

February 24th, 2022

Sojitz Corporation

Sojitz Introduces New Parental Leave System
 – Creating an Environment that Supports Child-care Leave for Male Employees–

Sojitz Corporation (“Sojitz”) will introduce a new parental leave system effective as of April 1st, 2022. Following revisions to Japan’s Act on Child Care Leave, Caregiver Leave and Other Measures for the Welfare of Workers Caring for Children or Other Family Members, child-care leave laws will be expanded from October 1st, 2022. Prior to these anticipated amendments, Sojitz will implement a new parental leave system available to both male and female employees following the birth of a child. By establishing a system in which employees can freely and autonomously take child-care leave, Sojitz hopes to build an environment that enables male employees to more easily participate in child-care activities.

■ Newly established parental leave system for all employees

After childbirth, both male and female employees will be entitled to take paid parental leave for a maximum of 40 days in the period up until the child turns 12 months old. There will be no restrictions on how leave is divided, and employees are free to utilize parental leave as many times as desired during this period. While maternity and child-care leave was previously limited to eight weeks after childbirth, under the new system the applicable period will be extended to one year following childbirth.

Former system for child-care leave			New system for parental leave (effective from April 1st, 2022)	
	8 weeks after birth	9 weeks – 12 months		9 weeks – 12 months
Women	Maternity leave up to 8 weeks after childbirth [Paid leave]	child-care leave 【Unpaid leave may be used once】	➔	All employees Parental leave 40 days [Paid leave/ Employees may take parental leave multiple times during this period with no restrictions on how leave is split.] Additional child-care leave [Unpaid leave may be used twice]
Men	Child-care leave up to 8 weeks after childbirth [Paid leave /Employees may take child-care leave multiple times during this period with no restrictions on how leave is split.]	child-care leave 【Unpaid leave may be used once】		

Sojitz's policy changes reflect feedback from employees who expressed a desire to more flexibly take child-care leave and to arrange the timing of child-care leave to accommodate their partners. Going forward, employees will be able to flexibly determine when and how parental leave will be divided and used, which will allow employees to plan leave based on their individual needs. Additionally, planned periods of parental leave will make it easier for employees to coordinate handover activities and the distribution of duties during their absence.

■ Employee feedback

I hope to adjust my leave based on my plans to travel home for the birth and according to work-related needs.

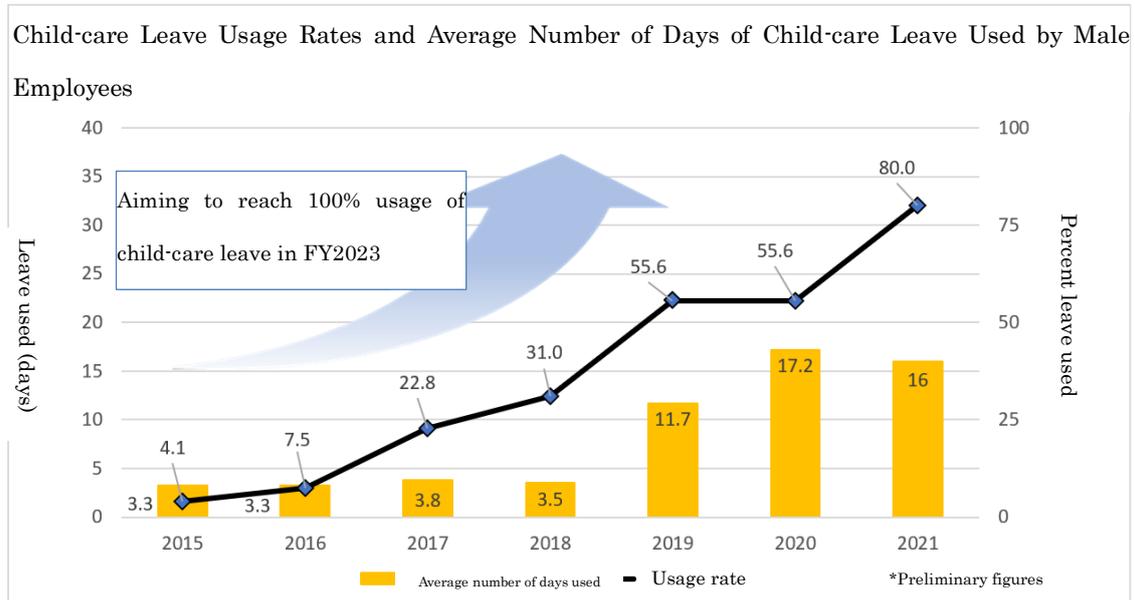
It would be helpful to take leave when my partner returns to the workplace, so that I can provide extra support.

If multiple people taking parental leave at the same time, we must be sure to have a plan in place to cover their workloads.

Sojitz values “diversity as a competitive advantage,” and the company sees harnessing the strengths of a diverse workforce as central to realizing its collective strength as an organization that is distinguished for its ability to quickly and continuously pursue new business creation in response to a rapidly changing market environment. In doing so, Sojitz strives to “become a general trading company that continues to create business and develop capable people.” Through the implementation of this new parental leave system, Sojitz aims to encourage men to actively participate in child-care activities as well as to foster a culture of understanding and support for male child-care leave within the company. Through these efforts, Sojitz will create an environment that promotes the advancement of women in the workplace and helps to support diverse employees to excel regardless of gender. Additionally, Sojitz seeks to realize new working styles and improved productivity for the company as a whole through the implementation of this new system.

Sojitz has set a target to reach 100% child-care leave usage among employees in FY2023, the final year of Medium-term Management Plan 2023. Up until this point, the company has increased accessibility to leave policies and conducted management-level training related to child-care leave. Sojitz will take this opportunity to create a forum for employees to share feelings of workplace gratitude, new perspectives gained through use of parental leave, and examples of strategies related to effectively taking leave. Through this internal dialogue, Sojitz hopes to

foster a culture of empathy and understanding in which employees readily support each other.



■ Comment from Sojitz employee following child-care leave



I consulted with my manager during a challenging moment for my family during the pandemic. At the time, my wife and I were trying to determine if she should get the vaccine, how to handle possible Covid-19 infections in the family, and how to organize care for our older son before and after the baby arrived. I took one month's leave under the company's child-care leave system. Thankfully, I was able to support my wife at home and be involved with child care. I'm very grateful to my manager and colleagues for covering my work during this period.

[For questions regarding this press release, contact:]

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