

House of Commons unanimously adopts new parental-leave policy for MPs ^[1]

The policy change is the latest effort by the House of Commons to try to make the Hill more family-friendly.

Author: Wright, Teresa

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 14 Jun 2019

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

For the first time ever, members of Parliament will have the right to take paid parental leave from their jobs on Parliament Hill when they adopt or give birth.

The House of Commons unanimously agreed to new rules that will allow new parents who are serving as MPs to take up to 12 months of parental leave. The rules give MPs who are expecting babies the right to take up to four weeks off as leave at the ends of pregnancies as well.

Until now, MPs who missed more than 21 days of sitting time for a reason other than illness or official business have been docked \$120 a day. (Their \$178,900 base salaries work out to \$490 a day.)

Democratic Institutions Minister Karina Gould, who was the first cabinet minister to give birth while in office, calls the move a historic change.

...

Gould said many of her constituents were "gobsmacked" to find out she didn't have the option to take formal maternity leave after she gave birth to her baby boy, Oliver, in March 2018.

She did take a few weeks off, which she credits to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for being supportive, but was back in the House of Commons a few weeks later, with Oliver in tow. But she said the lack of a formal leave policy has left new parents in Parliament feeling pressure to go back to work right away.

...

Regardless of the new rules, of course, voters will get to decide at election time whether they believe they've been properly represented by an MP who's taken a parental leave.

...

"If we're going to be serious about encouraging women to run for federal office, these are not negotiable measures, these are critical. There's various ways of discouraging women from doing this work and certainly, frankly, a workplace full of barriers to doing your work while having a family is a major disincentive."

The new leave policy will extend to new fathers as well, but Toronto Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, whose wife had a baby a year after the 2015 election, said he hopes it will help more younger women get involved in federal politics.

Related link: The second time around, Karina Gould's maternity plans are much different ^[3]

Region: Canada ^[4]

Tags: federal government ^[5]

parental leave ^[6]

Source URL (modified on 4 Aug 2023): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/house-commons-unanimously-adopts-new-parental-leave-policy-mps>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/house-commons-unanimously-adopts-new-parental-leave-policy-mps> ^[2]

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/parental-leave-commons-1.5175413#:~:text=41->

[,For%20the%20first%20time%20ever%2C%20members%20of%20Parliament%20will%20have,12%20months%20of%20parental%20leave](https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/parental-leave-commons-1.5175413#:~:text=41-For%20the%20first%20time%20ever%2C%20members%20of%20Parliament%20will%20have,12%20months%20of%20parental%20leave). ^[3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/second-time-around-karina-gould's-maternity-plans-are-much-different> ^[4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9140> [6]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/parental-leave>