



Supervisor Guide: An Employee is Becoming a Parent

An employee that you supervise has just told you that he or she is going to become a parent. You may have questions about how to handle the news. To assist you during this exciting time in the life of your employee, we have developed a checklist. It is by no means exhaustive, but it is designed to help you address the practical issues that arise in the workplace during a pregnancy/adoption. Please don't hesitate to contact the Benefits Team if you have any questions at 3-2600 or via email at benefits@gmu.edu. We're happy to help!

Upon hearing the news:

- Though your very first thought after hearing that an employee is having a baby or adopting may regard the impact your employee's upcoming absence will have on your department, the first thing you may want to actually say is, "Congratulations! How can we help you during this exciting time?"
- Suggest that the employee contact the HR & Payroll Benefits Team and schedule an appointment to talk about their plans and how they would like to utilize their benefits during the pregnancy/adoption process and after the child is born/adopted.

In preparation:

- Talk with your employee about her/his leave plan.
- Discuss the possibility of utilizing flexible work options with your employee to ease the transition back to work after the baby is born/adopted. For information on flexible work options, please visit <http://hr.gmu.edu/worklife/flex>

After the child is born/adopted:

- Try to be flexible. Becoming a parent is both wonderful and a challenge. Your employee may not be getting a full night's sleep and may have some issues that arise as a result of their newest family member.
- Remind your employee to add their baby/child to their insurance plan within 31 days of the birth/adoption.
- If your employee is a new nursing mom, help her find a private, quiet place where she can express milk for the baby and refrigerate it for later use. A list of formal and informal lactation sites is available on the work/life website. But sometimes the employee's office or a vacant office/space can be used as well.