

What If I Don't Want to Go Back to Work After My Maternity Leave?

What happens if you change your mind?

WORKING
MOTHER



Q: I'm pregnant and pretty certain I want to return to work after my paid leave—but not totally. Is it ethical to “take the money and run”?

A: Before your babe is born, you can't know how you'll feel on the other side. Heck, you'll probably be so sleep-deprived the first month after delivery that you'll be even more clueless then. But any employer who offers paid leave knows that there's a possibility you might opt to stay home afterward. Take all of your leave to make up your mind, with no guilt (if that's possible, since you're a mom). This PTO is part of company overhead, as are workman's comp and disability. And your leave may not cost them much if they parcel out your work to other staff (who may thrill to new challenges). But don't burn your bridges: as soon as you know if you want to stay or go, speak up!

Source: Katherine Wintch, founder and CEO of The Mom Complex consultancy firm in Richmond, VA