

Parental Support Policy

Life at the Bar can be demanding even in the best of circumstances, and for those balancing professional responsibilities with the care of children, the pressures can be especially significant. Recognising these challenges, and with a strong commitment to member wellbeing, the ACT Bar Association offers a range of assistance to support parents at the Bar.

1. *CPD exemption:* For members taking a period of parental leave associated with the birth or adoption of a child, an exemption will be granted from compliance with annual mandatory CPD requirements commensurate with the period of parental leave taken during the relevant CPD year. For example, a member taking 6 months' parental leave in the period 1 April to 31 March will be entitled to an exemption for 5 CPD points (being half the annual CPD requirement). The CPD table on the CPD website page can assist in calculating the reduced CPD Points required based on time off.
2. *Practising certificate and membership fee exemption:* For members taking parental leave associated with the birth or adoption of a child, an exemption will be granted for Practising Certificate and membership fees commensurate with the period of parental leave taken during the relevant financial year. This will be in the form of a refund once the member has returned to work and confirmed the period of leave.

For points 1 and 2, members are required to inform the CEO of the Association of their intended parental leave as soon as possible (ideally prior to the commencement of parental leave). The CEO will advise of any further information required, including confirmation of the end of the parental leave on the member's return to work.

3. *Maternity Bar jacket for loan:* The Association has a maternity Bar jacket available for members to loan at no cost. We only ask that members dry-clean the jacket prior to returning it.
4. *Assistance to Readers attending Bar Practice Course:* Where possible, the Association will support members with children attending the NSW Bar Practice Course. The support may be in the form of:
 - i. liaising with the NSW Bar Association on behalf of the Reader as to what elements of the course can be done via online sessions;
 - ii. granting permission for attendance at the course to be delayed following the issuing of a Practising Certificate;
 - iii. paying the Bar Practice Course fee on the Reader's behalf on the basis that the Reader will reimburse the Association (on a no-interest basis) by way

of quarterly instalments over the following 12 months or such longer period as may be agreed.

The Association will support members where possible however point (i) is a decision for the NSW Bar Association and points (ii) and (iii) are at the discretion of the ACT Bar Council in accordance with the ACT Bar Association Reading Program Rules.

5. *List of emergency childcare providers:* To assist barristers with childcare responsibilities to manage court or other commitments when children are ill or regular care arrangements are unavailable, the Association has collated a list of emergency childcare providers as set out below. While the Association has collated this information, it has not independently verified the providers' representations and is unable to provide any assurances about accuracy or quality of service. This is designed to be a helpful starting point. The Association is not affiliated with any of these providers.

Approved by Bar Council 16 February 2026