

Novartis announces 26 weeks gender neutral parental leave policy in India

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- *New parental policy applicable to birthing and non-birthing parent*
- *Applies to cases of birth, adoption, surrogacy as per Indian law*
- *Retrospectively applicable to non-birthing parents from January 30, 2019*

Mumbai, July 1, 2019 – Novartis today announced a gender neutral parental policy for its employees across its entities in India. The new parental leave policy is effective July 1, 2019 and applies to birthing and non-birthing parents in the case of birth, adoption and surrogacy. The policy is applicable with retrospective effect to employees who became parents on or after January 30, 2019. In case both parents work with Novartis, both will be entitled to 26 weeks leave.

“People are key to the success of an organization and we believe that by recognizing moments that matter in the lives of our associates, we will contribute to better work-life balance. Our parental leave policy is a symbol of equality for all new parents in the company, offering choice and giving both parents precious time to spend bonding with their new baby. Becoming a parent is a life-changing event and we want our people to cherish the experience. We believe that this move will enrich the workplace and foster a more inclusive culture in the organization,” says Sanjay Murdeshwar, Country President, Novartis in India.

Non-birthing parents will have the flexibility of taking leave in one go or two tranches of 13 weeks each within a year of birth / adoption / surrogacy of their new child. The first employees to avail this opportunity are expected to resume work in January 2020. Novartis will offer coaching to associates going on leave for a seamless reintegration into the workplace when they resume work. There is no cap on the number of births and in case of premature birth, depending on the number of weeks of prematurity, employees will be entitled to additional parental leave.

According to Savitha Shivsankar, Country Head People & Organization, Novartis in India, “Our aim at Novartis is to make the “moments that matter” in an associates life most special. Having a gender neutral parental policy recognizes the role that both parents play in a changed world and helps both parents build bonds with their new baby. We would encourage our associates to use this great opportunity to enrich themselves as they take on one of the most beautiful journeys in life as parents.”

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