

**dexus**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES TOTAL: 440

FEMALE: 247 **56%**MALE: 193 **44%**

Challenge

Dexus is committed to providing a meaningful, engaging and rewarding employment experience for their people. To attract and retain the best talent in the market, they believe in providing good programs to support working parents.

Parental leave is an important experience to get right.

Recognising that Australian women generally have significantly less superannuation savings than men, the challenge was to reduce the financial impacts that accompanies leave. Further, with a range of parental leave benefits and support tools already in place, the challenge for Dexus was to make it simple and easy to find and select the benefits to best meet their needs. The final piece was to ensure that flexibility was part of everyone's roles to ensure the most productive outcomes.

Strategy

Dexus undertook an extensive analysis on the financial consequence of taking unpaid parental leave for primary and secondary carers. In addition, the company conducted interviews with past parental leavers and carers and their managers to review the end-to-end experience of preparing for and undertaking parental leave, and looked for ways to improve this experience.

Actions

Conducted in early 2017, a financial impact analysis revealed parental leave was having a significant impact on the amount of superannuation savings available at retirement age, and that this was compounded for those employees returning to work on a part time basis. To close this gap, Dexus now maintains the payment of superannuation contributions to primary carers throughout the duration of their parental leave period, helping to overcome the gender retirement gap potentially faced by women in the workplace.

In January 2018, Dexus conducted a detailed review of the parental leave experience. The review highlighted an inconsistent experience, with some employees not leveraging the entitlements offered to them or losing connection with their teams whilst on leave. Dexus used the insights gained to design a new parental leave experience, powered by Enboarder. The digitally enabled experience aims to enhance:

- [Communications](#) - Based on employee preferences, emails and texts are delivered at specific stages of the parental leave journey to provide relevant and meaningful support to planning, leave and return to work.
- [Manager Connectedness](#) - Managers are guided through each step of the process; from carer entitlements, to recommended ways to keep in touch with employees during their leave. Invites can be scheduled directly on the platform to make it easy to schedule catch ups or send an update provided on what the team is up to.

- [Coaching and development](#) – Pre-defined communications based on personal preferences send a wealth of information, webinars and reminders to set-up 1:1 coaching to carers.

As part of the review, Dexus also recognised for both its employees and customers that gaining access to childcare was a major roadblock to returning successfully to the workplace. As a result, Dexus formed a new partnership with Guardian Early Learning Group, a national childcare provider. The program, called ChildSpace, allows employees and customers access to priority childcare spaces across the Guardian portfolio. Early confirmation of spaces has allowed parental leavers to plan and manage return to work.

Existing Parental Leave Benefits

Dexus recognises the important obligations of new parents. Employees have access to a range of leave options which assist with the financial impact, care obligations and flexibility requirements of parents during their parental leave period.

Dexus offers:

- 12 weeks primary carer paid parental leave
- Continued superannuation contributions for the entire leave period (up to 12 months) with the option of receiving payments at half-pay to allow further flexibility
- Non-primary carers receive one week's leave
- Access to Parents At Work, a tailored program supporting parents in the workplace targeting three specific areas:
 1. [Preparing to go on Parental Leave](#)
The session provides an opportunity to meet and network with colleagues who will also be going on parental leave in coming month, to provide each other with support and share experiences in the lead up to your leave period.
 2. [Employees Returning to Work after Parental Leave](#)
The aim of the session is to provide each other with support as you transition back into work and juggle parenting responsibilities at the same time.



Gary Maher with his son

3. [Dexus Dads](#)

Provides an opportunity to meet and network with colleagues who are working Dads, to share experience and provide support to each other as needed

- Access to Enboarder, a digitally enabled experience which provides bespoke employee communications, ongoing connections with employees' managers, and coaching and development
- All Roles Flex, enabling employees to choose the structure that best supports their work outcomes. Formal/ informal flex work may include:
 - Job sharing
 - Part time work including 9-day fortnights
 - Early start/ finish times
 - Remote working/ work from home options
 - Transition to retirement



Paul Wall working from his home on the NSW South Coast

- Consideration of any flexible work arrangement
- Employees are also encouraged to record flexibility as part of their KPIs with individual personal flexibility goals supported by management

Outcomes

- Close to 20% of primary carers at Dexu are men, compared with 0% in 2016
- Employees who report utilising an available flexible working arrangement have higher than average engagement scores
- 91% of Dexu employees agree they are provided with sufficient flexibility to meet their outside work needs, up from 71% in 2016 before the introduction of the All Roles Flex policy
- Initiatives to support employees with caring responsibilities have helped to improve return to work rates, with 89% retained following carers leave in 2017, compared to 78% in 2016

Employee Experience

Closing the superannuation gender pay gap

Jamie Toko, an asset manager at Dexu, recently returned to work following the birth of her first child. "The continuity of my superannuation entitlements throughout my nine months parental leave meant that my accumulated superannuation balance at retirement age was maintained," said Jaime.

"This meant a lot to me on both a personal and financial level. I am on equal footing with my male colleagues, and the benefit has essentially closed any gap that may not have impacted me until my retirement."

Providing continuity of superannuation contributions to employees during their period of unpaid parental leave is an initiative which supports Dexu's goal of gender equality in the workplace and helps to reduce the superannuation gap. In addition, Dexu provides primary carers with 12 weeks of paid parental leave, and the option of receiving payments at half pay, with non-primary carers entitled to one week paid parental leave.

Dexu's CEO is a WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador and personally committed to promoting gender equality and improving female representation at senior levels, both at Dexu and throughout the industry. In 2017 Dexu achieved gender pay equity in like-for-like roles.

My Personal Flexibility Plan

Paul Wall is Head of Group Sustainability and Energy at Dexu and two years ago made a personal decision to raise his family in a rural community on the South Coast of New South Wales.

Today, Paul works three days remotely from his farm in Termeil in the Shoalhaven district and two days at Dexu's Sydney head office.

Paul's arrangement is made possible by Dexu's My Personal Flexibility Plan, a company initiative which has given him the flexibility to choose his place of work.

Paul says, "I was overwhelmed by the response I received, both from my manager and the People & Communities team, to my request to work remotely. The request was approved the same day as I submitted it, and our CEO called by my desk to personally endorse my decision, saying that he believed it was the future way of working."

Dexus introduced the My Personal Flexibility Plan to encourage organisation-wide acceptance of flexible work. The plan allows employees to choose what structure best supports their productivity. Flexibility goals are recorded in employees' Individual Scorecards.

The impact of the My Personal Flexibility Plan on Paul's life has been extremely positive.

"I've had more time for everything, for my family and my work," says Paul.

"The morning rush to leave for work and the evening rush to get home is reduced, making my work-life transition seamless.

"Supported by good technological connectivity, I am more efficient and effective in meetings.

"And, while my kids and wife see more of me, I also look forward to coming into the office because I enjoy regularly collaborating face-to-face with my work colleagues."

In addition to remote working and working from home, other flexibility arrangements at Dexus include job sharing, part time work including 9-day fortnights, early start/finish times and transition to retirement.

New Experience

Enhancing the parental leave experience

Wendy Yee, Senior Manager of Brand & Corporate Marketing at Dexus, is preparing to undertake primary carers leave in mid-2018 and will be one of the first employees to experience the new support process powered by Enboarder.

"As I prepare for the birth of my second child, it's been great to experience Dexus's new program for parents taking parental leave. It's been a definite improvement from my first experience elsewhere."

Parents At Work provides coaching supplemented by webinars, providing information on how to keep in touch while you are on leave and plan your return to work.

While it is early in the implementation phase, the positive impact on Wendy's experience is already evident.

Wendy says, "With the support I have received so far, I feel secure in the belief that my parental leave experience will be good and without any concerns about job security on my return to work.

"I'm looking forward to keeping in touch through the assistance that Enboarder will provide during my leave," says Wendy.

Throughout her parental leave Wendy will use Enboarder to have an ongoing connection with her manager, and participate in personalised coaching and development sessions.

Dexus has built pulse surveys into the digital leave process to proactively gauge how carers and their managers are feeling during parental leave. The aim is to encourage carers to be open and honest in letting the organisation know how they are going - early, so appropriate support can be provided and ultimately, talent retained in the business.

If you would like to talk to us about how Parents At Work can support the working parents in your organisation please phone +61 2 9967 8377 or email info@parentsatwork.com.au.

You can also visit parentsandcarersatwork.com.au for more information.