

Compassionate care leave is an unpaid, eight-week leave for employees who need to care for a seriously ill family member (spouse, common law partner, child, child of spouse or common law partner, parent, spouse or common law partner of a parent) who has a high risk of dying within 26 weeks. The Leave can be broken up into separate periods of no less than one-week blocks.

Eligibility

In accordance with the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*, employees who have been employed for at least 3 consecutive months may qualify for Compassionate Care Leave. Cape Breton University may ask for a medical certificate, from a medical doctor, stating that the employee's family member is seriously ill.

Procedure to Apply for Compassionate Care Leave

An employee must give their supervisor and the Human Resources Department as much notice as possible before taking the Leave. Employees who take a Compassionate Care Leave may qualify for a six-week compassionate care leave benefit under the federal government's Employment Insurance program.

Continuation of Employment Benefits

Employees on Compassionate Care Leave shall pay both the employee's share of benefit contributions as well as the employer's share (this may also include the pension plan). The employee must advise, in writing, the Human Resources Office prior to commencing unpaid leave of their intention to maintain benefits during this period. The employee is responsible for making payment arrangements with the Payroll Department.

It is strongly recommended that employees continue benefit contributions during their period of unpaid leave. Failure to do so could leave an employee without coverage in the event of sickness or disability and reinstatement may require a penalty waiting period as well as proof of health.

No vacation credit is earned while on unpaid Compassionate Care Leave.

Link to the Labour Standards Code Guide - <http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/labstand/lstcode/>