

SPECIAL PURPOSE LEAVE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, parents of students were given the opportunity to obtain a special parental leave, *called a special purpose leave*, during the time when school units were suspended. The special purpose leave was provided in par. 3 of article 4 of 11.3.2020 Act of Legislative Content, which established that the *working parents of children attending schools or care units, whose operation is suspended, have the right to receive a special purpose leave lasting at least three (3) days, provided that the employee uses one (1) day of his normal leave for every three (3) days of the special purpose leave, in the context of the tripartite participation in this urgent and temporary measure.*

The special purpose leave is granted to parents working for private sector employers when distance work is not possible, under the following conditions:

- Children must be enrolled in nursery and preschool, attend compulsory education, special schools or special education and training units or have a disability regardless of their age and benefit from open care facilities for people with a disability.
- The structures that children turn out or attend, remain closed.
- Employees receive at least three days of special purpose leave, making use of one day of regular leave for every three days of special purpose leave.
- Leave can be obtained if at least one parent works in the private sector as an employee, even if the other parent is self-employed. In case both parents are employed, to the same or different employers, they announce with a joint solemn declaration to the employer or their employers, which of the two will use the above leave or, in case they share the leave, the respective periods of use by each of them.
- In case one parent is a private sector employee, while the other is in the public sector, a solemn declaration by the public sector employee must be provided to the private sector employer proving that the first has not used the special purpose leave, so that the private sector employee can use this leave.
- If only one of the two parents works, then he/she cannot use the special purpose leave, unless the non-working parent is hospitalized for any reason or is sick with the coronavirus or is a person with a disability (greek abbreviation: AMEA) and receives allowance from the Organization for Welfare Benefits and Social Solidarity (greek abbreviation: OPEKA).

- In case of divorce or legal separation of parents, the special purpose leave is obtained by the parent who has custody of the child or parental responsibility, unless otherwise agreed, according to their joint solemn declaration as above.
- In order for an employee to be able to use the special purpose leave, he / she must fulfill the legal conditions for obtaining an annual regular leave of at least six (6) days in the six-day work and five (5) days in the five-day work. If the above condition is not fulfilled, then he is entitled to the special purpose leave in proportion to the days of normal leave to which he is entitled. If the employee has exhausted the right to the annual regular leave, on the fourth (day?), it is accepted any other legal leave the employee is entitled to, whether it is granted with pay or without pay, such as e.g. leave to monitor children's school performance, leave due to child illness, unpaid leave.