

4.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR EXTENSION REQUESTS

The date of the first PhD considered for the calculation of the eligibility period is the date of the actual award according to the national rules of the country where the degree was awarded.

The eligibility periods set out in the table on page 7 can be extended beyond 7 and 12 years for the Starting and Consolidator Grants respectively for the following properly documented circumstances⁴⁹, provided they started before the call deadline:

- **Maternity:** 18 months extension for each child born before or after the PhD award. If the applicant can document a longer maternity leave, the eligibility period will be extended by the documented amount of actual leave taken until the call deadline.
- **Paternity:** extension by the documented time of paternity leave taken until the call deadline for each child born before or after the PhD award.
- **Long-term illness**⁵⁰, or **national service:** extension by the documented amount of leave taken by the PI until the call deadline for each incident which occurred after the PhD award date.
- **Clinical training:** extension by the documented amount of clinical training received by the PI **after** the award of the first eligible degree and until the call deadline, **up to a maximum of 4 years.**

All applicants are entitled to an extension of their eligibility window if properly documented and related to the specific circumstances defined in the annual ERC work programme⁵¹. Please note that any such circumstance must have started before the call deadline. The reference date for calculating the eligibility window is the actual award date of the first eligible degree according to the national rules of the awarding country⁵². The extension time is calculated based on the supporting documentation submitted with the application. There is no limit to the total extension timeframe. Please note however, that a maximum of 4 years have been introduced for extensions due to clinical training. The individual extensions for different periods are additive and the total extension time can thus be based on several reasons.

Maternity leave

For maternity⁵³, a flat rate of 18 months extension is granted for each child born **before or after** the PhD award. If a maternity leave or the combined maternity- and parental leave was longer than 18 months, an extension will be granted for the documented leave actually taken. The same principle also applies for child adoption.

Supporting documents: any official document that links the mother and the child(ren), i.e. birth certificate(s) or passport(s) of the child(ren) or family book. For extension requests above 18 months per child, an official signed document⁵⁴ from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s) must be submitted. Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods.

⁴⁹ For applicants whose first eligible degree is their medical degree such incidents can be considered from the date of the completion of their medical degree.

⁵⁰ Over 90 days for the Principal Investigator or a close family member (child, spouse, parent or sibling).

⁵¹ E.g., no extension to the eligibility window can be accepted for periods of unemployment.

⁵² Please see footnote 14.

⁵³ Different family and couple scenarios can be considered provided they are properly documented.

⁵⁴ The certificate should be issued by a person within the employing organisation empowered to certify the actual leave taken (i.e. an authorised officer from the HR Department).

Paternity leave

For paternity leaves, an extension will be granted corresponding to the documented time of paternity and/or parental leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline). Both full time and part time leaves can be accepted if properly documented⁵⁵. The same principle also applies for child adoption.

Supporting documents: an official signed document⁵⁶ from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s). Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods.

Long-term illness

For long-term illness (more than ninety days for the Principal Investigator or a close family member such as a child, spouse, parent or sibling), an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of leave actually taken after the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline). Full time and part time leaves as well as reduced working capacity can be accepted if properly documented.

Supporting documents:

- For the PI: an official, signed document from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s) or a medical record that indicates work incapability with the start and end date(s) of the illness period(s). Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods, as long as the leaves were related to the same illness or condition.
- For taking care of close family members: an official signed document from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s). Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods, as long as the leaves were related to the same illness or condition. Furthermore, the request should be supported by an official document explaining the long-term nature of the illness or condition of the close family member (e.g. from a hospital, a doctor or an insurance company). The supporting documents should also prove the family relationship in case the extension request relates to caring for a seriously ill close family member.

National (military) service

For national military service, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented amount of leave actually taken after the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline).

Supporting documents: document signed by official authority with start and end date of the service.

Clinical training

For clinical training, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of clinical training received by the PI after the award of the first eligible degree up to a maximum of 4 years (counting up until the call deadline). For applicants whose first eligible degree is a medical degree, clinical training can be accepted from the date of the completion of their medical degree. No extension will be accepted for serving as a house doctor or hospital doctor unless it is part of a clinical training programme. In case of part-time clinical training, the exact total training time will be accepted on a pro-rata basis to extend the eligibility window of the applicant.

Supporting documents: an official document signed by the employer (usually a hospital) certifying start and end date(s) of the individual training period(s). Any document should mention the type of training. If the training was conducted part-time, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the training happened over several periods and for different clinical specialties.

⁵⁵ An official document proving the PI's right to social paternity benefits can also be accepted.

⁵⁶ The certificate should be issued by a person within the employing organisation empowered to certify the actual leave taken (i.e. an authorised officer from the HR Department).