**Staff Checklist for Maternity Leave**

**Prior to Child Birth**

- Notify your supervisor and/or department administrator of your intention to take Maternity Leave at least 30 days prior to your anticipated leave date.

- Employees should review the Northwestern website for our Maternity Leave and Extended Sick Time policies. Also, employees with at least 3 continuous years of service in a benefits eligible role immediately prior to their leave should review Northwestern’s Birth and Adoption Parental Leave policy.

- For employees enrolled in University Health Insurance, review the “Special Beginnings” program offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield. Employees will have access to informational articles, pregnancy calendars, helpful videos, and other useful maternity information. Coverage may also include the rental or purchase of a dual electric breast pump or a manual breast pump at no cost to you. This means you do not have to pay a copayment, co-insurance, or a deductible. If you’re eligible, you’ll also be fully covered for breastfeeding support. Covered services are only available from Blue Cross contracted providers with a prescription. Please contact Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois at 1-800-327-8497 for more information.

- Follow the steps outlined in the Hartford flyer to set up your leave claim. Begin by calling The Hartford at 1-888-541-7283 to start the process at least one month prior to your anticipated due date. Be prepared to provide the following information:
  - Name, Address, and other key identification information
  - Name of your department and your last day of active work
  - Your HR Representative (Robert Ellis) and Phone Number (312-503-2720)
  - The nature of your claim
  - Your treating physician’s name, address, and phone and fax numbers

- Provide instructions to your HR Representative as to how you would like your timecard completed for any portion of your leave not covered by our Extended Sick Time Benefit (EST), or Birth and Adoption Parental Leave Benefit (BAPL). Mothers have the option of using Vacation, Personal Floating Holiday, or Unpaid Time for the remainder of leave after these benefits are applied.

- Visit or contact The Office of Work/Life & Family Resources to receive an expectant mother packet and review resources that can help with finding and paying for childcare, transitioning to parenthood and more benefits available for soon-to-be mothers.

- Commuter Benefit Information: For employees using commuter benefits, please review Commuter Benefit Information. Visit www.payflex.com to turn off commuter benefits that will not be needed while on leave. The deadline to make changes is the 5th of the month prior to when changes should be effective.

- Parking Permits: If you have a Northwestern parking permit, contact the parking office to learn how to stop your payroll deduction during your leave of absence.

  **Evanston Parking Office** 847-491-3319

  **Chicago Parking Office**: 312-503-1103.
After Child Birth

- Contact The Hartford at 1-888-541-7283 to let them know you have delivered the baby.

- For employees enrolled in Northwestern’s medical coverage, review the process for adding your child to your medical, dental, and/or vision coverage, as well as information about child life insurance, and our dependent care flexible spending account.

- Review all documentation sent from The Hartford and respond to any inquiries or requests ASAP.

- Keep in contact with The Hartford in regards to any changes in your maternity leave plan or medical complications.

Just Before Returning to Work

- Schedule a time to talk with your supervisor to discuss your return to work date. It can be helpful to start back to work at the end of the week to ease the transition, if possible.

- At least one week prior to returning to work, identify a convenient lactation room and contact The Office of Work/Life and Family Resources at 847-467-3631 or worklife@northwestern.edu to ensure that you have access. All lactation room locations are being converted to WildCARD access during the academic year 2016 - 2017. Please ensure that your WildCARD has the Indala indicator. For WildCARD assistance, please contact 847-467-2609 on the Evanston Campus or 312-503-0548 on the Chicago Campus.

- If your child will be enrolled in childcare, you can schedule his/her first day prior to your return to work date. You can ease your child in by starting with a few hours and building up to the regular schedule.

After Return to Work

- E-Mail Robert Ellis at Robert.Ellis1@Northwestern.edu to confirm your return to work so you can be returned from leave in the HRIS system.

- Visit payflex.com to reactivate commuter benefits. Please note that changes must be made by the 5th of the month to take effect the following month.

- If interested in enrolling in the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account, submit a benefits change form within 31 days of your return to work. If family AGI is below $130,000.00, you may be eligible for University matching funds. If eligible, and you are enrolling in the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account, please complete and submit the Dependent Care Match Application and return along with the Benefits Change Form.

Financial Planning for New Parents

- Update (or create) your will and estate planning documents. Resources for Online Will Preparation are available through the Dearborn National Life Insurance. For information, call 800-348-4512 or visit www.dearbornnational.com.
Consider starting a 529 or Coverdell educational savings account for your child’s future. Both allow your contributions to grow tax-free for qualified expenses. Resources are available from Fidelity Investments at www.fidelity.com and TIAA at www.tiaa.org.