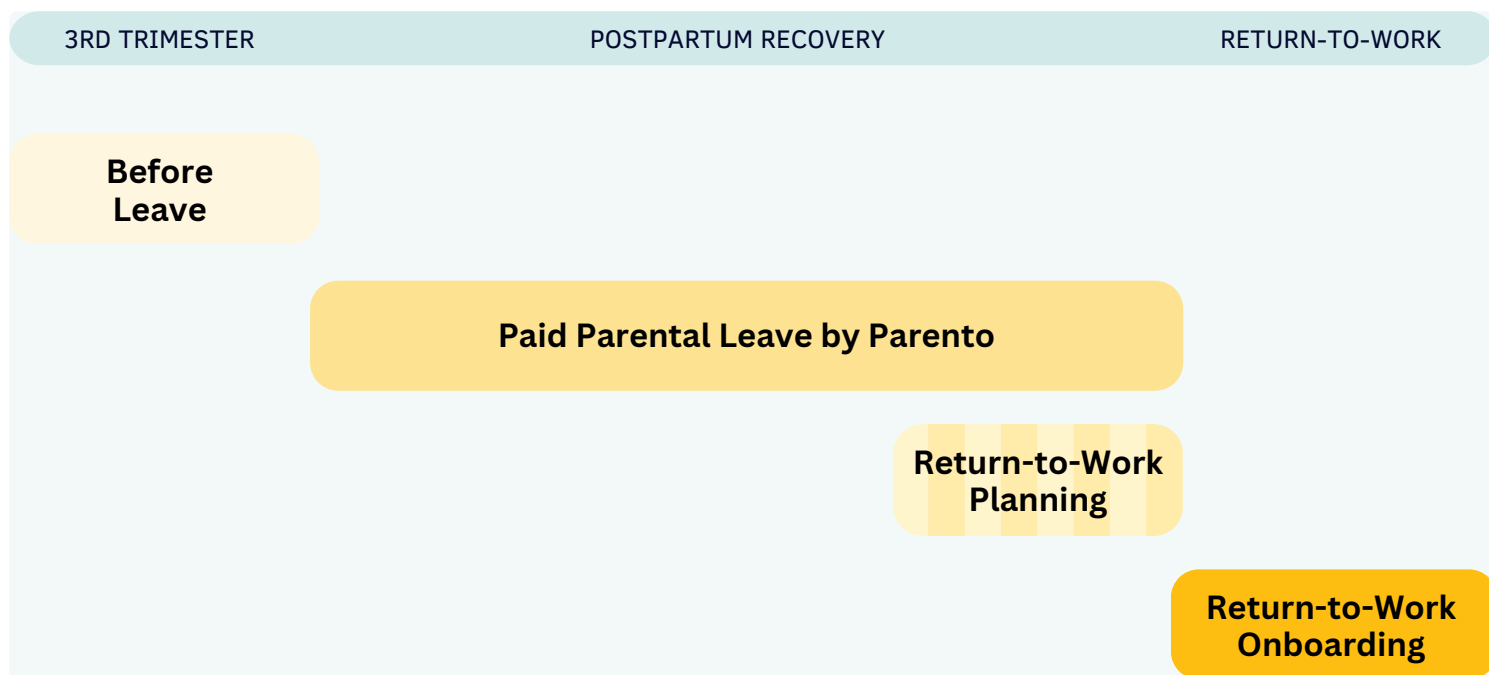


Feeling overwhelmed?
Parento's Leave Concierge can help!
Email parents@parentoleave.com



Calendar of Key Dates

If you're a birthing parent, planning your parental leave doesn't begin on the day you meet your kiddo. It's a process that should start when you're in your last trimester. Below is an overview of a calendar from before leave through the return-to-work period.



Before Leave

- Review benefits and policies
- Design your birth and leave plan
- Set a primary contact
- Wind/hand-off down projects
- Discuss expectations during leave / boundaries with your manager

During Your Paid Parental Leave

- Enjoy your parental leave!
- Review forms and supply any documentation
- Schedule a coaching session
- 14 days out: confirm your return-to-work date
- Dry-run your first day back at work

After Leave and During Return-to-Work

- Schedule a meeting with your manager and review expectations
- Catch-up on projects as needed
- Schedule a check-in in 30 days
- Ramp-up workload



My Parental Leave Timeline

Let's take a look at what your personal timeline may look like. Keep in mind that all dates are subject to change. Not much is predictable about having a baby and timelines WILL shift throughout the pregnancy, birth, and postpartum period. That is okay! Think of it as an opportunity to practice flexibility - a skill all parents need to be comfortable with.

01

Step 1

Add dates next to the key milestones on the timeline below.

02

Step 2

Pencil in other key dates such as your partner's leave, visitors, holidays, etc

03

Step 3

Note potential sticky areas. Can you line up some extra support ahead of time in anticipation? Remember, it's easier to cancel if not needed than trying to muddle through last minute.

My Work Related Milestones

Announce at Work

Date:

Last Day Window

(2 weeks before to 1 week after due date)

Dates:

3 weeks before returning to work

(Check in with HR/your manager)

Date:

Return to work (RTW)

Date:

1 Month after RTW

(Check in with HR/your manager)

Date:

Third Trimester

Your Paid Parental
Leave Period

Your Return to
Work Onboarding

My New Baby's Milestones

Due Date

Date:

2 weeks old

(baby is back to birth weight)

Date:

6 weeks old

(possible tough week developmentally)

Date:

4 months old

(possible sleep regression)

Date:



**Pause.
Take a breath.
You're doing
great.**



P.S. We believe in you.

My Parental Leave Plan

You're off to a great start!!

Now that you've outlined your paid leave benefits and drafted your calendar, it is time to create a your leave plan - you know, what work you will be offloading, who will be taking over certain responsibilities, and how to do it all in such a way that feels good to you and your co-workers.

Planning for your parental leave can be extremely daunting. There's so much to do, so much information, where do you even start? Don't worry! We're here to alleviate some of those concerns from real-world tips to complete templated plans for you to share with HR and your team.

The following pages will walk you through:

- Logistics
- Communication Preferences & Boundaries
- Responsibilities & Delegation
- Wind-down Calendar & Timeline

In the appendix you will find a full [Parental Leave Plan template](#) that you can use in conversations with your team and other stakeholders.



Use your plan to help set the tone for your leave.

We know parental leave is not a vacation. However, to your colleagues it may feel like they are being left in a lurch or at least have complex feelings. Use this plan as a tool to set the tone for your leave.

Collaboration? Opportunities for professional growth? Strengthen relationships? You got this!!

01

This is not a one-and-done activity.

You have a complex role and capturing it all will take some time. Draft it, review a few days later, revise as the dates get closer, etc.

02

Engage your co-workers in the plan.

Use this plan as a tool to ask them about their concerns and do your best to mitigate them. Also, they may see areas you've overlooked or places to add more detail.

03

Express gratitude.

Your work friends are happy for you and they may be taking on more responsibilities while you are out. Be sure to recognize them and show your appreciation.

Logistics

The basics of your leave: when, how long, who to contact, dates to remember, etc.

- ☐ Conversation with your supervisor about your leave and professional aspirations
 - ☐ Leave dates and a reminder that these will be flexible. Babies come on their own time! Did you know that 80% of women give birth up to 2 weeks before their due date?
 - ☐ Discuss how your leave will impact your career trajectory, including upcoming promotions, and reviews
 - ☐ Outline your goals for the next 1-3 years including how you'd like to take on new responsibilities, management roles, title changes, etc.
 - ☐ Responsibilities and duties you can permanently take off of your plate. This will provide room for growth, flexibility for new responsibilities, and perhaps even professional growth for one of your colleagues.
- ☐ Conversation with your team and other co-workers. Assure them that you will communicate every step of the way and ask for their input as you create your plan.
- ☐ Medical information. If you work in-person or in an office, consider sharing your partner's name and cellphone, your medical center location, and birthing contact (OBGYN, doula, midwife, etc) in case you go into labor at work. This can be given to your supervisor, HR, or a trusted colleague.



Looking for a template?

Head to the appendix and use our template to share with your manager and coworkers.

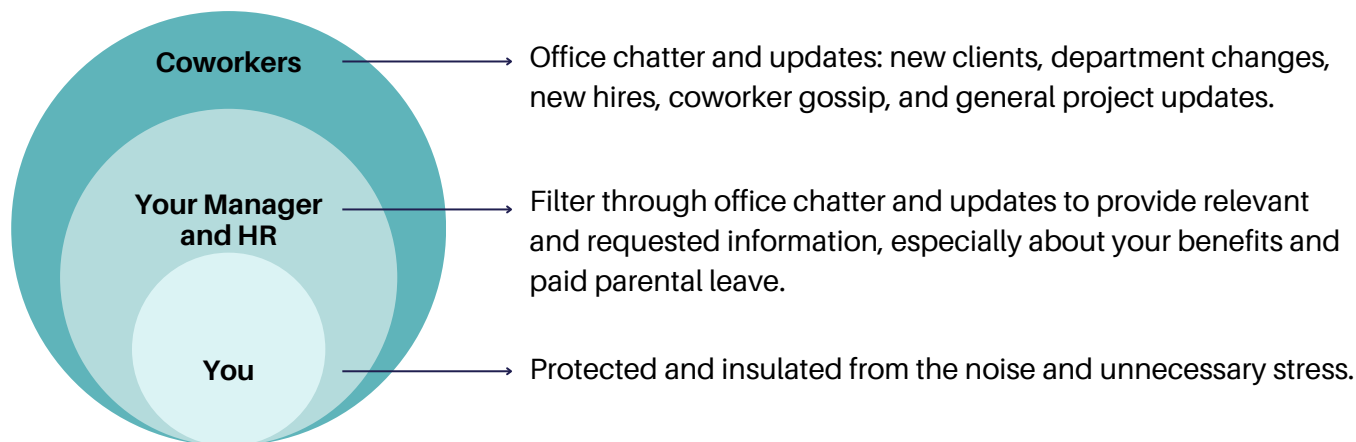


Communication Preferences and Boundaries

Outline how you prefer to be contacted during your parental leave - if at all!

Use the Communication Bubble to help you visualize your plan. Some parents want to be insulated from all company business. Other parents prefer high level information, company updates, or to still communicate with direct reports. No right or wrong answers. Just personal preference.

Keep in mind that you are not obligated to work while you are on leave.



Don't forget to communicate this to the folks that need to know - your supervisor, team, and other internal stakeholders. Use this [template](#) to set your clear communication boundaries and expectations. Be as specific as possible to avoid confusion.

Speaking of templates, don't forget to schedule your OOO for the beginning of your leave. Grab one of these [pre-written messages](#) or put your personal spin as you let the world know you are on leave.

Looking for more info on communication? Check out [Managing Expectations and Communications as a Working Parent](#) in the Library

My Communication Preferences

- My Designated Contact:
- When is it okay to contact me:
- Project information I want to receive and be cc'd on:
- Company updates I wish to receive:
- Best way to contact me:



Defining and communicating boundaries is a skill that will serve you well as a working parent. Use this as an opportunity to practice.

Responsibilities and Delegation

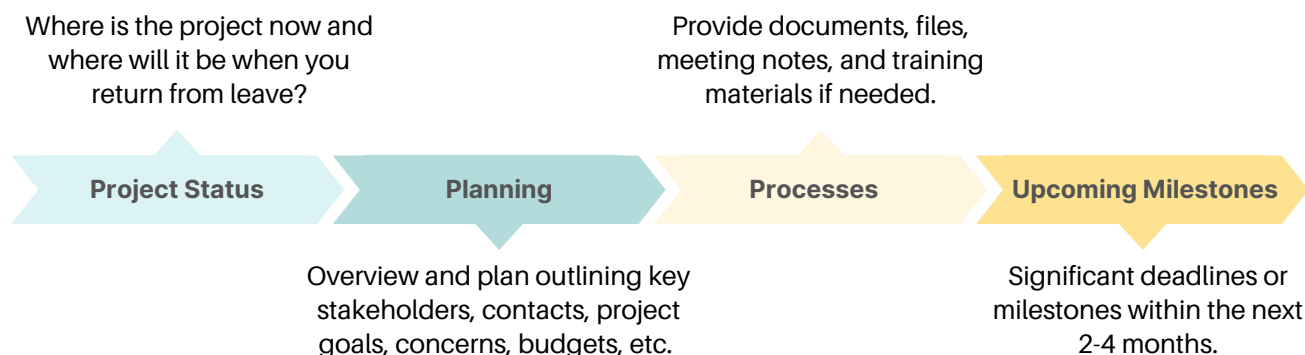
We know your career is important to you - you take great pride in the work that you do. You also respect your colleagues and don't want to overburden anyone. With careful planning and proactive communication you can delegate responsibilities in a way that makes everyone feel comfortable and moves your work forward.

Document Your Work Load

Review your ongoing responsibilities (projects, direct reports, approvals, etc.) and those that will extend through your leave, and who will manage them in your absence. Use this [Work Delegation Plan template](#) to organize your work and communicate your plans.

The plan includes:

- Project Status & Summary
- Recurring Meetings
- Recurring Activities & Processes
- Direct Reports
- Key Deadlines or Milestones



Helpful Tips



- 01** Before you even start, spend a week writing down all of your tasks as you do them. This will help you catch the automatic activities that you may otherwise miss.
- 02** Consider who needs to know where files/resources are located, passwords to programs, and other access permissions.
- 03** Meet with your team or people who you work with on a regular basis to ask what they need from you, what concerns they have, and how you can mitigate any stress. Express gratitude and make them true partners.

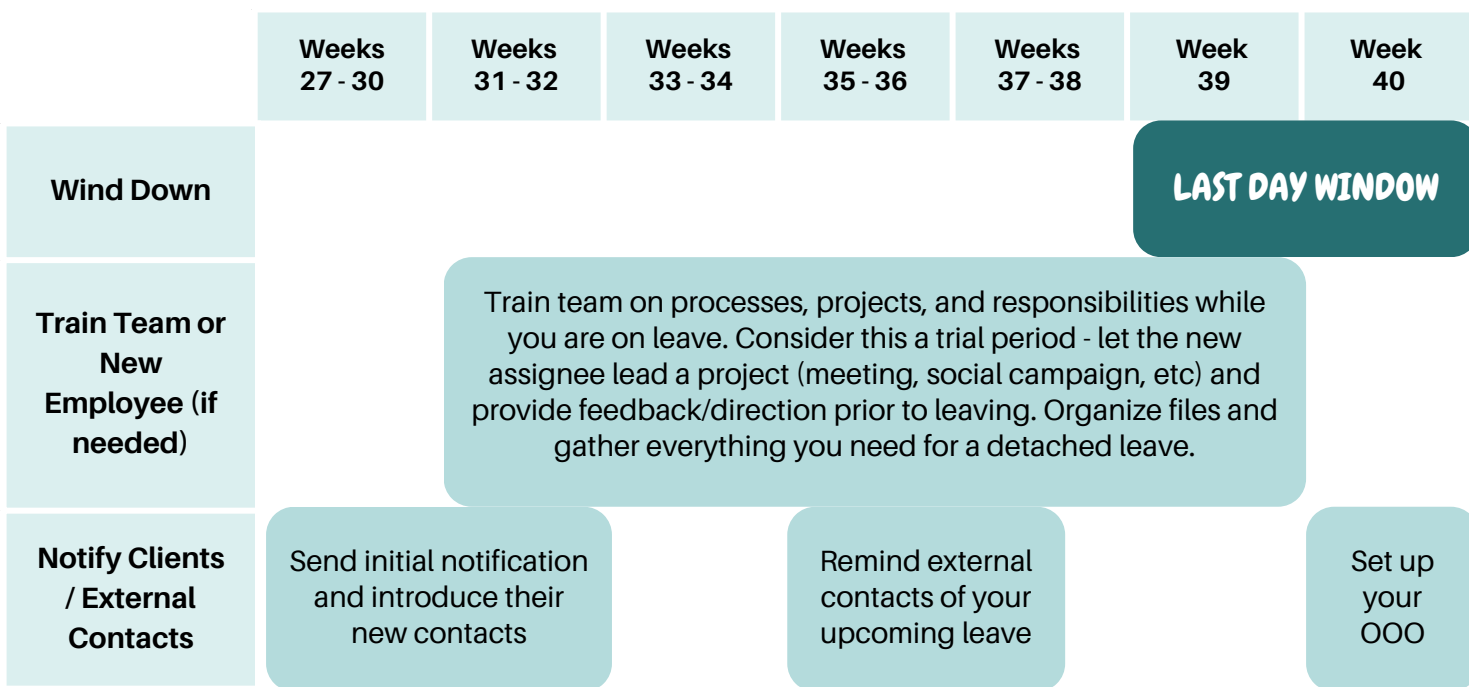
Wind-down Calendar and Timetable

Your leave planning will take some time, especially if you are hiring a new employee, training others, or have a very complex role. Plan out your wind-down calendar for your third trimester to offload your current projects and responsibilities. Include your high level tasks, deadlines, and other key points in your parental leave plan.

Considerations:

- What is your workplace culture? How have other parents experienced this period?
- Are you able to work from home or remotely? Would WFH for the last few weeks be more comfortable for you and feasible for your company?
- Try to offload all mission-critical responsibilities prior to the EDD in the event of any surprises or early L&D.
- When training, start by letting the person observe you and then shift to observing them. Letting them take the reins will instill confidence and limit the number of calls and emails you receive when you are home snuggling your new little one.

Sample Timeline



Need to talk this through?

Schedule a one-on-one session.

[Talk to a Coach](#)





**Breathe.
Relax your
shoulders.
Look at all
you've done
already!**



P.S. You're not in this alone.

My New Parent Plan

You have taken the classes and read all the books. You sorted piles of cute baby clothes, decorated the nursery, and have chosen the perfect name.

But what about your transformation into a new parent?

This section is designed to guide you through meaningful ways you can prepare for your child's arrival that you may not get in the typical "new parent 101" guides.

Preparing for your child's arrival

- ☐ Draft your Birth Plan. A birth plan is a document that outlines your version for an ideal labor and delivery, communication, post-birth care, pain management, and newborn care. You can share this with your medical team outlining your preferences but keep in mind that the unforeseen circumstances may require you to deviate from your plan.
- ☐ Classes. There are so many classes available to expectant parents. As you navigate which classes to take, consider the following to help with your decision process:
 - ☐ Do you have strong birth preferences? If so, a longer, more in-depth, or method specific childbirth class may be for you.
 - ☐ Do you feel comfortable learning and discussing potentially vulnerable topics in a group? If not, consider a 1:1 class with a perinatal professional
 - ☐ How comfortable are you with newborn care? Total newbie? There's a class for you!
 - ☐ Are you planning on breastfeeding or are curious about the possibility? A class with a lactation educator will help you understand the mechanics of feeding your baby, what to expect, and how to start on the right foot.
- ☐ Get to know your birth location, providers, and other helpful professionals.
 - ☐ Visit the hospital or birth center
 - ☐ Meet all of the providers in your OB or midwifery practice
 - ☐ If you aren't comfortable, it is okay to change doctors and/or birth locations
 - ☐ Make a list of helpful professionals and post in an easy to access place.

Assessing Your Unique Situation

Your transition into parenthood - and then working parenthood - is unique to you. You'll hear stories, advice, and then you have the honor and privilege of taking what works for you and leaving the rest behind.

As you begin your journey to parenthood, take time to assess your situation. Life is full of opportunities and challenges. Identify these, learn how to leverage your strengths, mitigate the challenges, and take charge of your unique position.

Evaluate the following:

<p>Your Situation</p> <p>What elements of your current work and home situation will impact your parental leave and transition to parenthood?</p>	<p>Self Reflection</p> <p>In times of transition, what elements of you and your personality will be instrumental during this time?</p>
<p>Coping Strategies</p> <p>When you have faced stressful situations, what coping strategies do you find helpful? What habits do you have that are less helpful?</p>	<p>Support System</p> <p>Consider the people in you and your child's life. Who will you turn to for support? Who is less helpful?</p>

Did some of your responses surprise you? Perhaps you found areas that could use some extra TLC. Or maybe remember some tools you forgot were in your tool box. Keep this in mind as you move to the next section of the Pathway.

Click here for a full [worksheet to help you assess your situation](#)



Need to talk this through?

Schedule a one-on-one session.

[Talk to a Coach](#)



Building Your Parenting Mindset

Spoiler alert: parenting is not for the faint of heart! Rewarding, fulfilling, filled with love and giggles? Yes, yes, and double yes! But not it is not easy. The following lessons will help you build confidence and resilience as you learn to thrive in your new role of mom or dad.

More of a visual learner? Check out this video with our [Top Tips from Seasoned Parents](#)

01 Flexible thinking beats a fixed mindset all day

Experienced parents will tell you that every day is a new adventure! How you choose to approach it and the mindset you adopt will make all the difference. Some helpful mindsets to adopt:

- Plans are a starting point. Expect that they will change.
- It's okay not to know everything. Learn as you go.
- Infuse every day with curiosity and play.
- You are the best parent for your child.

As parents, balancing the big picture while handling the daily ups and downs is not always easy! By consciously stating intentions we create that foundation which allows us to navigate challenges with resilience and live in alignment with our values.

02 To be the best version of yourself, put yourself first

It's not new news that taking care of ourselves leads to lower stress, improved mental health, and enhanced resilience which allows us to be the best versions of ourselves as parents, partners, professionals and individuals.

This is NOT selfish – dispel that mindset right now. It is necessary for your well-being.

As a new parent it can be hard to know what self-care is even possible in the midst of everything else. Let's reframe self-care as activities that keep you grounded in your daily routine. A solo cup of coffee, a walk outside, a trashy reality show, or 20 minutes at the gym are all examples. Find out what works for you and your partner with this [worksheet](#).

If you aren't feeling like yourself, pay attention and don't brush it off.

Emotional and mental health disorders can arise in pregnancy as well as postpartum. They can affect all parents - moms and dads, birthing and non-birthing. Your [Parento coach](#) offers perinatal mental health screenings at every session and can assist you in getting help if needed.



03 People feel honored when you ask them for help

Don't believe us? Think of a time when someone you loved was in the thick of it and you offered to help. What about when they accepted? How did you feel when they refused?

When someone offers to help you allow them to be a meaningful part of your life. This is how strong foundations are built that will be with you throughout your child's life. After all, we aren't meant to parent alone.

If you are out of practice asking for and receiving help, you are in good company. Most of us are! Use this [framework](#) to identify areas you could use help and which family or friends would be best suited for each role.

04 Double down on your relationship with your partner

If you are starting off parenthood with a partner, having a strong relationship makes life with a new baby easier. You have someone to share all of the highs and lows with. You can tag-team the work, experience the joys together, and commiserate when things are hard.

But life isn't a Hallmark movie and strong relationships take work.

As you prepare to welcome your little one, dedicate some time to reinforcing your relationship. Putting in some effort now - before you experience the stressors of parenthood - will pay off.

Here are some good habits to start developing now:

- Schedule intentional check ins with your partner to foster open communication
- Take care of yourself: See #2 above
- Talk about finances and be transparent about your intentions, goals, and challenges
- Give each other space to be themselves and to build 1:1 relationship with the baby
- Practice gratitude and loving out loud

05 There is no one right way to be a parent

Lastly, only you know what is right for your family. Social media, baby books and even well-meaning friends and family will all give you advice on the best way to do something. Listen to what they have to say and choose what works for you.

You can choose how to feed your baby, where everyone sleeps, when to allow visitors, how often to bathe your little one, what to dress in, how important newborn photos are to you, use a snoo or not, and if you want to introduce a pacifier. There are no right or wrong paths!

If these choices or the societal pressure feels overwhelming, [reach out to a coach](#). They can guide you as you determine what is best for your family and situation.

Early Weeks of Parenthood



Trust yourself!

You are the best authority on your family. Trust your instincts; I promise they are good!

The moment you have been waiting for is here: You have a new baby!!

In the early weeks of parenthood you have 3 primary objectives:

1. Rest and recover: Nourish your body, hydrate, rest, and let the rest slide.
2. Bond with your baby: Snuggles, skin to skin, and googly eyes all day.
3. Learn how to be a family of 3 (or more!)

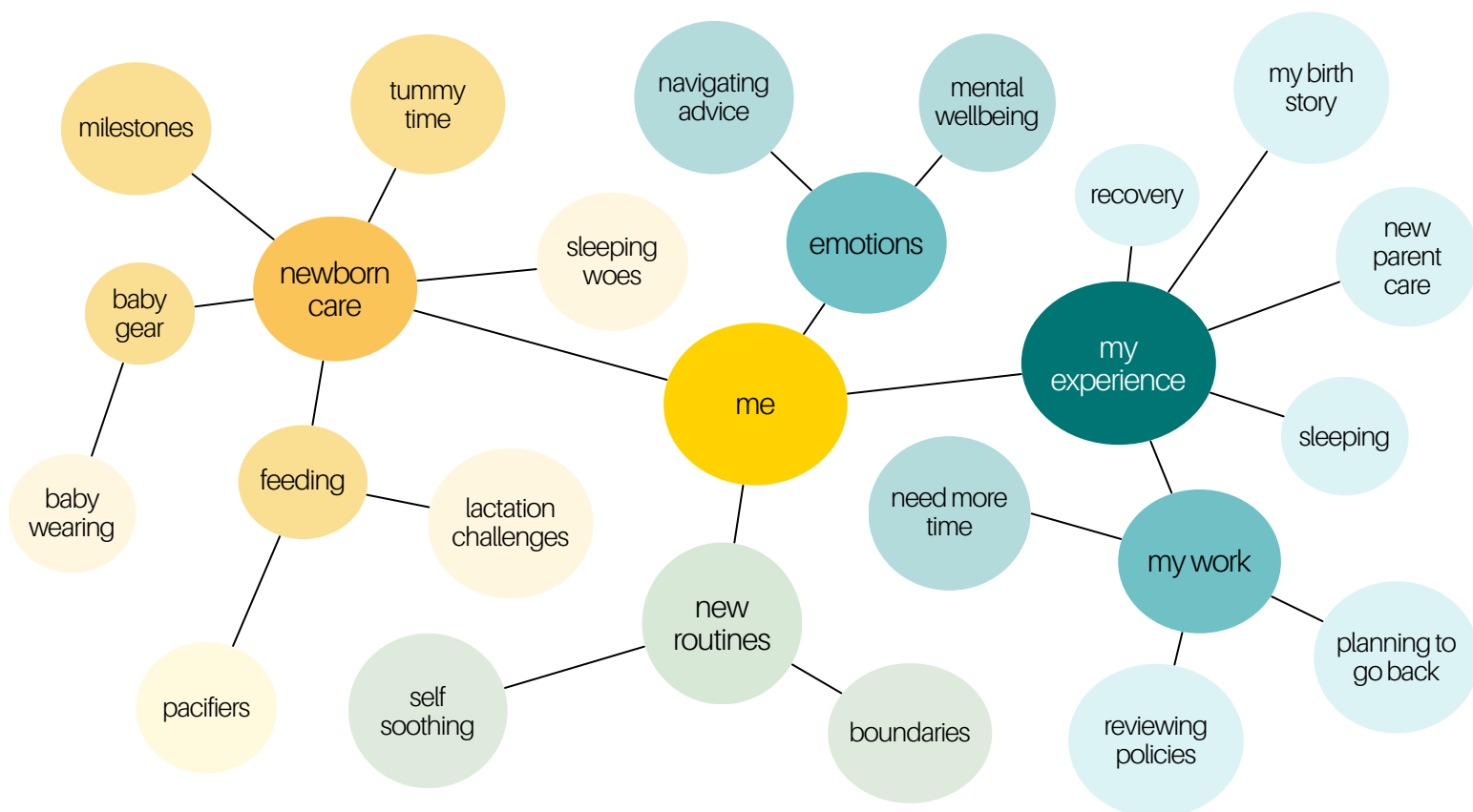
That's really it. The days will be full but if you keep these three objectives in mind, you'll be on your way in no time!

If you find yourself asking lots of questions or would like a professional perspective, our [Parent Coaches](#) are experts in the postpartum period and can chat about the following topics, and much more, all at no cost to you.

Check out the Parento Library!

If research is your thing, we've got you covered! The [Parento Library](#) is chock full of evidence based articles, helpful guides, toolkits, checklists and more. Here are a handful of articles to start with - along with the myriad articles linked throughout this Pathway. Follow the suggested links for a deep dive into the topics.

Parento Library Topics



Taking Care of Baby

- [AAP Safe Sleep Guidelines to Reduce SIDs and SUIDs](#)
- [What to do when Breastfeeding Isn't Working](#)
- [So Many Tongue Ties](#)
- [Sleep Regressions: A Sign of Healthy Development](#)

Taking Care of You

- [Self Care: Reframed](#)
- [Fatherhood, Mental Health and Paternal PPD \(yes, it's real\)](#)
- [Mental Fog: Understanding Baby Brain](#)
- [Finding Support and Advocating for Yourself as a BIPOC Mother](#)



**Savor your
leave. Start
this next
section when
you're ready.**



P.S. If you're a planner, feel free to peek ahead.

My Return to Work Plan

Preparing for the Return to Work

Congratulations! You made it through birth and leave and your body, life, community, finances, and relationships have gone through big changes. It is natural that this transition may bring up many emotions. Excited to see work friends and to use your brain in a familiar way? Apprehension about new routines and logistics? Childcare blues? These are all totally NORMAL!

We suggest planning your return-to-work at least two weeks before your anticipated return work date, but the earlier the better! Be sure to communicate your needs with your manager and HR, keeping open lines of communication.

Final weeks of Parental Leave

- ☐ Finalize arrangements with your child care provider. Don't forget to find babysitters for the occasional date nights - self care is important!
- ☐ If you are breastfeeding or pumping, consider milk storage, pumping, and introducing bottles now. This will give you and your baby time to adjust.
- ☐ Check in on your emotional and mental health. Talk about any changes or concerns with your coach or a medical provider.
- ☐ Investigate your work wardrobe. Whether your body has changed or just the season, a few new outfits can make you feel ready for whatever comes your way.
- ☐ Talk to other parents who have returned to work and ask about their experiences.



Three Tips for A Smoother Return to Work



- 01 Practice your morning routine a week before returning to work.** Run through every step to see what works and what doesn't: Set your alarm, get ready for work, pack up your child, drop off at daycare (or pretend to), and commute to work. This will give you a chance to make adaptations if needed and lower the first day anxieties!
- 02 Return on a Thursday.** Staring down a 5 day work week can feel daunting for your first week back. Talk with your HR or manager about the possibility of starting later in the week or other ramp-up options.
- 03 Talk about roles and responsibilities with your partner.** Life has changed since you were last at work. If you haven't yet, use this time to talk with your partner about what will be changing when you return to work and how family work is going to be divided up.

Conversations to Have With HR / Your Employer

Re-engaging with your work is the final step of your Parental Leave pathway. Well thought out conversations with your HR and your supervisor can smooth out the bumps in the transition back to work.

- ☐ Review your paid parental leave policy
 - ☐ Have you used all of the leave available to you?
 - ☐ Have you provided all required documentation to Parento and your HR team?
- ☐ Schedule a one-on-one with HR **2-3 weeks prior to your return**
 - ☐ Has HR already provided return guidelines? If so, review.
 - ☐ What flexible work arrangements, if any, are available?
- ☐ If you are breastfeeding and nursing, what lactation and breastfeeding support will be available on site? Review the PUMP act to understand your rights as a breastfeeding parent.
 - ☐ Will you have access to a dedicated pumping space?
 - ☐ Will you have access to a fridge?
 - ☐ If your job involves travel, what accommodations will be made for work-trips? E.g. breast milk shipping.
 - ☐ Are you eligible for an additional pump through your insurance? E.g. keep one pump at work and one at home.
- ☐ Schedule a one-on-one with your manager for **the week you return**
 - ☐ Review performance expectations
 - ☐ If a semi-annual or annual review was to take place while you were away, go ahead and schedule it! Don't miss out on career growth opportunities because you were parenting.
 - ☐ Schedule a 30-day check-in
 - ☐ Review company updates you missed
 - ☐ New hires and personnel changes
 - ☐ New launches/campaigns/clients
 - ☐ Product, program updates, etc.
 - ☐ Review all projects and work you missed
 - ☐ Loop in other team members as needed
 - ☐ What requires your immediate attention?
 - ☐ What can be pushed back for 14+ days?

Parental Leave and Your Career

When you return to work, you will be wearing a new hat: working parent.

- What does this new role mean for you and your career?
- Are you leaning into your ambitions and seeking professional growth? Or do you want to take a slower approach and focus on family?
- Will you be setting firm boundaries to delineate between work and home or do your new family responsibilities mean that the blending of work and home are essential for making it all work?

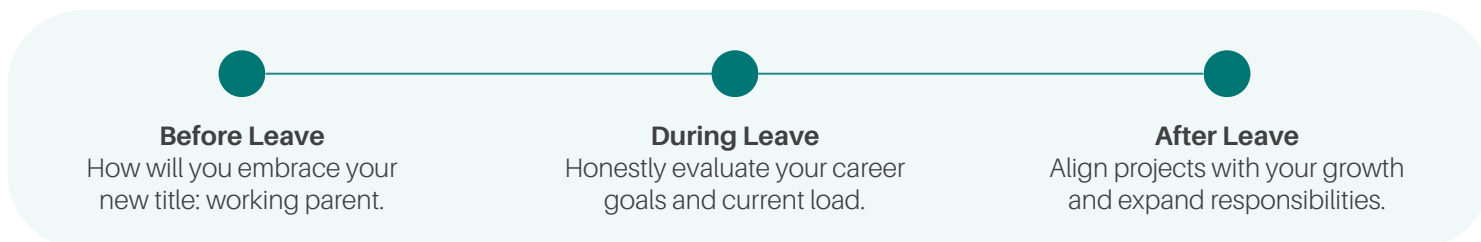


There is no “right” answer. Just what feels right to you and your family. Your working parent identity will evolve over time and your path will be different from that of friends, family, and co-workers.

Using Parental Leave as an Opportunity for Growth

Going on parental leave can be a natural opportunity to evaluate your career goals, and have an honest conversation with yourself and your employer about your growth and development. The work that you have done to outline your work responsibilities, delegate, and train others has prepared you for a transition:

- If you offloaded work while you were on leave, decide what you want to bring back
- Can you leave some lesser tasks behind to make room for expanded responsibilities you’re really passionate about?



Your new found knowledge of the parental leave period gives you a unique perspective to be a leader among parents and expectant parents:

- How can you use your experiences to train managers and colleagues about parental leave and parent experiences at your company?
- Consider your leave journey: what can the company do differently next time?
- Can you mentor other expectant parents to help ease their parental leave journey?



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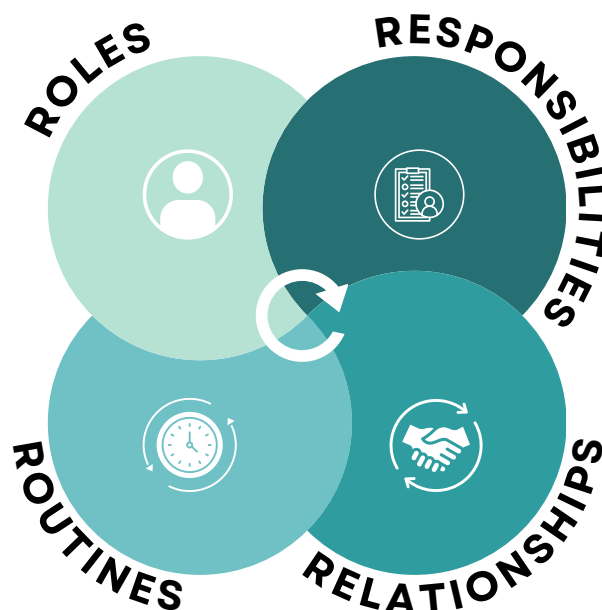
Working Parenthood

As you are settling in at work, this is a great time to take stock of what is and isn't working at home and work.

As you know, home life and work life are integrated, not separate entities. When you start making changes - like going back to work - there is a ripple effect that impacts:

- Roles
- Responsibilities
- Routines
- Relationships

At each major change, evaluate the 4Rs. Are there areas that need to be reprioritized or rebalanced? What is needed to get you where you want to be? What can you change that will make things a little easier or help you reach your goals?



If you have a partner, be sure to engage them in these conversations. Cover the basics, state your needs clearly, address expectations, and leave room for flexibility.

- **Logistical questions**
 - Who's handling drop-off and pick-up?
 - Who will be the primary contact if a child is sick?
- **Roles and responsibilities**
 - How will we divide household chores and responsibilities?
 - How will we divide child related responsibilities?
 - If you're working from home: what are your expectations for interruptions / updates throughout the day?
- **Self-care**
 - How do we schedule unwind / "me" time after work?
 - What do we each need to take care of ourselves?
 - Schedule periodic check ins with each other

My Resources



YOU DID IT!

You prepared for leave in a way that made everyone feel at ease and confident!

You had a baby and survived the first months of parenthood!

You returned to work and are learning to navigate working parenthood!

Parento's Parent Experience provides a suite of custom support for you and your partners that includes individual and group coaching, and regular events. These free, confidential programs are designed to support you now and in the future. [Learn more or sign up today.](#)

Parent Experience Program Offerings



Parent Coaching

Virtual one-on-one sessions with an expert parent coach. Includes a postpartum anxiety and depression screening for birthing parents.

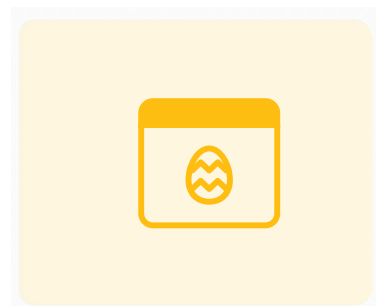
[Schedule a Coaching Session](#)



Parento Pods

Group parenting sessions designed to build community, share perspectives, and meet parents at similar stages.

[View Upcoming Events](#)



Parento Library

Updated and curated articles, worksheets, guides, and more for every stage of parenting.

[Launch Parent Library](#)



You did it!



P.S. We never doubted you.

Appendix

AKA - Tools to make your parental leave planning even easier!

The following pages are full of tools, templates, and worksheets that were referenced in the Pathways and designed to help you organize and communicate your plan. You will find:

Navigating the Terminology & Acronyms of Paid Parental Leave

A guide to the alphabet soup and jargon that pops up when talking about leave policies

Parental Leave Plan

This multi-page template has all of the information you need to start outlining your parental leave plan with your manager and co-workers. Add sections, remove blocks, and make it your own!

Communication Tools

Easy to use OOO templates and sample text for communicating your preferences and boundaries while you are out on leave

Parenting Worksheets

Worksheets discussed in the Pathways document to help you prepare at home:

- Birth plan
- Helpful Professionals
- Helper Framework



Take what works and leave what doesn't!

These templates are designed to help you and serve as a blueprint during this time, but please take what works for you and your family, and leave what doesn't fit!



Navigating Terminology and Acronyms of Paid Parental Leave

PFL, STD, FMLA, QE, EDD - so many acronyms! The world of parental leave can feel like alphabet soup! Here's what you need to know:

- **PPL** - Paid Parental Leave. This is an employer-paid parental leave policy for employees.
- **PFL or SDI** - Paid Family Leave or State Disability Insurance are state wage replacement programs offered in some US states. You may be eligible for these benefits if your state offers them! Not sure? Check out our [PFL guides](#) to learn more.
- **STD** - Short term disability insurance is a benefit that may be offered by your employer replace wages for leave due to medical reasons (like giving birth).
- **FMLA** - Family Medical Leave Act is an unpaid Federal leave entitlement that offers job protection for up to 12 weeks to some employees. It does not offer paid leave. Your state may also have a state leave entitlement that may or may not include paid leave. Check with your employer to see if you are eligible.
- **QE** - Qualifying event is a formal way of saying your child has arrived whether by birth or legal placement for adoptions and foster.
- **EDD** - Estimated due date is the best guess for your child's birth date and often provides guidance for planning the start of your leave.
- **Elimination Period** - A period of time before your benefits kick in, often seen with STD and PFL
- **Leave** - This is your time out of the office (or virtual office) to be spent with your family.
- **Continuous Leave** - when all parental leave is taken in one single block
- **Intermittent Leave** - when parental leave is used in increments over a set period of time
- **Claim** - An insurance term that for the formal request for compensation for a leave
- **PTO** - Paid time off is a blanket term for sick days, holidays, and vacations that your company offers. This generally does not include paid parental leave.

My Parental Leave Plan

I am expecting a new child and will be taking Parental Leave per our company policy. I will work with you to plan for my transition to leave and return to work so that there is clarity and coverage. This document is a “living document” and will continue to be updated as more details are defined.

Parental Leave Overview

Department	
Manager	
Due Date	
My Anticipated Last Day of Work	
Last Day Window (babies can arrive early!)	<i>Two weeks before the due date through one week after the due date</i>
My anticipated Return-to-Work Date	
Notes: limitations, special requests, etc. (if applicable)	

Contacts

Personal Email Address	
Cell phone number	
Emergency Contact (name, email, phone, relation)	
Hospital / Birthing Center	
OBGYN / Doctor Contact	

Communication

Primary point of contact	<i>Who has permission to contact you while on leave?</i>
It's OK to contact me in these circumstances	<i>Project updates, company personnel changes, review period, etc.</i>
The best way to reach me at home is	

Project Status

General Summary:

Project #1

Project Name	
Re-assigned to	
Project Scope	
Key Dates	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Project #2

Project Name	
Re-assigned to	
Project Scope	
Key Dates	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Project #3

Project Name	
Re-assigned to	
Project Scope	
Key Dates	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Recurring Meetings

General Summary:

Meeting #1

Meeting Name	
Leader	
Who attends?	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Meeting #2

Meeting Name	
Leader	
Who attends?	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Meeting #3

Meeting Name	
Leader	
Who attends?	
Resources / Docs	
Additional Notes	

Direct Reports

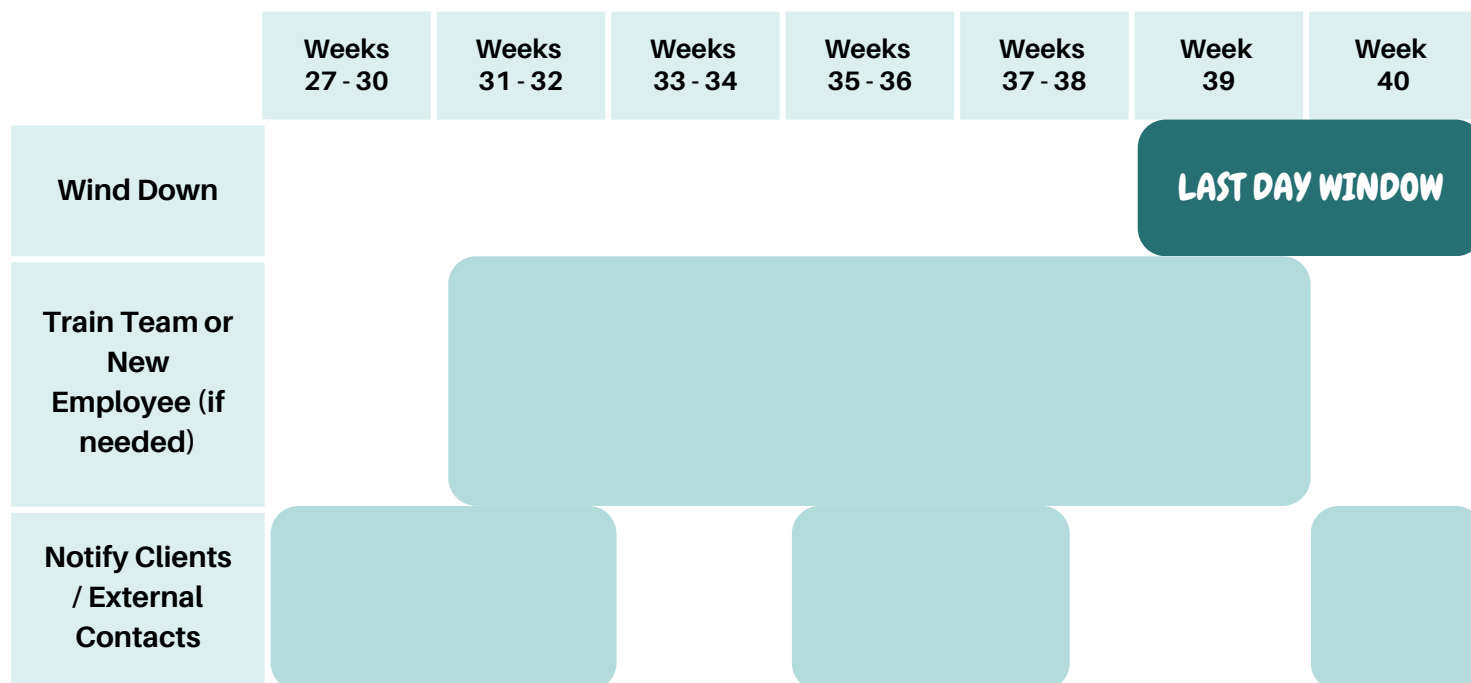
My team of direct reports includes:

Name	Role	Interim Supervisor

Interim Supervisors will be able to: *(Edit responsibilities as needed)*

1. Provide direction and assistance prioritizing workload
2. Project and document signoff and approval
3. Review and approve PTO requests
4. Annual or bi-annual performance reviews
5. Review reimbursement requests

Wind Down Calendar



Sample OOO Auto Response

Don't forget to set up your out of office reply! Consider also setting up out of office notifications on all channels your company uses, such as Slack, Asana, etc. and set up a block on your calendar so that all meetings are automatically declined.

Here are some templates as a jumping off point. Feel free to customize!

OOO Template #1

TO

SUBJECT

Thank you for your email. I am currently on parental leave and will be unavailable, with no access to emails, until **[insert expected return to work date]**.

For questions regarding **[insert project or department]** please contact **[interim contact name]** at **[insert email address]** in my absence. For all other inquiries, please contact **[Name #2]** at **[insert email address]**.

Upon my return, I review emails in the order I received them. Thank you for your understanding and patience!

My best,
[Your Name]

Include an exact date, if available, or a range such as "mid-July" or "after Labor Day."

Feel free to direct all inbound requests towards one person or divide by project or type (Service, clients, etc) as needed.

OOO Template #2

TO

SUBJECT

Thanks for your email but I'm on parental leave through **[insert expected return to work date]**. As I navigate this exciting new time in my life, I will be unavailable. Please contact **[insert name]** at **[insert email address]** in my absence.

My best,
[Your Name]

Include an exact date, if available, or a range such as "mid-July" or "after Labor Day."

Communications Preferences Template

My Communication Preferences While On Leave:

While I am on leave, please do not contact me for work-related items for at least 6 weeks. With an estimated leave start date of [insert first day of parental leave] I expect to be 100% off the grid until at least [insert date]. I will also not be checking my work email, Slack messages, Asana tasks, etc. during this period. Please do not @ me or ping me on those channels. Thank you for respecting my first few weeks of leave with my new baby!

After 6 weeks, I will be checking my work email intermittently and only for high-level project updates. I will not be responding to emails. I will not be tracking projects.

Who Can Contact Me:

Insert instructions on who can contact you. E.g. would you like to only be contacted by your direct manager and HR or are you open to receiving text messages from coworkers? Should direct reports contact you if needed? If you want to only be contacted by one person, designate a contact below.

My designated contact is: Name in Department Name. Please do not share my personal email address with coworkers without my permission.

Project Information I want to Receive and be CC-d On:

For example: At this time, I would like updates on the below projects only and will hold all other updates until I return:

- *Project Name: please send high-level updates on project timeline and client requests*
- *Project Name: please send high-level updates when the campaign is launched in May, along with any press we receive from it*
- *Please send any interview requests or request for comment to my personal email address:*

My Birth Plan

About me (high-level summary of your birth wishes and medical history)

Delivery Room Atmosphere

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dim lights | <input type="checkbox"/> No TV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bright lights | <input type="checkbox"/> Aromatherapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music (will provide) | <input type="checkbox"/> Free movement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Bath / shower |

Support people allowed in L&D room:

Labor and Delivery Preferences

Pain Management

- ☐ Epidural
- ☐ Breathing
- ☐ Massage
- ☐ Aromatherapy
- ☐ Hydrotherapy
- ☐ Counterpressure
- ☐ Other _____

Laboring Tools

- ☐ Birthing ball
- ☐ Squat bar
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Stool or Chair

Planning for a:

- ☐ Vaginal
- ☐ VBAC
- ☐ Scheduled c-section

Episiotomy

- ☐ No if possible
- ☐ Yes

Fetal Monitoring

- ☐ Continuous
- ☐ Intermittent

Medical Students Allowed

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

FOR BABY

Skin-to-skin

- ☐ Yes, me first
- ☐ Yes, partner first
- ☐ No preference

Cord and placenta

- ☐ Yes, cord blood banking
- ☐ No cord blood banking
- ☐ Keep the placenta
- ☐ Delayed clamping

First bath

- ☐ Delayed
- ☐ Right away

Approved Visitors

Notes and Requests

Helpful Professionals

Create a list of local professionals and providers that you can call if needed. Reach out before you need help to say hi!

Paid Parental Leave Organizer

Pediatrician	
OD / Midwife	
Urgent Care	
Mental Health Therapist	
Lactation Support (breastfeeding support group, CLE, IBCLC, etc.)	
Postpartum support (night nurse, doula, postpartum doula, etc.)	
Other health and wellness (pelvic floor PT, chiropractor, acupuncturist, massage therapist, etc.)	

Other Helpful Professionals

Babysitter / mother's helper	
Pet care or dog walker	
Urgent Care	
House cleaner	
Food delivery (or take them a meal, meal train, etc.)	

Helper Framework: Asking for and Receiving Help

Here are some areas new parents can use a helping hand. Identify which of your friends and family could fill each of these roles, keeping in mind that one person may be listed multiple times. Cross out or add roles as needed.

Meal Maker

Laundry Helper

Errand Runner

Baby Holder

Emotional Support

Experienced Parent

**"Get me out of the house"
friend**

"I'm not afraid of TMI" friend

Social Planner

Early Bird

Night Owl

Confidant

Dog Whisperer

Around during the day

Handy / Fix-it friend



Parental Leave Pathways

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