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# Take-up of Parental Leave Pay and Dad and Partner Pay among Australian parents

Analysis using the Person Level Integrated Data Asset

Jennifer Baxter, Mikayla Budinski and Emily Stevens

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Australian Institute of Family Studies  
Level 4, 40 City Road, Southbank VIC 3006 Australia  
Ph: (03) 9214 7888 Web: [aifs.gov.au](https://aifs.gov.au)

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## Executive summary

This report examines mothers' take-up of Parental Leave Pay (PLP) and fathers' take-up of Dad and Partner Pay (DAPP), 2 government payments designed to support eligible working mothers and fathers to take time off work to care for newborn or newly adopted children. By exploring take-up we fill a significant gap in knowledge about the proportion of eligible parents who were using these payments, and the factors explaining different levels of take-up for these parents.

The report examines PLP and DAPP take-up around 2021, before the introduction of the 2023 reforms that saw the removal of DAPP as a separate payment. As such, the findings provide an important baseline to compare mothers' and fathers' take-up of PLP under these reforms. The analysis provides insights on the likely variation in take-up of PLP under the current policy setting, and draws attention to the number of fathers no longer eligible for support via the new criteria for eligibility for PLP.

The research uses administrative data on PLP and DAPP recipients and Australian Tax Office (ATO) data linked to the 2021 Census of Population and Housing. The focus is on parents who had a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census and examines estimated take-up of PLP and DAPP by mothers and fathers who were likely to have been eligible for these payments.

Using 2021 data and focusing on parents likely to be eligible for these government payments, this research estimated that mothers' take-up of PLP was 74% and fathers' take-up of DAPP was 40%.

The timing of PLP use was varied. Of PLP-eligible mothers, 34% used PLP in the birth month, increasing to 60% in the fourth month. By the fifth month, the proportion using PLP declined to 31% and kept declining in the following months. DAPP was most often taken in the birth month (28%) and the month after (17%).

Similarly, estimated rates of PLP take-up by mothers varied by their jobs. Take-up was higher for those in state or local government jobs (85%) and was lowest for mothers who worked in small business (66%). Mothers in small business were more likely than other mothers to use PLP soon after the birth. Mothers in state or local government jobs were more likely to use PLP in the second half of the year after the birth. By occupation, the mothers most likely to use PLP were professionals, managers and those in clerical and administrative jobs. By industry, PLP take-up was highest in an industry group including education, arts and recreation jobs.

PLP is an important support for mothers without employer-funded leave to enable them to take a period of leave and stay connected to work. This was apparent in the high proportions of mothers who were likely in jobs without employer-funded leave using PLP early. Overall differences in mothers' take-up were likely to reflect that some mothers leave employment, rather than take a period of leave, around the birth of a child. The availability of PLP is expected to contribute to more mothers remaining connected to work at this time.

Estimated rates of DAPP take-up were highest for fathers who had worked in a medium-sized business (46%), followed by those who had worked in a small business (41%) and a large business (39%). These take-up rates were markedly higher than for fathers who had worked in state or local government (30%) or federal government (25%). There were differences in DAPP take-up by occupation and industry also. Take-up was highest in technical and trades jobs and in the construction industry.

As DAPP could only be taken while on unpaid leave from work, differences in fathers' DAPP take-up are likely related to whether fathers had alternative leave available from their employer and whether the rate of payment was sufficient as an alternative to income from employment, relative to the family's financial needs. DAPP was mostly used very early on, especially in the birth month, suggesting it was used by fathers who did not have alternative means of funding time away from work.

With the 2023 reforms, fathers can now only share in PLP if the mother meets the PLP work test. Considering these changes, we explored DAPP take-up among those who had a partner or spouse who did not meet the PLP work test. The analysis found 7,558 fathers used DAPP and did not have a partner or spouse meeting the PLP work test (11% of fathers using DAPP). This is the number in this cohort of fathers who would lose eligibility for PLP under the current policy.

As well as differences by employment arrangements, there were differences in take-up of PLP and DAPP by personal and family characteristics. There was lower take-up among parents who were not in an opposite-sex couple relationship, parents with poor English language proficiency, lowest-income parents, parents with a disability (as indicated by needing assistance with core activities) and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents. Further research is needed that explores barriers to the take-up of PLP for these groups of parents,

including potential for there to be systemic issues impacting awareness of or the capacity to apply for these government payments. This is important given the relative disadvantage experienced by these groups.

Overall, more detailed research is needed to fully understand parents' decision-making about leave and employment in the period that follows a birth. Findings about the lower take-up of PLP and DAPP among some groups need monitoring for changes with the new policy setting. Findings about take-up of PLP from this analysis of pre-reforms data are likely to still be relevant for mothers experiencing the new settings for PLP. With DAPP looking to be especially useful for fathers without employer-funded leave, exploring whether fathers' take-up of PLP under the new setting remains at a similar level to that of the DAPP take-up, and whether it goes up or down for some cohorts, will be important to understand.

## 1. Introduction

This report examines mothers' take-up of Parental Leave Pay (PLP) and fathers' take-up of Dad and Partner Pay (DAPP) using data linked to the 2021 Australian Census of Population and Housing ('the Census'). In 2021, these government payments were available to eligible parents from the time of a birth or adoption to provide financial support while they take time away from work. By exploring take-up we aim to provide insights on what proportion of parents were using these payments, among those eligible, and to see what factors explained different levels of take-up among eligible parents.

The aim of this report is to answer the following research questions. In 2021:

- What was the take-up of PLP and DAPP among eligible mothers and fathers?
- Which parents were most likely to use PLP or DAPP among those eligible for these payments? How did take-up vary by past employment characteristics?

These findings fill a significant gap in knowledge about take-up of these payments. The report examines PLP and DAPP take-up around 2021, before the introduction of the 2023 reforms that saw the removal of DAPP as a separate payment. As such, the findings will provide an important baseline to compare mothers' and fathers' take-up of PLP under these reforms. The report considers what the findings say about access to employer-provided leave and, more generally, about parental employment.

The research used the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA). It builds on AIFS 2023 report about PLP and DAPP (see Baxter & Budinski, 2023).

The key approach was to estimate the take-up of PLP among mothers and DAPP among fathers who had a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census. The primary data source was administrative data from the Department of Social Services (DSS) resource 'Data Over Multiple Individual Occurrences' (DOMINO), with DOMINO tables stored in PLIDA. These data were linked to the 2021 Census data and to financial year summaries and other employment data from the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

The data and method differ to those used in Baxter and Budinski (2023). Both focused on parents with a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census. The earlier report included analysis of PLP and DAPP used at the time of the Census. The analysis in this report takes a broader view, finding out about any PLP or DAPP used by these parents in respect to the child under one year of age at the Census. Further, the earlier report calculated percentages using PLP and DAPP over all parents, while this one includes information on income and employment before the birth to get closer to excluding those not eligible for these payments. This report also includes detail about when PLP and DAPP were taken. Take-up and timing for PLP and DAPP is explored according to aspects of parents' employment before the birth of the child as well as characteristics as captured at the Census.

PLIDA does not have any information about employer-provided parental leave but the important contribution of this research is bringing in information about previous employment – employer type, occupation and industry. Differences according to these variables (and others) suggest which parents might be using employer-funded leave before using PLP or DAPP.

Following some background information, the report presents results in 2 sections, the first being PLP and the second being DAPP. A final summary follows. All details about data and analysis are in the Appendix along with some background statistics.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Policy setting

PLP and DAPP provide financial support to eligible parents to help them take time away from work from the time of a birth or an adoption.<sup>1</sup> The PLP and DAPP policy settings that applied in 2020 and 2021 included:

- A payment was available equivalent to 18 weeks minimum wage for primary carers (PLP) and of 2 weeks for the father or partner (DAPP).<sup>2</sup>
- Parents could take PLP while on paid or unpaid leave from work but they had to take DAPP while on unpaid leave.
- Parents had to meet a work test, an income test and residency requirements to receive either payment.

According to analysis of PLP and DAPP recipients up to 2022 by Baxter and Budinski (2023), most PLP recipients were mothers and most DAPP recipients were fathers. PLP could be shared with fathers or others but was almost always taken by mothers. This previous work also showed that DAPP was very often taken in the month or 2 after a birth, while there was more variability in the timing of PLP commencement.

The policy setting that applied to the data in this report was before the 2023 Paid Parental Leave reforms. These reforms involved major changes to the scheme, with PLP now designed to be shared between parents (or other primary carers), and DAPP withdrawn as a separate payment. For more detail about the policy setting in 2021 and a summary of the July 2023 changes see Baxter and Budinski (2023). This report provides important baseline information that can later be compared to take-up under the new arrangements.

### 2.2 Parental employment

A key point in looking at parents' use of PLP and DAPP is that there are marked differences in mothers' and fathers' employment patterns, with mothers much more likely to take time out of employment to care for children (Baxter, 2023). Some mothers will take a break from employment by using leave – remaining connected to their job. Others will withdraw from the labour market for a time. Others will have already been without employment prior to the birth of a child, perhaps still caring for other children. There are many factors likely to matter to mothers' decision-making about employment at this time (see e.g. Baxter, 2013). In relation to this analysis of PLP take-up, where we see lower take-up by some mothers, this may indicate they have withdrawn from employment, rather than taking a period of leave.

Fathers usually remain employed when a new child is born, with the 'breadwinner' model that is most common when children are young meaning that if mothers have reduced income from employment, families are often reliant on father's income at this time. For fathers, take-up of DAPP is not likely to be so related to decisions about returning to work, given that most are employed before and after the birth.

### 2.3 Employer-funded leave

Having access to and using employer-funded leave is expected to make a difference to patterns of leave-taking. Mothers *without* employer-funded leave, who wish to stay on in employment, are very likely to use PLP from birth. An exception may be those who plan to resume working very soon after the birth. For those with a workforce attachment, PLP can fund 18 weeks of leave at the equivalent of National Minimum Wage. This can be used concurrently with any employer-funded leave, boosting income during this leave period. It can also be used during a period of unpaid leave, providing some income and potentially enabling mothers to take longer away from work.

For fathers, DAPP provided 2 weeks paid at National Minimum Wage but can only be taken while on unpaid leave. The decision to take DAPP is likely dependent on whether and how much other employer-funded leave is available, and whether the family financial circumstances can be sustained for 2 weeks on National Minimum Wage. This includes whether employers provide leave that is fully paid or whether the policy is to pay the gap between DAPP and usual salary. Those working in jobs that offer the latter to new fathers would face an increased incentive to take DAPP.

1 Throughout this report we refer to births as being the key event as date of adoption was not available in the data sources used.

2 In 2020–21 the National Minimum Wage (per 38-hour week, before tax) was \$753.80, and for 2021–22 was \$772.60.

There is considerable variability in the availability of employer-funded parental leave across the workforce. The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reports annually on non-public sector employers with more than 100 employees. The 2022–23 report included that 63% of employers offered paid primary carer’s leave (either to both women and men or to women only), with this leave at least partially funded by the employer (WGEA, 2023).

One factor that WGEA shows is linked to leave availability is size of the organisation. Small employers are less likely to offer paid leave. For example, in 2022–23, among those employing less than 250 people, 57% offered paid primary carer’s leave or universally available (i.e. leave offered equally to men and women) parental leave. At the other end of the scale, 87% of those with 5,000 or more employees offered some paid primary carer’s or universal parental leave.

The WGEA data also show marked differences in employer-funded parental leave (universal or primary carer’s) by industry of employment, noting the focus is on non-public sector organisations with more than 100 employees. In 2022–23 the industries with highest levels of access were Education and Training (87%), Information Media and Telecommunications (86%), and Financial and Insurance Services (85%). The least likely to offer paid employer-funded parental leave was the Public Administration and Safety industry (27%). These data are summarised in [Appendix, Table 3](#).

Most employers fully fund the parental leave (86% of those providing universal parental leave in 2022–23; WGEA, 2023). Some employers instead pay the gap between the PLP or DAPP and the employee’s usual income (10% of those providing universal parental leave in 2022–23; WGEA, 2023).

## 3. PLP receipt among mothers

This section first explores PLP receipt among mothers, starting with take-up and timing overall. PLP take-up and timing is then explored by employment type, occupation and industry. Later in this section we briefly note some of the other findings from our analysis. See [Appendix](#) for more details.

### 3.1 Mothers’ take-up of PLP

There were 229,600 mothers with a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census and in the analytical dataset.<sup>3</sup>

PLP is only relevant to mothers who were employed before the birth of a child (as assessed through a work test), whose income was at or below the income cut-off and who met other eligibility criteria.<sup>4</sup> To derive a population of mothers who may have been in scope for PLP we used ATO data for the 2019–20 financial year. Mothers with a child under one year of age at August 2021 were defined as PLP-eligible if they reported having some 2019–20 income from employment (employee income or self-employment income) and total 2019–20 income less than \$150,000. This is indicative of eligibility rather than exact, and we expect that the approach used means we have included some mothers who did not meet the work test at the time of application for PLP. A total of 190,371 mothers in the combined Census-ATO data satisfied these restrictions. Of these PLP-eligible mothers, and looking for incidences of PLP receipt for the under-one year old at the time of the Census:

- **73.7% received PLP at some time in the 2 years following the child’s birth**

This statistic is the one used as an estimate of PLP take-up.

By mapping information about timing of PLP receipt to children’s birth month, we derived the percentage of mothers that received PLP in the birth month and at each month following this.<sup>5</sup> This part of the analysis looks only at the first year after the birth, as the proportion receiving PLP is small in the second year. For each month we also present the cumulative take-up of mothers, ultimately showing different patterns of take-up by the end

<sup>3</sup> See data description in the [Appendix](#) for more information. This was not a full count of all mothers with a child under one year of age given some exclusions for analysis purposes.

<sup>4</sup> The 2 criteria taken account of in this research were the work test and the income test. The work test required mothers to have worked at least 10 of the 13 months before the birth or adoption, involving at least 330 hours of paid work, without a break in employment of more than 12 weeks. Our test of this was generous and just required some income from employment to have been reported in 2019–20. It is likely this included some who did not satisfy the work test. The income test meant higher income mothers were unable to access PLP. If assessed on income in the 2019–20 financial year, those with incomes exceeding \$150,000 were ineligible for PLP, so this limit was applied here.

<sup>5</sup> The month-level data were based on year and month of birth, aligned to exact dates of payment receipt.

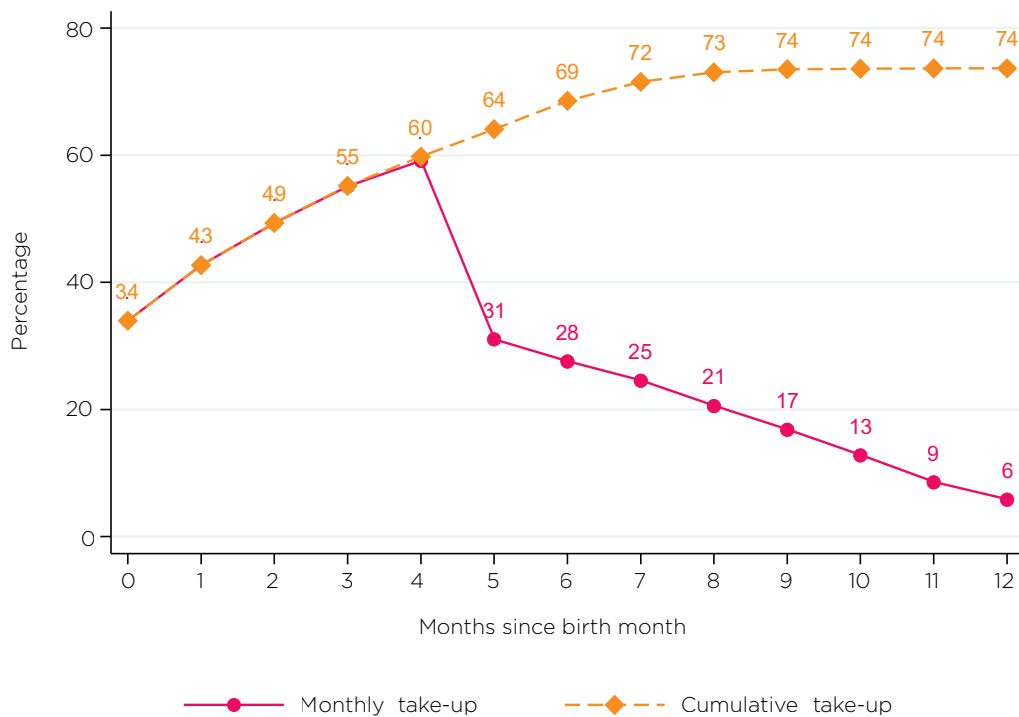
of the first year. By the 9th month after the birth, 74% of PLP-eligible mothers had used PLP. This is the same as the proportion using PLP at one year and at 2 years after the birth, showing that the percentage starting it in the second year is close to zero. This pattern reflects that, prior to 1 July 2023, parents had to complete the first 12 weeks of PLP before the child’s first birthday in order to receive the full 18 weeks of PLP.

As seen in Figure 1, the monthly measure and the cumulative measure are the same up until the fourth month after the birth, which reflects that once commenced on PLP most received the payment for 18 weeks. Those who started PLP in the birth month, will have still been receiving PLP in the fourth month after the birth. By the fifth month some will have finished their 18 weeks. Figure 1 shows:

- 34% of PLP-eligible mothers used PLP in the birth month.
- This increased to 43% in the first month after the birth, 49% in the second month, 55% in the third month and 60% in the fourth month. Each of these months saw a growth in the proportion using PLP.
- By the fifth month, the proportion using PLP declined to 31% and kept declining in the following months.

**Figure 1: The percentage receiving PLP peaks at 60% in the fourth month with the percentage having received PLP increasing gradually after this**

Monthly take-up and cumulative PLP take-up by months since the birth, 2021



Note: Percentages were calculated over PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census.  
 Source: PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

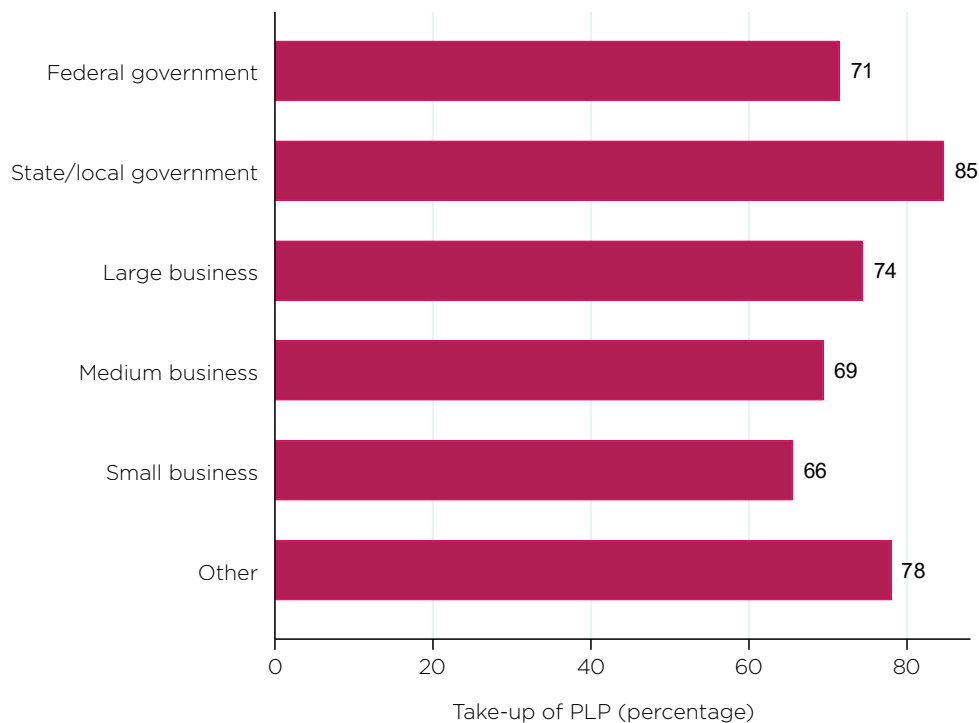
## 3.2 Employment type and PLP

WGEA analysis of parental leave availability shows marked differences by employer size, although currently only focuses on private sector organisations with more than 100 employees. Here we use the ATO data to look at different patterns of PLP take-up according to employer type in 2019–20. This includes information on whether parents had worked in federal, state or local government jobs or in large, medium or small businesses. Some are in an ‘other’ category.<sup>6</sup>

The differences in take-up for PLP-eligible mothers according to employment type in [Figure 2](#) shows that the highest PLP take-up was among those previously employed in state or local government, at 85% of mothers. At the other end of the scale, there was considerably lower take-up for mothers who had been employed in small business (66%).

**Figure 2: Highest PLP take-up rates were in state and local government jobs**

PLP take-up by employer type, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by employer type, holding constant other factors. See [Appendix, Table 2](#) for details of the multivariate analysis. See [footnote 6](#) for information about the categories.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

<sup>6</sup> Those with missing information were included in a ‘missing’ category but we have excluded this from the figures. See multivariate analysis for findings for that category. Business size is defined by the ATO as small (below \$10 million turnover; medium: \$10m–\$250m turnover; large: over \$250m. The ATO also included an ‘other’ category, which may have been used when the ATO was unable to classify an employer type.

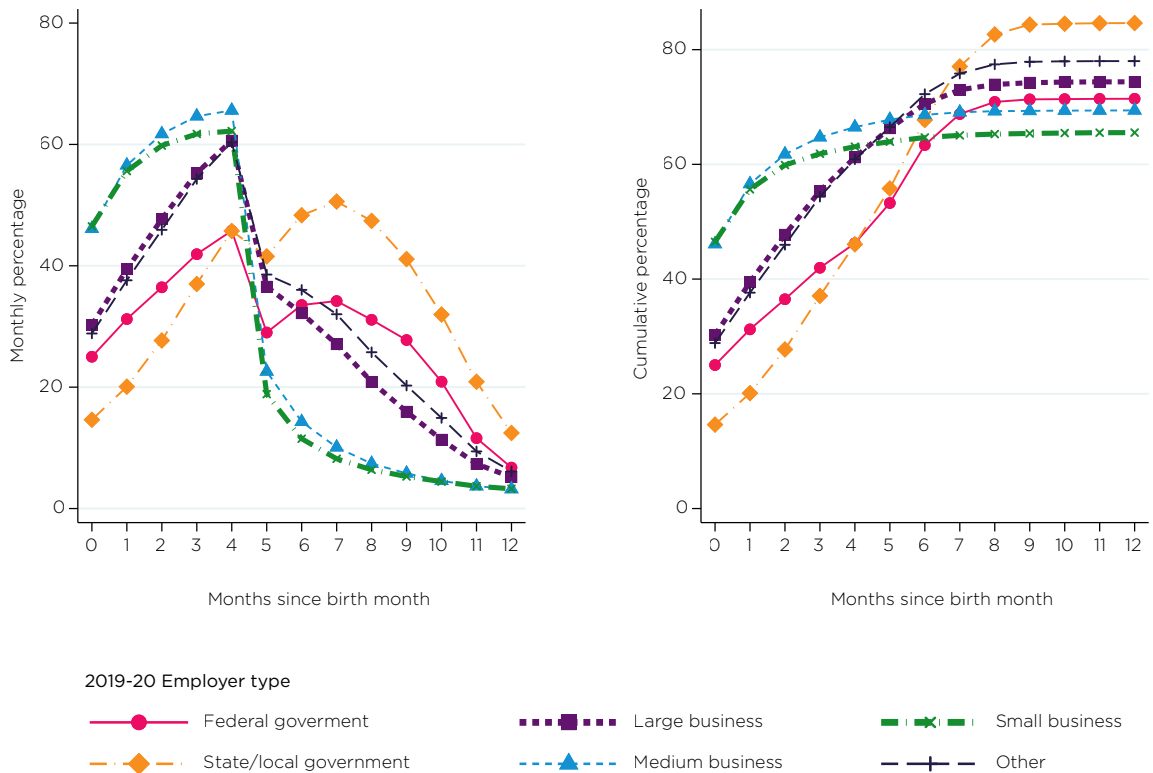
Figure 3 shows very strong differences, according to employer type, in the timing of PLP use.

- Overall PLP take-up was highest for those who had been employed in state or local government jobs, with this take-up markedly higher in the second half of the year and lower soon after the birth.
- While overall take-up was lowest for those in small and medium business, they were the most likely to use it in the month of the birth and the following 3 months.

Those in federal government jobs were somewhat like those in state and local government jobs, although a little more likely to use PLP early on, and less likely to use it later.

**Figure 3: PLP take-up timing varied a lot by employer type, with those in small and medium business using it soon after the birth**

Monthly and cumulative PLP take-up by employer type and months since the birth, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. See footnote 6 for information about the categories.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

### 3.3 Occupation and PLP

Here we present findings for how take-up of PLP, overall and by month since birth, varied according to mothers' main occupation in 2019–20. [Figure 4](#) presents the average take-up by occupation.<sup>7</sup>

- Take-up of PLP was highest for mothers employed in professional occupations (82%), followed by managers (78%) and those in clerical and administrative jobs (77%).
- Take-up was lower for mothers in sales jobs (68%) and community/personal services jobs (67%). It was lowest for labourers and machinery operators and drivers but few mothers are employed in these occupations (see Appendix, [Table 1](#): Characteristics of mothers and fathers in scope for the PLP and DAPP analysis for percentages).

**Figure 4: PLP take-up was highest for professional occupations and lowest for sales and service occupations**  
PLP take-up rates by occupation group, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by occupation, holding constant other factors. See Appendix, [Table 2](#) for details of the multivariate analysis.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

The broad categories of occupation conceal much variation within each category. Taking, for example, the professionals, and focusing on the most common jobs within that category, PLP take-up was 88% for occupational therapists and urban and regional planners, while it was 51% for university tutors. Among the technician and trade workers (with overall PLP take-up of 72%), the 2 largest occupations were hairdressers, with take-up of 77%, and chefs, with take-up of 54%.

Looking at the month-by-month data, there are some complicated patterns.

- Mothers employed as professionals were least likely to use PLP early on, and most likely to use it in the second half of the year. This probably indicates that these jobs more often offered access to employer-paid leave that could be used first.

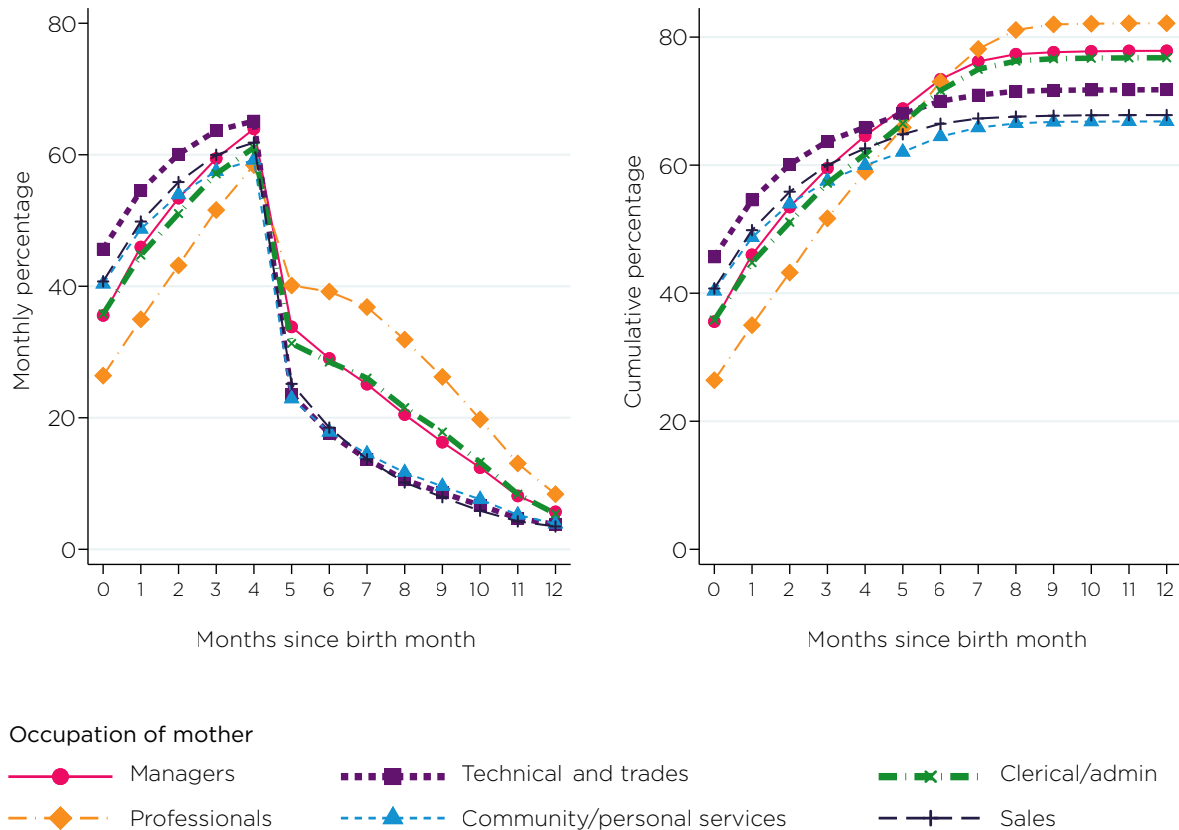
<sup>7</sup> Occupation of main job is self-reported in tax returns and coded to Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) in the ATO data. There was missing occupation data for 7% of PLP-eligible mothers. Categories of occupations is based on ASCO but with some aggregation of smaller categories.

- At the other end of the spectrum, mothers employed in technical and trades jobs were most likely to use PLP early on, and unlikely to be using it in the second half of the year. These trends suggest that these jobs have the least availability of employer-funded parental leave.

Other jobs had mixed patterns, likely due to differences in availability of employer-funded leave. We discuss this further in the report summary.

**Figure 5: PLP use was initially highest for technical and trades jobs, while use of PLP when children were aged 6-12 months was most likely for mothers in professional jobs**

Monthly and cumulative PLP take-up by selected occupation groups and months since the birth, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages calculated over in-scope mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. These are the most common occupation groups for mothers. The 'missing' category is excluded.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

### 3.4 Industry and PLP

This section explores the industries mothers were employed in in 2019-20. There was a significant amount of missing industry data in the ATO data, so this analysis is a partial view of industry differences.<sup>8</sup>

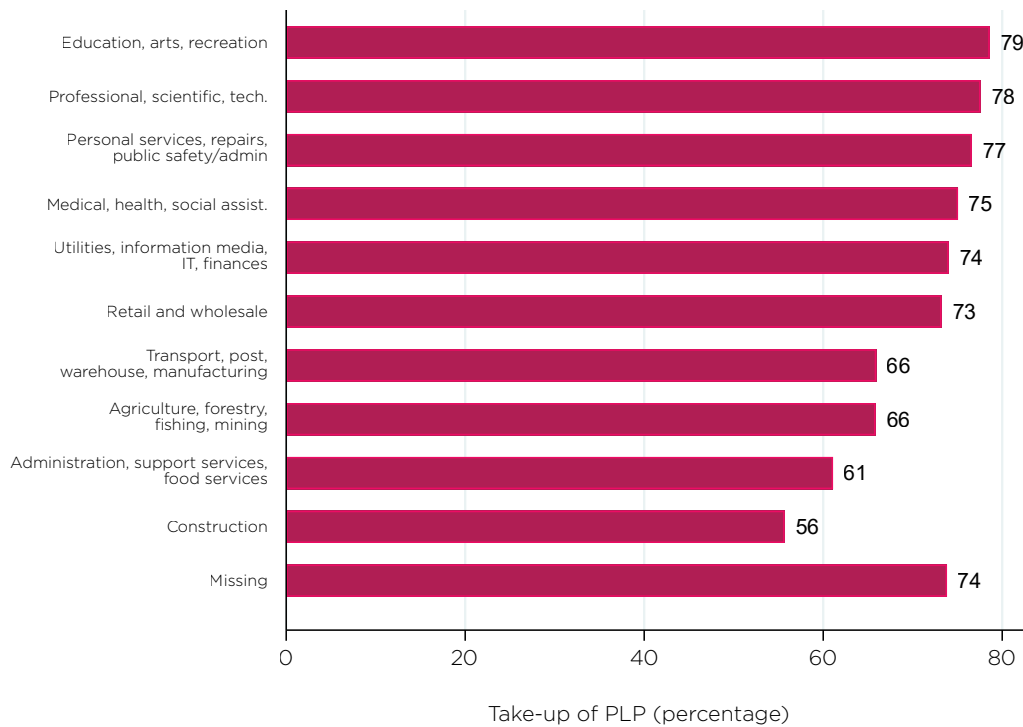
Figure 6 presents the average take-up rates by broad industry groups. Take-up of PLP was highest for mothers employed in education, arts and recreation (79%), professional, scientific and technical services (78%) and personal services, repairs and public safety (77%). There were take-up rates of over 70% in a large range of other industry groups. By contrast, take-up rates were lower for transport, post, warehouse and manufacturing jobs

<sup>8</sup> Industry information was missing for 66% of mothers in the ATO data and in scope for PLP. Industry information (Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification, ANZSIC) comes from the Australian Business Register systems, matching via the Australian Business Number. No further information is available on this matching process, and what might explain the high percentage missing. ANZSIC categories were grouped further into non-standard groups to allow inclusion of categories of industry groups with smaller numbers. Mothers with missing information are included in the analysis, in a 'missing' group.

(66%), agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining (66%), administration, support services and food services (61%) and construction (56%).

**Figure 6:** Highest PLP take-up rates were in education, arts and recreation, and professional, scientific and technical industries

PLP take-up by main industry group, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by industry, holding constant other factors. See Appendix, [Table 2](#) for details of the multivariate analysis.

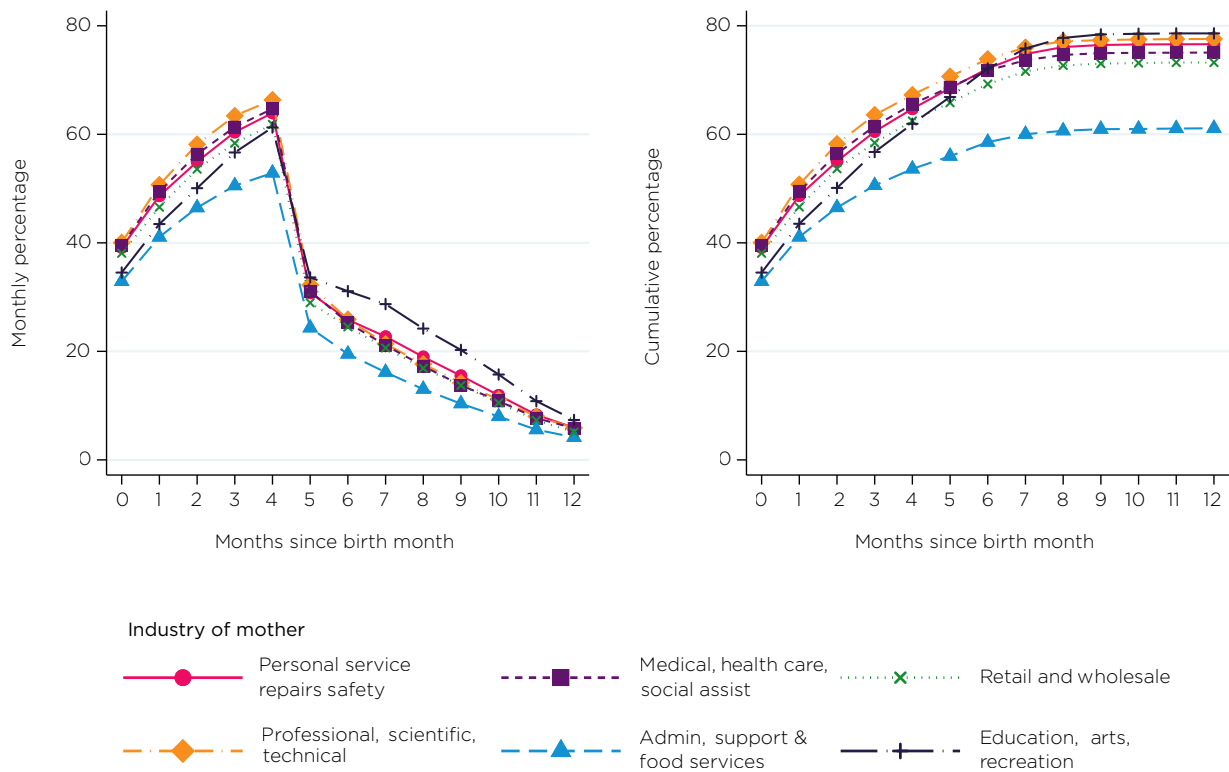
**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

To better see differences in timing of PLP use, a smaller set of industries is shown in [Figure 7](#), focusing on those industry groups with the largest numbers of mothers.

- There was relatively low take-up at all months for those in administration and support industries.
- Mothers were more likely to use PLP in the second half of the year if employed in education, arts and recreation, suggesting these workplaces more often had employer-funded leave available.
- The timing patterns were similar across other industries.

**Figure 7: Mothers employed in education, arts and recreation were the most likely to use PLP in the second half of the year**

Monthly and cumulative PLP take-up by selected industry groups and months since the birth, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated for PLP-eligible mothers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. These are the most common industry groups for mothers. The 'missing' category is excluded.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

### 3.5 Other findings about PLP

In the multivariate analysis of which mothers received PLP among the PLP-eligible mothers, some other findings were statistically significant (see [Appendix](#)). Lower take-up was found for:

- mothers with low income in 2019-20 (It was markedly lower for those with incomes of less than \$500 per week.)<sup>9</sup>
- single mothers and mothers in same-sex relationships, compared to mothers in opposite-sex couple relationships
- those who needed assistance with core activities
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mothers
- mothers with poor English language proficiency
- those whose partner had lower income (less than \$1,000 per week).

<sup>9</sup> Income is derived from the 2019-20 total taxable income or loss as reported in the ATO data, divided by 52 to estimate a weekly income. It excludes income that is not taxable, so excludes some government payments. This income measure is not the same as the Adjusted Taxable Income used in assessing eligibility for government payments.

There were also differences by mothers' highest level of educational attainment. Take-up for those with a certificate or diploma or with complete secondary education only was significantly higher than for mothers with incomplete secondary education.

## 4. DAPP receipt among new fathers

This section focuses on fathers and their receipt of Dad and Partner Pay (DAPP). It follows the same approach used above for mothers and PLP. There were 219,430 fathers with a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census and in the analytical dataset. As was done for PLP, a population of DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at August 2021 was derived. Fathers needed to have reported having some 2019–20 income from employment (employee income or self-employment income) and a total income of less than \$150,000. This was a total of 176,969 fathers in the combined Census-ATO data.

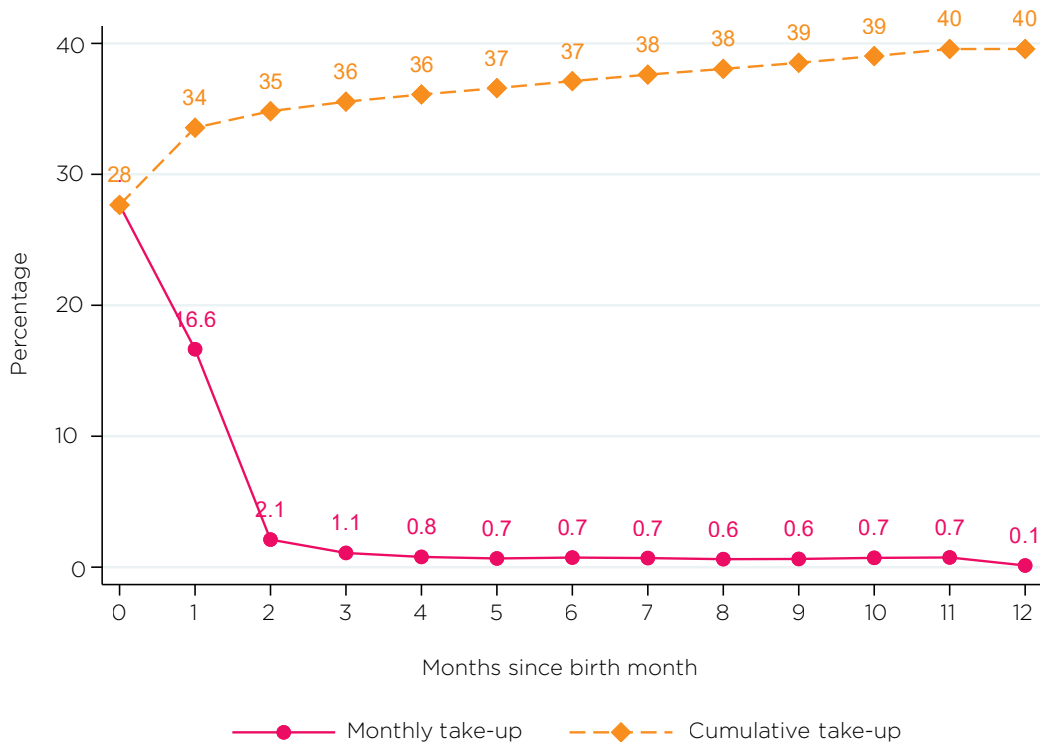
- **39.9% received DAPP at some time since the child's birth.**

Overall take-up of DAPP is explored along with the timing of receipt. [Figure 8](#) shows:

- 28% of DAPP-eligible fathers used DAPP in the birth month.
- In the month after the birth, 17% of DAPP-eligible fathers were using DAPP. A total of 34% of DAPP-eligible fathers had used DAPP by this time.
- From the second month onwards very small percentages of fathers were using DAPP, such that the cumulative percentage increased gradually up to the total of 40% of DAPP-eligible fathers using DAPP.

With comparisons of timing, in the sections below we focus on the birth month and the 2 following months, given the low incidence of DAPP at later months.

**Figure 8: DAPP take-up was almost all in the birth month and the month after**  
Monthly and cumulative DAPP take-up by months since the birth, 2021



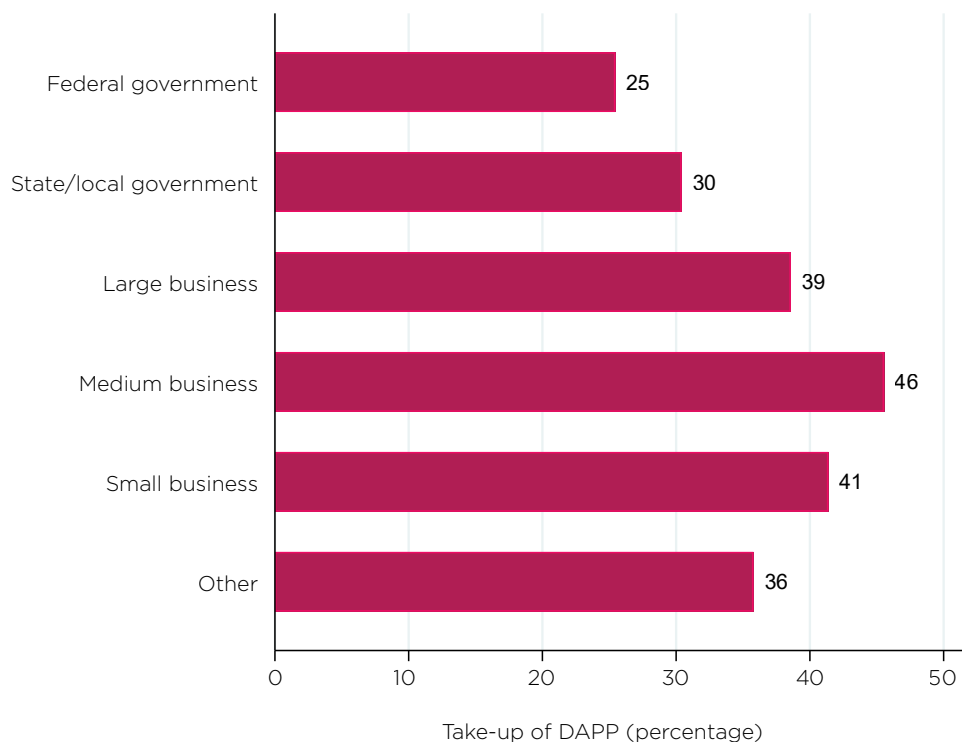
**Note:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census.  
**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

## 4.1 Employer type and DAPP

As with mothers, we begin by exploring how DAPP take-up varied by 2019–20 employer type. [Figure 9](#) shows the average take-up rates in each employment type, with the rates highest for those who had been in non-government jobs. Of these, it was highest for fathers who had worked in a medium-sized business (46%), then those who had worked in a small business (41%) and a large business (39%). These take-up rates were markedly higher than for those whose jobs had been in state or local government (30%) or federal government (25%).

The timing differences in [Figure 10](#) were most apparent in the proportions using DAPP in the birth month.

**Figure 9: DAPP take-up was highest for non-government jobs, particularly those in medium-sized businesses**  
Average DAPP take-up by employer type, 2021

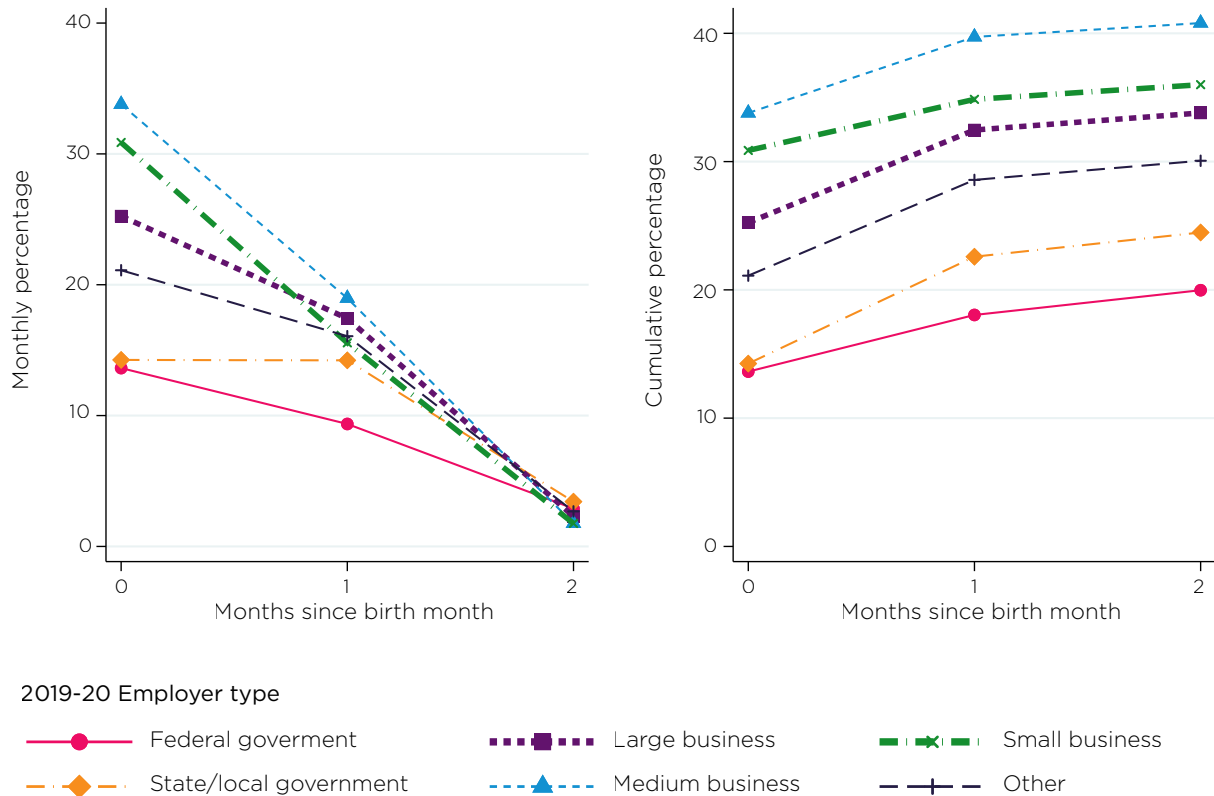


**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by employer type, holding constant other factors. See Appendix, Table 2 for details of the multivariate analysis. See [footnote 6](#) for information about the categories.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

**Figure 10:** DAPP take-up varied the most in the birth month when it was much higher for fathers in medium and small business

Monthly and cumulative DAPP take-up by employer type and months since the birth to 2 months, 2021



**Note:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. See footnote 6 for information about the categories.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

## 4.2 Occupation and DAPP

Figure 11 shows how DAPP take-up varied according to fathers' main occupation in 2019-20.<sup>10</sup> This shows that take-up was highest for technical and trades jobs and lowest for managers and for community and personal service workers.

Looking at more details of the kinds of jobs fathers worked in that had lower levels of DAPP use, some examples for the 3 most common occupations in the 'Managers' category are:

- Information Communication Technology Project manager: 28% take-up
- Transport company manager: 36% take-up
- Engineering manager: 33% take-up

Among community and personal service workers, the 3 most common occupations were quite varied in their take-up rates:

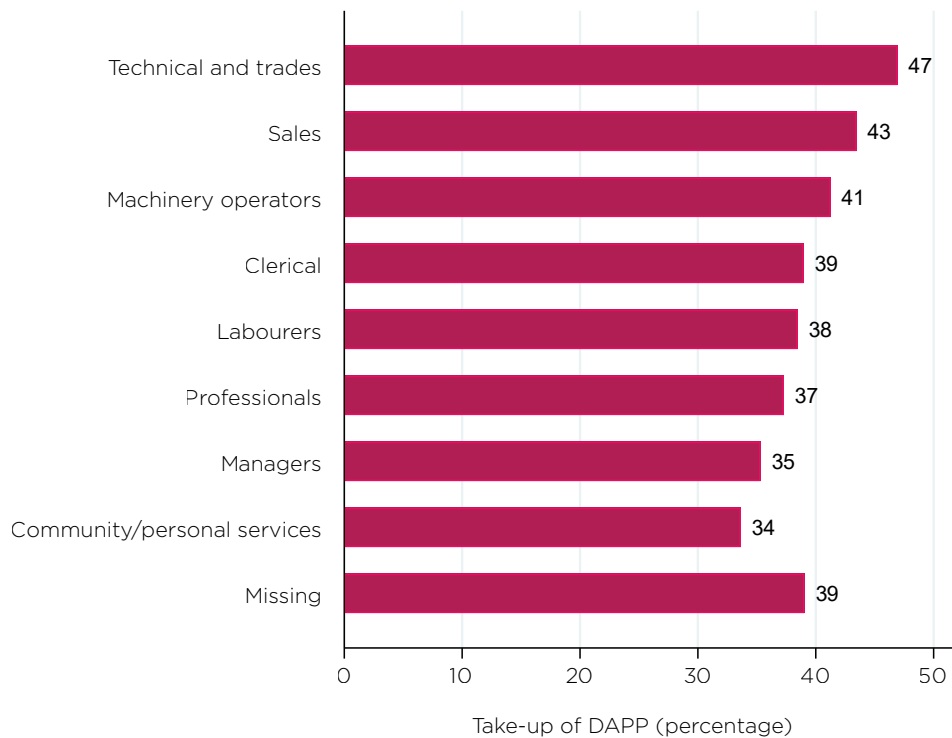
- Police officer: 14% take-up
- Security officer: 43% take-up
- Ambulance officer: 34% take-up.

<sup>10</sup> As for the mothers' PLP analysis, some fathers were in a 'missing' category as occupation in the ATO data.

The analysis of DAPP use by month in [Figure 12](#) shows that the same broad occupation group differences in [Figure 11](#) are evident in the birth month, suggesting differences in levels of access to other forms of paid leave at this time.

**Figure 11: DAPP take-up was highest for technical and trade jobs and lowest for community and personal services jobs**

Average DAPP take-up by occupation group, 2021

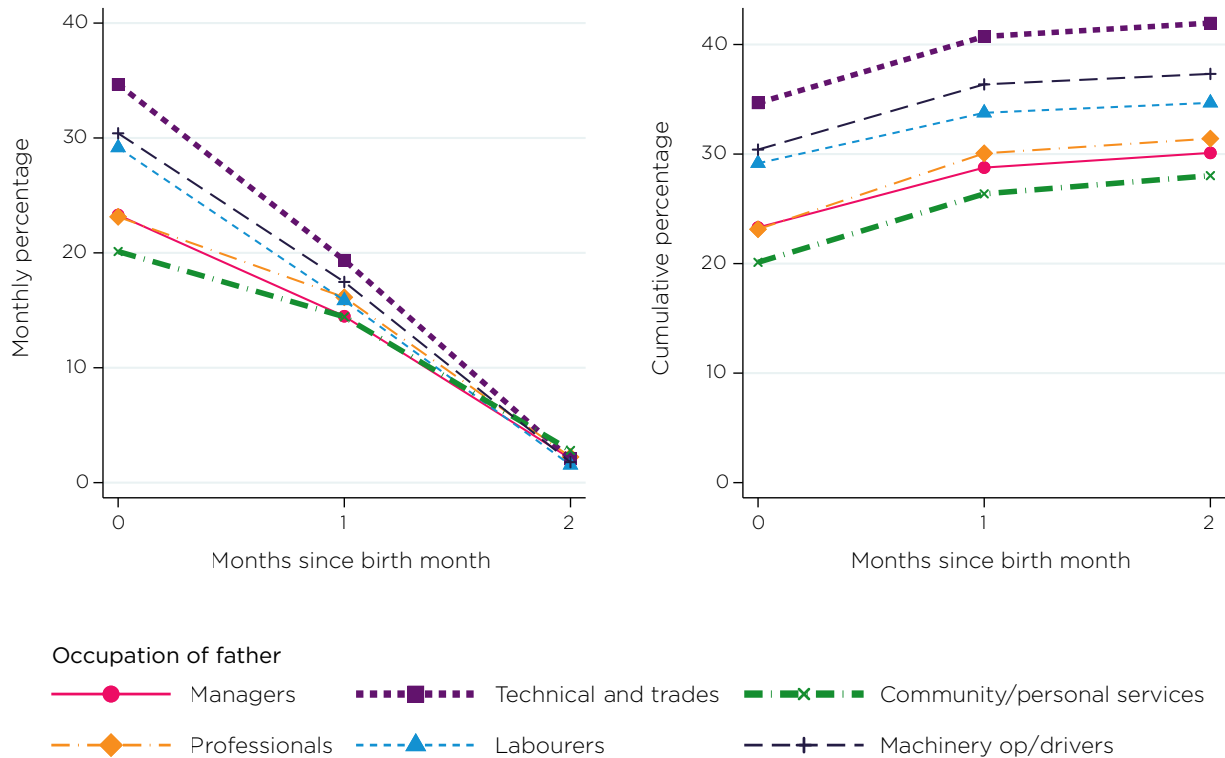


**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by occupation, holding constant other factors. See Appendix, [Table 2](#) for details of the multivariate analysis.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

**Figure 12:** Variation in DAPP use by occupation was most apparent in the birth month with higher use then among technical and trade workers and sales workers

Monthly and cumulative DAPP take-up by selected occupation groups and months since the birth to 2 months, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. These are the most common occupation groups for fathers. The 'missing' category is excluded.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

### 4.3 Industry and DAPP

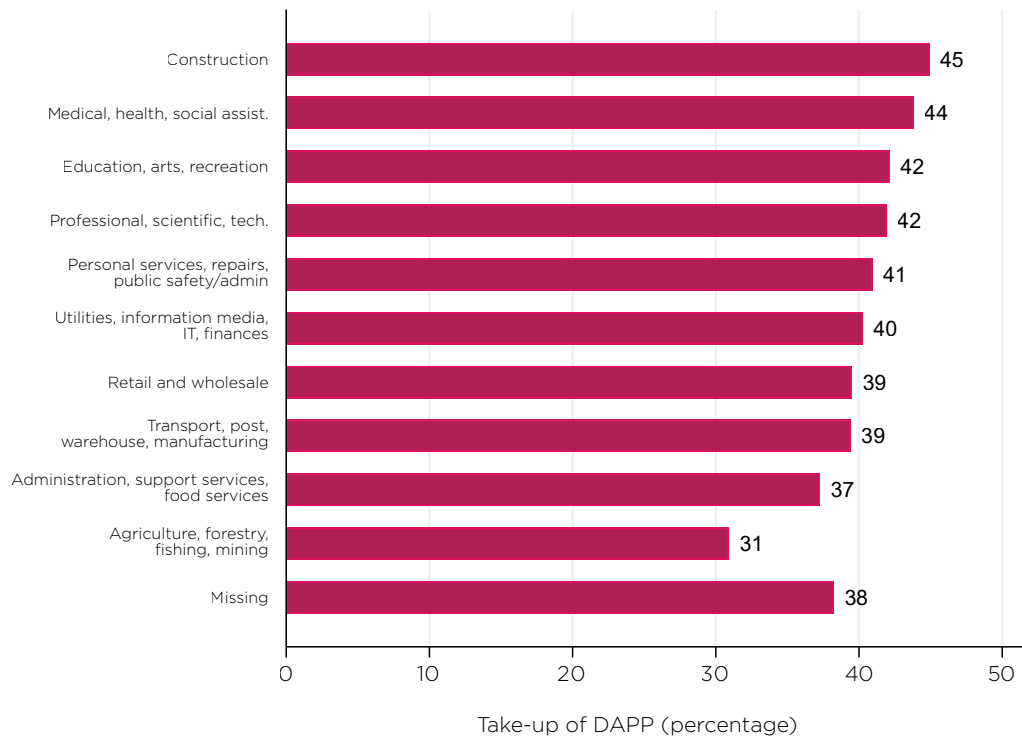
Figure 13 and Figure 14 show findings for fathers' DAPP take-up by broad industry groups in 2019-20.<sup>11</sup> A narrower range of industry groups is in Figure 14 to help with readability, focusing on the more common industry groups for the fathers in these data.

A number of industries had similarly high levels of take-up, with the highest being 45% in construction. The take-up rate varied between 37% and 44% for another 7 of the broad categories shown. DAPP take-up was lowest at 31% in agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining. As with earlier analysis of DAPP, the timing information in Figure 14 reinforces the overall take-up rates, with differences most apparent in the birth month.

<sup>11</sup> As with mothers, industry information was missing in the ATO data for a large number of fathers; 48% had missing industry information and were included in the analysis in a 'missing' category.

**Figure 13:** DAPP take-up is highest for the construction industry and lowest for agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining

Average DAPP take-up by main industry group, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. There were statistically significant differences by industry, holding constant other factors. See Appendix, [Table 2](#) for details of the multivariate analysis.

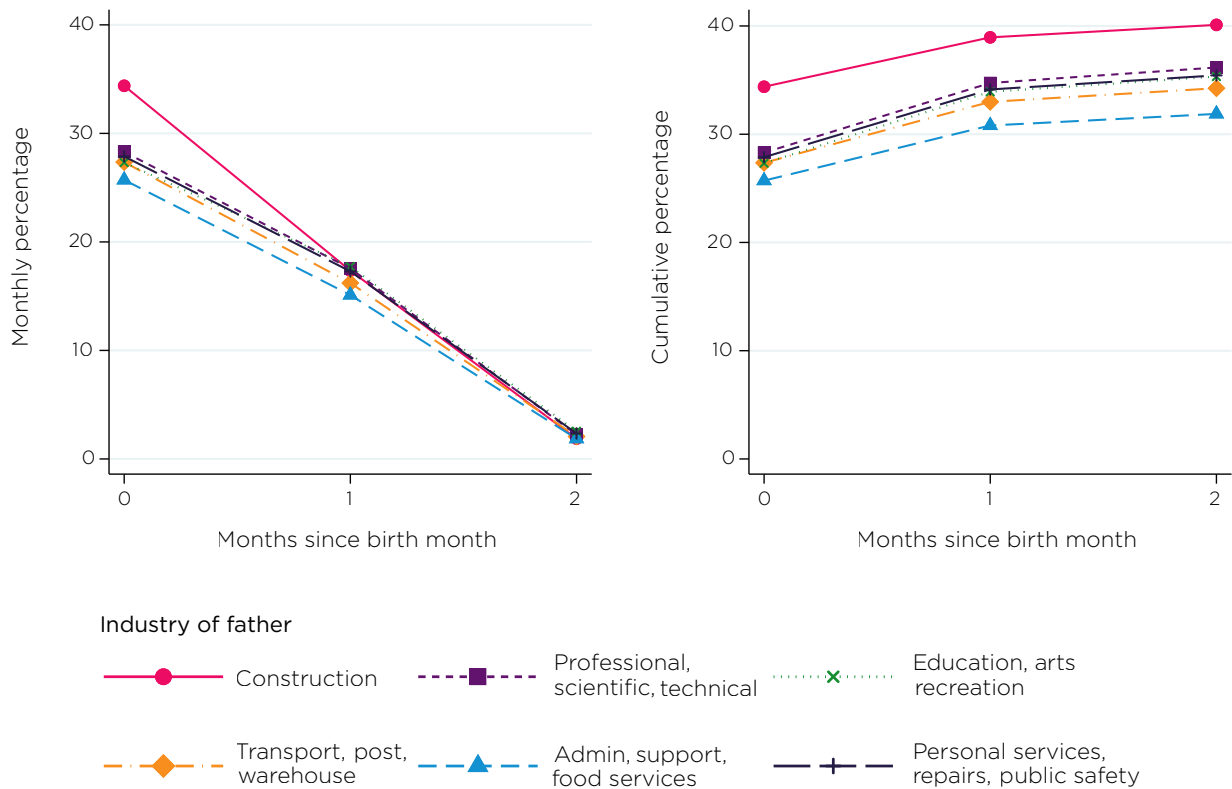
**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

Overall, the DAPP take-up for fathers employed in construction was relatively high (45%). The most common 3 industries within this broad category show an even higher take-up rate for carpentry services (58% take-up), plumbing services (51% take-up) and other residential building construction (52% take-up).

Looking at administration and support services, where take-up was lower (37%), some examples from the most common industries in this category are building and other industrial cleaning services (26% take-up), gardening services (44% take-up) and road freight transport (32% take-up).

**Figure 14:** DAPP take-up differences were greatest in the birth month when take-up was higher among the construction industry

Monthly and cumulative DAPP take-up by selected industry groups and months since the birth to 2 months, 2021



**Notes:** Percentages were calculated over DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census. These are the most common industry groups for fathers. The 'missing' category is excluded.

**Source:** PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

## 4.4 Other findings about DAPP

In the multivariate analysis of which fathers received DAPP, some other findings were statistically significant. These included:

- The lowest DAPP take-up was for the lowest income and highest income fathers, with those in the weekly income range of \$1,000 to \$1,499 most likely to have used DAPP.
- Fathers most likely to use DAPP were in the age groups 30–34 years and 35–39 years. The oldest fathers (45 years or more) were significantly less likely to use DAPP.
- Fathers were a little more likely to use DAPP with a second child, rather than a first one, but less likely to use DAPP for their third or later child.
- Fathers in an opposite-sex couple relationship were most likely to use DAPP, compared to a very small group that included single fathers and fathers in same-sex relationships.
- Those who needed assistance with core activities were less likely to use DAPP compared to those who indicated they did not need assistance with core activities.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander fathers were less likely to use DAPP compared to non-Indigenous fathers.
- Fathers with poor English language proficiency were less likely to use DAPP than other fathers.
- Lowest take-up of DAPP was by fathers whose partner had a low income (less than \$500 per week). Take-up increased with partner's income, although decreased for the highest group (incomes \$2,000 or more per week).
- As was found for mothers and PLP, the highest take-up was for fathers with a certificate or diploma. The lowest take-up was among those with incomplete secondary education.

The analysis also included an indicator of whether fathers had a partner or spouse who met the work test for PLP, noting that we used having some work-related income in 2019–20 as an indicator of this. This variable was included given that the 2023 reforms mean that for fathers to access PLP, the mother must have met the work test for PLP. The analysis showed that fathers were more likely to have used DAPP when their partner or spouse had met the work test for PLP (43% compared to 27%). Out of the total DAPP-eligible fathers, 28,321 had a partner or spouse who did not meet the work test for PLP. Of these, 7,558 used DAPP, so representing the number in this cohort who would have lost eligibility for PLP under the current policy. These 7,558 fathers were 11% of fathers using DAPP.

## 5. Summary

### 5.1 PLP and DAPP take-up

#### Overall take-up patterns

Among the derived population of PLP-eligible mothers, 74% used PLP. This take-up rate was much higher than the DAPP take-up rate of 40% for DAPP-eligible fathers. With the timing of PLP and DAPP receipt, there was much more variability for PLP, suggesting that mothers with access to employer-funded leave delayed take-up of PLP to use it on completion of the employer-funded leave. For DAPP, most fathers were using it in the birth month or the month after, suggesting they used employer-funded leave for a much shorter duration (and/or a lower rate) than mothers. Fathers with more generous parental leave from their employer were likely using that first, delaying their use of DAPP.

With the take-up of both PLP and DAPP there were differences by employer type, occupation and industry, that we return to below. In addition to this variation, even after taking some account of eligibility for PLP and DAPP, take-up tended to be lower for parents who were not in an opposite-sex couple relationship, parents with poor English language proficiency, lowest-income parents, parents with disability (as indicated by needing assistance with core activities) and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents. While some of these differences may be related to labour market factors, the lower take-up could also reflect structural or systemic issues impacting awareness of or the capacity to apply for these government payments. Further research that explores potential barriers to the take-up of PLP for these groups of parents is warranted. This is important given the relative disadvantage experienced by these groups.

#### Take-up explanations

There are a number of reasons for PLP and DAPP take-up being less than 100%, including those related to employment decision-making, the availability of employer-funded leave and finances. Parents opting out of PLP or DAPP, among those eligible, could reflect the following:

- Parents who had left work at the time of the birth may not wish to apply for PLP.<sup>12</sup> This is more relevant to mothers than fathers, given fathers typically keep working full-time during this life stage.
- Parents are not having a break from employment. For mothers, this may be the case, for example, among self-employed and family workers, or those who take casual or piecemeal jobs, who are able (and willing) to sustain employment around and after the birth. Even if they took a short break following the birth, the administrative and compliance costs of applying for PLP may have deterred them from taking it up. For fathers, this could be the case also if they do not seek to have a break in their employment around the birth or can adjust work hours and shifts to give them the time at home they need. Administrative and compliance costs may also be relevant to fathers in their decision-making about taking up DAPP.
- Employer-funded leave provides a sufficient length of time away. This is especially likely the case for fathers, given that DAPP would only extend any employer-funded leave at National Minimum Wage (unless topped up by employers). This is not so relevant to mothers, who can receive PLP at the same time as employer-funded leave, so the availability of employer-funded leave might only alter the timing of PLP use – not whether or not PLP is used at all.

<sup>12</sup> Depending on family income and ages and numbers of dependents, these parents, if not receiving Parental Leave Pay, may be eligible for the Newborn Upfront Payment and a Newborn supplement paid for up to 13 weeks as a supplement to Family Tax Benefit Part A.

- The rate of payment, equivalent to minimum wage, is not sufficient. This is relevant for fathers who must be on unpaid leave while on DAPP, although employers can top up DAPP to a higher amount. For those whose income is close to this rate of pay, DAPP is likely a viable option, particularly if they have no alternative employer-funded leave. The rate of payment is less relevant to mothers in respect of a decision to use or not use PLP, as they can receive PLP while on employer-paid leave.

Low take-up could also reflect that the derived PLP- and DAPP-eligible population in this analysis includes parents who did not meet the eligibility criteria. Without information on work histories in PLIDA, we used an indicator of parents having received some income from employment. This could be amended to require a minimum income from employment, although might then exclude those with low or negative incomes despite having met work hour requirements (as might be the case for a family business or farm, for example). We also note the income information used, from the ATO data, is not the same as the income information used in assessing eligibility for payments (see [footnote 9](#)).

We discuss the different take-up rates of mothers and fathers below.

## 5.2 Variation in PLP and DAPP take-up

### Mothers' take-up of PLP

When we focus on mothers who are eligible for PLP, differences in PLP take-up are likely to reflect differences in those mothers' patterns of return to work following this birth. This assumes that most of those eligible for PLP but not taking it are those that decide against taking a period of leave but instead leave work at the birth. This will not be true of all mothers who opted out of PLP, as some will have resumed work soon after the birth rather than taking a period of leave. Without further analysis, we cannot be certain about the actions taken by those not using PLP.

The timing of PLP use shows variation in when PLP is used, with a significant proportion of mothers starting it in the birth month. We suggest these mothers are largely those without employer-funded leave. However, it is possible for mothers to take PLP at the same time as employer-funded leave, so some of those starting PLP straight after the birth may be doing this. Although PLIDA does not have information about employer-funded leave, the differences in timing of PLP use when analysed by employer type (and size) and by industry reveal patterns that are consistent with the variation in availability of employer-provided leave, as reported by WGEA. That is, mothers in certain kinds of jobs (e.g. working for larger business, in professional industries) are more likely to start PLP later, consistent with these jobs being more likely to offer paid parental leave. Overall, the variation in timing of PLP use across the different variables examined in this report suggests the timing is linked to the availability of employer-funded leave.

There was lower PLP take-up among mothers that typically have lower levels of participation in employment, giving weight to the idea that not using PLP was associated with stopping work. It may also be that the generous work test eligibility criteria used in this analysis disproportionately picked up mothers in these groups that did not actually meet the work test eligibility criteria. Looking back to information about mothers' incomes and jobs before the birth, there was lower take-up for low-income mothers and mothers employed in occupations and industries that are less likely to provide supports for working parents via parental leave. The findings may also reflect a lack of understanding about the PLP eligibility criteria among mothers without employer-funded parental leave.

This includes those working in occupations and industries with relatively high levels of casual work (see Appendix, [Table 3](#) and [Table 4](#)) and with lower levels of access to employer-funded leave (Appendix, [Table 3](#)). Mothers in these kinds of jobs may be more likely than other mothers to stop work at this time.

We note that while PLP take-up is lower for mothers in these kinds of jobs, it is especially important for those who do wish to retain a connection to work, as some will have limited employer-provided leave. This was apparent when looking at the timing of PLP use, with mothers more often starting PLP in the birth month or soon after in jobs that were likely to have limited employer-funded leave. This was also apparent in the analysis by employer type, where overall take-up rates were lower for those in small and medium sized businesses but the use of PLP in the early months after the birth was much higher than for those in jobs with other employer types.

The availability of PLP is expected to have contributed to more mothers remaining connected to work at this time. This is consistent with previous AIFS analysis of Census data that shows that, among mothers with a child aged under one year of age, there has been a large increase in the percentage employed (up from 30% in 1991

to 59% in 2021). This is almost entirely explained by the percentage employed but away from work – that is, on some kind of leave (up from 5% in 1991 to 32% in 2021; Baxter, 2023).

## Fathers' take-up of DAPP

Low take-up of DAPP for fathers is not likely to have the same meaning as low take-up of PLP for mothers. For fathers, it is more likely that those not using DAPP are those continuing in work after the birth (perhaps using flexible shifts or hours to spend time at home) or making use of employer-funded leave. Of course, there will be some fathers who opt out of work for a time at the birth of a child through means other than leave (e.g. pausing casual work or self-employment). Employment data in Baxter (2023) indicate these are likely to be smaller in number compared to mothers.

The lower take-up rate for DAPP (compared to the PLP take-up) was likely related to the 2 points of difference for DAPP versus PLP: the duration of leave (2 weeks for DAPP and 18 weeks for PLP); and the fact that PLP could be taken while on paid leave while DAPP could not. With fathers often fulfilling the 'breadwinner' role at this family stage, many may have opted out of DAPP if it meant a significant drop in income, as would be the case if their usual income is higher than the payment they would receive from DAPP. The analysis of DAPP take-up by fathers' income in 2019–20 showed low take-up among the highest income fathers. It was also low for the lowest income fathers, perhaps indicating these fathers were already out of employment or were without sufficient work to meet the work test. They may also have worked in the kinds of jobs that are difficult to take time off from or are in jobs that can be worked flexibly to meet caring needs.

Fathers with (perceived) adequate parental leave from their employer may not consider DAPP to be necessary. The highest rate of DAPP take-up being for those in the construction industry supports this, with this industry having quite low levels of access to parental leave. Interestingly though, the take-up of DAPP was at only slightly lower levels for other industries that had relatively high levels of employer-provided leave. Differences in DAPP take-up were more apparent by employer type and by occupation than they were by industry, suggesting DAPP take-up is likely to depend on specific job (and family) circumstances rather than following industry-level patterns.

The timing of DAPP use also indicates that most is being taken early on, especially in the birth month, suggesting it is used by fathers who do not have alternative means of funding time away from work.

With the 2023 reforms, fathers can now only share in PLP if the mother meets the PLP work test so, for fathers, we explored DAPP take-up among those who had a partner or spouse who did not meet the PLP work test. The analysis found 7,558 fathers used DAPP and had a partner or spouse who did not meet the PLP work test. This is the number in this cohort of fathers who would lose eligibility for PLP under the current policy. These 7,558 fathers were 11% of fathers using DAPP.

## 5.3 Conclusion

This report has presented new estimates of PLP and DAPP take-up using parents with a child aged under one year of age at 2021 as the population of interest. It found that among a population of eligible parents, 74% of mothers used PLP and 40% of fathers used DAPP. There were some marked differences in the timing of these payments, with fathers mostly using DAPP in the birth month and soon after, and mothers' using PLP over a wider span of months.

The analyses showed that patterns of PLP and DAPP use varied by employment characteristics, as well as other personal and family characteristics. Some of the findings reflected different levels of availability and use of employer-funded leave across the workforce, although more detailed research is needed to fully understand parents' decision-making about leave and employment in the period that follows a birth.

These findings refer to PLP and DAPP used by parents in and around 2021, before the introduction of reforms to Paid Parental Leave. The analysis provides insights on the likely variation in take-up of PLP under the current policy setting. With PLP now redesigned to cover fathers' leave, rather than this being in a separate payment, this report will provide important baseline information that can later be compared to mothers' and fathers' take-up of PLP in the post-reform policy setting. The report draws attention to the number of fathers no longer eligible for support via the new criteria for eligibility for PLP. Findings about the lower take-up of PLP and DAPP in some groups in this analysis are of particular relevance and need monitoring for changes with the changed policy setting. With DAPP looking to be especially useful for fathers without employer-funded leave, exploring whether fathers' take-up of PLP under the new setting remains at a similar level to that of the DAPP take-up, and whether it goes up or down for some cohorts, will be important to understand.

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# Appendix: Data and method

## Data

This report draws on linked data in PLIDA, with analysis centred on the 2021 Census and matched data from DOMINO and ATO. Specifically, the following sources were used, with matching done via the Version 6 spine:

- DOMINO extracts from 10 December 2023, predominantly using information about PLP and DAPP eligibility aligned to demographic information.
- ATO income and loss dataset and context dataset for the 2019–20 financial year.
- 2021 Census personal, family and dwelling data combined into a family-level dataset for families with a child under one year of age.

With the data about PLP and DAPP up-to-date to December 2023, this dataset has complete information about any PLP or DAPP used by parents who had a child under one year of age at the time of the Census.

The analytical dataset derived from linking Census, ATO and DOMINO in PLIDA comprises 256,711 families that had a child under one year of age at the time of the 2021 Census. This is less than the total number of these families at the Census as there were some exclusions. The number of families with a child under one year of age at the 2021 Census was 268,881.<sup>13</sup>

- Families were excluded if the one-year-old child had missing month of birth, or if month of birth was in August 2020 or 2021, given challenges in aligning PLP and DAPP dates to these children's birth dates ( $N = 14,723$  excluded). If the youngest child under one year of age was not a biological, adopted or step child of the mother or the father in the family, this family was excluded (another  $N = 3,234$  excluded).
- After the above exclusions, 254,755 families included a mother. Of these 229,604 (90%) matched to the 2019–20 ATO data. This is the main analytical sample for mothers. Of these 146,579 (64%) matched to the PLP data in DOMINO. The match to DOMINO is not expected to be 100% as it only includes those that used PLP.<sup>14</sup>
- After the above exclusions, 227,979 families included a father. Of these 219,434 (85%) matched to the 2019–20 ATO data and 74,796 (34%) matched to the DAPP data in DOMINO. This is the main analytical sample for fathers.
- ATO data for the 2019–20 financial year were used to capture characteristics before the birth that might be relevant in explaining differences in take-up. In most cases, this information will not precisely map to the period used in determining eligibility for PLP. Families that could not be matched to the ATO data were excluded. If they matched but data were missing, they were included with that variable assigned to a missing category. A large amount of ATO employment data was missing, particularly the industry information. For the PLP-eligible mothers, 66% had missing industry information and 7% missing occupation information in 2019–20. For the DAPP-eligible fathers, 48% had missing industry information and 12% missing occupation information in 2019–20.

In analysing data by age of youngest child in months, there was some imprecision as only year and month of birth were provided in DOMINO and in the Census. We intentionally removed cases of children born in August 2021, as some were born before the Census (and picked up as under one year of age) and others born after the Census.

<sup>13</sup> The family file was based on families in which there was a lone parent or a couple relationship as well as a child aged zero years. Visitors were excluded.

<sup>14</sup> There were some cases dropped where duplicate matches between 2 datasets were found.

**Table 1: Characteristics of mothers and fathers in scope for the PLP and DAPP analysis**

Characteristics		Mothers (%)	Fathers (%)
2019–20 Employer type	Federal government	3.5	2.8
	State or local government	15.4	8.3
	Large business	20.8	23.1
	Medium business	23.2	32.5
	Small business	15.5	18.7
	Other	18.5	7.8
	Missing	3.1	6.9
	2019–20 Occupation	Managers	11.0
Professionals		32.6	20.5
Technicians and trade workers		3.9	22.7
Community and personal service workers		16.5	6.9
Clerical and administrative workers		17.4	5.0
Sales workers		8.2	4.2
Machinery operators and drivers		0.6	5.9
Labourers		3.1	9.7
Other, unspecified, or missing from ATO		6.9	12.3
2019–20 Industry	Construction	0.4	15.5
	Transport, post, warehouse, manufacturing	1.9	9.0
	Professional, scientific, technical	5.3	6.0
	Administration/support services, food services	4.3	4.5
	Medical, health care, social assistance	4.4	1.4
	Retail and wholesale	4.2	2.4
	Education, arts, recreation	4.0	3.0
	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	0.3	1.5
	Utilities, information media, IT, finances	0.9	1.5
	Personal services, repairs, public safety/admin	7.9	7.2
	Missing from ATO	66.3	48.0
2019–20 income (weekly, derived from ATO total taxable income and loss)	<\$500	17.9	7.9
	\$500–\$999	33.7	18.5
	\$1,000–\$1,499	25.3	28.8
	\$1,500–\$1,999	15.0	23.9
	\$2,000–\$2,890	8.2	21.0
Age group	15–19 (included with 20–24 for fathers)	0.2	
	20–24	6.1	3.7
	25–29	23.1	16.8
	30–34	40.7	36.5

Characteristics		Mothers (%)	Fathers (%)
	35-39	24.5	28.8
	40-44 (40 and over for mothers)	5.3	10.3
	45+ (N/A for mothers)		4.0
Number of children	1	47.8	44.9
	2	37.3	37.8
	3 or more	14.9	17.4
Family composition	Couple, opposite sex	93.2	99.4
	Couple, same sex (included with single parent for fathers)	0.5	
	Single parent	6.2	0.6
Highest educational attainment	Incomplete secondary	4.2	6.8
	Complete secondary only	11.8	12.4
	Certificate or diploma	35.6	43.8
	Bachelor's degree or higher	46.8	33.3
	Missing education	1.6	3.8
Needs assistance	Does not need assistance with core activities	98.9	98.9
	Needs assistance with core activities	0.4	0.4
	Not stated	0.7	0.7
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	Is not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	97.3	97.5
	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	2.6	2.4
	Not stated	0.1	0.2
English language proficiency	Does not have poor English language proficiency	98.9	98.3
	Poor or very poor English language proficiency	1.0	1.5
	Not stated	0.2	0.2
Partner's 2019-20 income	<\$500	6.0	18.5
	\$500-\$999	13.5	28.0
	\$1000-\$1499	22.8	21.5
	\$1500-\$1999	19.4	12.5
	\$2000+	25.1	7.7
	Missing partner income	13.2	11.9
<b>Sum</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total N</b>		<b>190,429.0</b>	<b>176,896.0</b>

Note: Characteristics shown for PLP-eligible mothers and DAPP-eligible fathers with a child under one year of age at 2021 Census.

Source: PLIDA linked Census, DOMINO and ATO data

## Multivariate analysis

Multivariate analysis was used to explore how the likelihood a mother used PLP or a father used DAPP varied with a range of characteristics. These 2 sets of analyses were run independently, using the in-scope population of mothers and of fathers.

Logistic regression analysis was used. There was one model for mothers (and PLP) and one for fathers (and DAPP). The key variable for each took the value of one if the mother used PLP or the father used DAPP and zero otherwise. The models included the variables listed in Table 1: Characteristics of mothers and fathers in scope for the PLP and DAPP analysis.

The results are presented in Table 2 as odds ratios. The 'odds' means the likelihood that the parent used PLP (or DAPP), relative to them not having used PLP (or DAPP). The odds ratio indicates how these 'odds' vary across the characteristics included in the model. For a binary variable such as English language proficiency, the odds ratio shows how the likelihood of receiving PLP or DAPP compares for those with poor or very poor English language proficiency, compared to those with better English language proficiency. Where the variable has more categories, the reference group is indicated in the table.

An odds ratio of greater than one indicates that this characteristic (e.g. being higher educated) is associated with a greater likelihood of the parent having received PLP or DAPP. Where the odds ratio is less than one (e.g. having poor or very poor English language proficiency), it indicates that this characteristic was associated with being more likely this parent did not receive PLP or DAPP.

**Table 2: Mothers' take-up of Parental Leave Pay and fathers' take-up of Dad and Partner Pay, logistic regression analysis results**

Parents' characteristics		Mothers' take-up of PLP		Fathers' take-up of DAPP	
		Odds ratios		Odds ratios	
2019-20 Employer type	Federal government (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	State or local government	1.3	***	1.3	***
	Large business	0.9	*	1.9	***
	Medium business	0.8	***	2.3	***
	Small business	0.9	***	1.8	***
	Other	1.1	**	1.6	***
	Missing	1.7	***	1.6	***
2019-20 Occupation	Managers (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Professionals	1.1	***	1.2	***
	Technicians and trade workers	0.9		1.4	***
	Community and personal service workers	0.8	***	1.1	
	Clerical and administrative workers	1.0	*	1.2	***
	Sales workers	1.0		1.2	***
	Machinery operators and drivers	0.5	***	1.4	***
	Labourers	0.5	***	1.2	***
Other, unspecified	0.5	***	1.3	***	
2019-20 Industry	Construction	0.8	*	1.3	***
	Transport, post, warehouse, manufacturing	1.3	***	1.2	***
	Professional, scientific, technical	1.7	***	1.3	***

	Administration/support services, food services (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Medical, health care, social assistance	1.5	***	1.5	***
	Retail and wholesale	1.5	***	1.1	**
	Education, arts, recreation	1.8	***	1.3	***
	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	1.4	***	0.8	***
	Utilities, information media, IT, finances	1.5	***	1.2	***
	Personal services, repairs, public safety/admin	1.7	***	1.2	***
	Missing from ATO	1.4	***	1.0	
2019-20 income	<\$500 (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	\$500-\$999	3.6	***	1.9	***
	\$1,000-\$1,499	6.4	***	2.3	***
	\$1,500-\$1,999	6.7	***	1.7	***
	\$2,000-\$2,890	4.9	***	1.0	
Age group	15-19 (included with 20-24 for fathers) (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	20-24	0.9		N/A	
	25-29	1.0		1.1	*
	30-34	1.1		1.1	***
	35-39	1.1		1.1	***
	40-44 (40 and over for mothers)	0.9		1.0	
	45+ (N/A for mothers)	N/A		0.8	***
Number of children	1 (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	2	1.2	***	1.1	***
	3 or more	1.0		0.8	***
Family composition	Couple, opposite sex (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Couple, same-sex (N/A fathers)	0.2	***		
	Single parent (includes same-sex fathers)	0.6	***	0.7	***
Highest educational attainment	Incomplete secondary (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Complete secondary only	1.2	***	1.1	***
	Certificate or diploma	1.4	***	1.3	***
	Bachelor's degree or higher	1.0		1.1	***
Needs assistance	Does not need assistance with core activities (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Needs assistance with core activities	0.6	***	0.6	***
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	Is not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	0.7	***	0.8	***

English language proficiency	Does not have poor English language proficiency (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	Poor or very poor English language proficiency	0.6	***	0.6	***
Partner's 2019-20 income	<\$500 (reference)	1.0		1.0	
	\$500-\$999	1.2	***	1.2	***
	\$1,000-\$1,499	1.6	***	1.3	***
	\$1,500-\$1,999	1.8	***	1.4	***
	\$2,000+	1.6	***	1.2	***
	Missing partner income	1.1	**	0.7	***
Partner PLP work test	Partner did not meet work test (reference)			1.0	
(DAPP only)	Partner met work test			1.2	***
Constant		0.4	***	0.1	***
<i>N</i>		190,364.0		176,966.0	***
Pseudo R-square		0.13		0.05	

Notes: Not stated categories for all Census variables were also included in analysis. Results not shown. \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

## Background reference information

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) produces Gender Equality Scorecards each year, drawing on data collected from all non-public sector organisations with 100 or more employees. Table 3 summarises the industry differences in provision of paid employer-funded parental leave, showing the total percentage that offer this leave. Data are shown for 2020-21, which approximately aligns with the time at which the 2021 new parents were taking parental leave. Data are also shown for 2022-23 for comparison.

**Table 3:** Percentage of employers with employer-funded paid parental leave and percentage casual, selected years

Industry	2020-21	2022-23	2020 Prevalence of casual work (%)
	Employer-funded parental leave (%)	Employer-funded parental leave (%)	
Education and Training	88	88	15
Information Media and Telecommunications	73	87	12
Financial and Insurance Services	84	85	7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	85	83	9
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	77	82	11
Mining	78	75	16
Arts and Recreation Services	62	71	37
Other Services	67	70	23
Health Care and Social Assistance	66	67	19
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	53	65	14
Wholesale Trade	50	58	15
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	39	49	47
Construction	44	48	20
Manufacturing	44	47	16
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	39	43	23

Administrative and Support Services	37	40	36
Retail Trade	31	38	38
Accommodation and Food Services	31	36	60
Public Administration and Safety	41	27	8
<b>National</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>22</b>

Notes: WGEA reports on parental leave availability for non-public sector employers with more than 100 employees. Casual work prevalence estimates derived by Gilfillan (2021) using 2020 ABS survey data.

Source: [Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard 2022-23 \(wgea.gov.au\)](https://wgea.gov.au); Gilfillan (2021)

**Table 4: Prevalence of casual employees by occupation category, 2020**

Occupation	Percentage casual (%)
Managers	7
Professionals	10
Clerical and administrative workers	14
Technicians and trades workers	16
Machinery operators and drivers	29
Community and personal service workers	39
Sales workers	45
Labourers	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

Source: Gilfillan (2021) using 2020 ABS data