

**UW SYSTEM AND UW-MADISON  
PAID PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

No action is required; this item is for information only.

**SUMMARY**

Pursuant to the authority delegated to the UW System President and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Chancellor by the Board of Regents in Regent Policy Document (RPD) 20-21, the UW System and the University of Wisconsin-Madison have drafted policies under their respective personnel systems to implement six weeks (240 hours) of paid parental leave within a 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child. As required by RPD 20-21, prior to implementation, these policies are subject to review by the Board.

**Presenters**

- Daniel Chanen, Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer, Universities of Wisconsin Administration
- Patrick Sheehan, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**BACKGROUND**

The Board of Regents has authority over the personnel systems for both the UW System and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Board's authority includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a leave system for employees (i.e. sick leave, vacation, personal holiday, and other leaves of absences). The Board of Regents delegated to the UW System President and the UW-Madison Chancellor the authority to formulate operating policies and administer personnel systems. Prior to the initial implementation of a personnel policy, the policy is subject to review by the Board. This item is brought forward to provide the opportunity for review, as required by RPD 20-21, prior to the proposed July 1, 2024 effective date. The attached policies provide eligible employees with six weeks (240 hours) of paid leave following the birth or adoption of a child. Employees working less than full-time receive a

prorated amount based on their FTE. This leave can be used continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis and must be taken within 12 months of birth or adoption. These policies provide paid parental leave to Faculty, Academic Staff, Limited Appointees, and Academic Staff who meet the eligibility requirements for Wisconsin Retirement System, permanent and project University Staff employees (i.e. non-temporary), Employees-in-Training (Post-Docs), and UW-Madison Graduate Assistants. All employees must have six (6) months of service prior to the date of birth or adoption in order to be eligible for this benefit.

Providing this benefit helps to bring UW System and UW-Madison leave benefits in line with peer institutions. Peers within the Association of American Universities, including seven of the Big 10 peer institutions, provide an average of six (6) weeks of paid parental leave. Within all higher education institutions across the East North Central Census region (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI) there is a growing use of paid parental leave, with 49.3% of institutions providing an average of six (6) weeks of paid parental leave. Locally, both Dane County and the City of Madison provide paid parental leave benefits. In a survey conducted by UW-Madison, data from across 19 different private sector employers across southeast and south-central Wisconsin show that on average, employers within south-central Wisconsin offer 8 weeks of paid leave, and employers within southeast Wisconsin offer 10 weeks of paid leave for the childbearing parent.

### **Cost to Implement**

The estimated annual cost is approximately \$458,500 of which approximately \$173,000 is General Purpose Revenue (*See Table 1*). The cost is based on the rate of the State workforce taking Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) qualifying leave (19.6%) and the national average of the percentage of FMLA leave related to birth and adoption of a child, that ranges from 18.2% to 25%. The cost for employee salaries and the current use of back fills (i.e. the cost to hire an additional person or authorize additional overtime to fulfill the duties of an employee during an absence) are already budgeted expenses. The cost estimate projects an additional 3% of the workforce taking parental leave would need to be backfilled to implement this program. It presumes FMLA leave (paid and unpaid) usage equivalent to the State and that 22% of this leave is related to parental leave (average of national estimates of 18.2%–25%).

Table 1: Cost Impact Estimate

	Head Count Total	Average Hourly Rate	Est* Number FMLA leaves	Parental Leave Est**	6 Weeks at 3% Backfill
UW-Eau Claire	1356	\$36.72	266	58	\$15,459.28
UW-Green Bay	918	\$34.16	180	40	\$9,735.35
UW-La Crosse	1281	\$35.10	251	55	\$13,959.52
UW-Madison	20296	\$45.86	3978	875	\$288,958.87
UW-Milwaukee	3608	\$39.55	707	156	\$44,299.49
UW Oshkosh	1272	\$34.97	249	55	\$13,811.76
UW-Parkside	438	\$37.41	86	19	\$5,086.87
UW-Platteville	913	\$33.38	179	39	\$9,461.23
UW-River Falls	815	\$34.76	160	35	\$8,794.68
UW-Stevens Point	1223	\$32.46	240	53	\$12,324.78
UW-Stout	1051	\$34.42	206	45	\$11,231.63
UW-Superior	385	\$32.97	75	17	\$3,940.88
UW Systemwide	552	\$38.00	108	24	\$6,512.29
UW-Whitewater	1265	\$38.00	248	55	\$14,924.07
<b>Total:</b>	<b>35373</b>	<b>\$41.83</b>	6933	1525	\$458,500.72
				<b>GPR SHARE:</b>	<b>\$172,854.77</b>

\*Assumes percent of employees taking FMLA leave of 19.6%

\*\*Assumes 22% of all FMLA leave are Parental Leave Request

\*\*\*Assumes estimate of 37.7% GPR funding

### Related Policies

- [Regent Policy Document 20-21](#), "University Personnel Systems"
- [Wis. Stats.](#) §36.09(1), §36.115(2),(3).

### ATTACHMENTS

- A) UW System Draft Paid Parental Leave Policy
- B) UW-Madison Draft Paid Parental Leave Policy
- C) UW-Madison Draft Post Doctoral Fellow Paid Parental Leave Policy

# The University of Wisconsin System Administrative Policy #12xx



## Title: Paid Parental Leave

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**Original Issuance Date:** July 1, 2024

**Last Revision Date:** NA

### 1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide Eligible Employees with up to 6 (six) weeks of paid time off following a qualifying birth or adoptive event to allow for time to bond with their new child, adjust to their new family situation, and balance personal obligations that result from a birth or adoptive event.

### 2. Responsible UW System Officer

Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer

### 3. Scope and Institutional Responsibilities

This policy applies to the following UW System employees: Faculty, Academic Staff, University Staff, Limited Appointees, and Post Doctoral fellows eligible for absence with pay under UW Administrative Policy 1220. It does not apply to Employees-In-Training, Graduate Assistants (Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Project Assistants and Program Assistants – Reader/Grader), University Staff Temporary Employees, or Student Hourly employees. This policy does not apply to employees of UW-Madison.

Institutions shall develop their own procedures to operationalize this System policy. Institutions may also develop guidance to support the policy and procedures.

### 4. Background

It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin System to provide up to 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave to Eligible Employees following a qualifying birth or adoptive event. This Paid Parental Leave Policy (“Policy”) exceeds any legal requirement. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act leave (WFMLA) in cases where an eligible employee is also eligible for FMLA or WFMLA leave. This means the employee’s Paid Parental Leave time will be subtracted from the total of 12 weeks available under FMLA, and the 6 weeks available under the WFMLA.

### 5. Definitions

**Child(ren):** is defined as a person under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, the child’s parent must be an employee of the University of Wisconsin System.

**Paid Parental Leave:** is defined as 240 hours of paid time off from work to enable an employee to care for and to bond with their newborn or a newly adopted child. Employees working less than 1.0 FTE shall receive a prorated amount according to their FTE status. For example, 0.5 FTEs who are approved will receive 120 hours.

**Parent:** is defined as a person identified on a child(ren)’s birth certificate, adoption certificate, certified copy of a foreign adoption order that has been registered with the State of Wisconsin, or other legal document certifying an adoption.

**Qualifying event:** A qualifying event is defined as the birth or adoption of a child under the age of 18 on or after July 1, 2024. For adoption, the date of the event is the date the child is placed with the employee. An employee receiving a child from a surrogate is considered a qualifying event on the date the child is placed with the employee. For foreign adoptions the qualifying event is the date the child enters the United States.

## 6. Policy Statement

### A. Eligibility

1. To qualify for Paid Parental Leave, the employee must meet the following conditions:
  - a) On or after the effective date of this Policy, the employee or the employee’s spouse/partner has given birth to a child or has adopted a child who is under the age of 18. The employee must also meet the eligibility requirements for their employee type:

- (1) University Staff

- (a) All university staff, except University Staff Temporary employees, are eligible for paid parental leave if they have completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event.

- (2) Faculty, Academic Staff and Limited Appointee

- (a) Faculty, academic staff and limited appointees are eligible for paid parental leave once the employee is:

- (a) Covered by the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) through employment; or

- (b) Expected to work at least 440 hours (21% for annual-basis and 28% for academic year appointment) for at least one year. Employees initially hired on an academic year contract meet the one-calendar-

year-duration requirement if they are expected to return the following academic year; and,

(c) Whether qualifying under section (a) or (b), above, has completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event. This includes periods spent on a short work break with an expectation of continuing employment for those employees who are appointed to a C-basis position, or any other 9, 10 or 11 month renewable position.

(3) Post Doctoral Fellows

(a) Postdoctoral fellows are eligible if they qualify for Absence with Pay benefits under [UW System Administrative policy 1220](#) and have completed 6 months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event. This includes periods spent on a short work break with an expectation of continuing employment for those employees who are appointed to a C-basis position, or any other 9, 10 or 11 month renewable position.

2. If the adoption involves a child who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability the age limit of under 18 may be waived.

3. The Paid Parental Leave will end immediately if the employee no longer meets the criteria for eligibility.

4. If both parents of a qualifying event are UWS Employees, each employee receives a Paid Parental Leave benefit.

5. Eligible employees must provide timely documentation of the upcoming qualifying event. Forms of documentation include: a health care certification from a medical doctor, a certified copy of an adoption order listing the eligible employee as a parent, a certified copy of a foreign adoption order registered in the State of Wisconsin, or comparable official or professional documentation.

6. Employees with academic year or C-basis appointments may be eligible to take Paid Parental Leave during their short work break when they hold a summer service or summer session appointment. Paid Parental Leave is available during the dates of their summer contract period.

B. Leave Provisions

1. An eligible full time staff employee will be provided up to 6 weeks (240 hours) of Paid Parental Leave following the occurrence of a qualifying event. Employees working less than 1.0 FTE shall receive a prorated amount according to their FTE status.

2. The Paid Parental Leave must be taken within 12 months following the birth or adoption. Any Paid Parental Leave remaining at the end of the 12 months is not banked for later use or paid out and cannot be combined with any future Paid Parental Leave.
3. University benefits (such as, medical, dental, retirement, time off accruals, etc.) in which the employee is enrolled will continue while the employee is on Paid Parental Leave.
4. The Paid Parental Leave may be taken continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis.
  - a) Intermittent or reduced schedule leave requires advanced consultation with the eligible employee's department, for purposes of planning work coverage during the employee's leave.
  - b) Taking the Paid Parental Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis does not extend the 12 months after the birth or adoption in which the leave must be taken.
  - c) Employees on intermittent or reduced schedule leave remain eligible for other types of leave when they must be absent from their scheduled work hours. An employee must follow the institution's normal procedures for requesting time off and calling in absences when on intermittent or reduced schedule Paid Parental Leave. Failure to do so may result in the Paid Parental Leave not being approved for those days.
5. Paid Parental Leave cannot be donated or transferred to other employees through the Catastrophic Leave Program or any other leave donation program.

C. Notice, Application and Other Considerations

The employee must ordinarily provide a minimum of 30 (thirty) days' advance notice when the Paid Parental Leave taken under this Policy is foreseeable. If 30 days' notice is not given, the leave may be denied until 30 days after the notice is received. It is understood that under some circumstances it is not feasible to provide 30 days' notice. In these cases, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable. Application for Paid Parental Leave should be made via the Institution's Application for Family/Medical Leave.

The employee must also note whether they intend to use the Paid Parental Leave continuously, intermittently or on reduced schedule. Any request for intermittent or reduced schedule leave requires advance consultation with the employee's department, for purposes of planning work coverage during the employee's leave.

If the date of the qualifying event is different from the anticipated date submitted on the application, it is the responsibility of the employee to notify their institution HR department. No later than three days after the qualifying event, Employees shall provide notice to their institution HR department that the event occurred. Notice may take the form of a phone call or email.

D. Record Keeping- All medical information relating to use of Paid Parental Leave, whether verbal or written, including FMLA medical documentation, shall be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. All medical documents including, but not limited to, medical statements and FMLA medical certifications must be maintained within the Human Resources Department in confidential, secure files separate from personnel files.

E. Relation to Other Leave

1. Paid Parental Leave will run concurrently with FMLA leave, if the employee meets the eligibility requirements of the FMLA. The concurrent use of Paid Parental Leave and FMLA leave will decrease, in whole or in part, the amount of FMLA leave available to an employee.
2. Paid Parental Leave will run concurrently with WFMLA leave, if the employee meets the eligibility requirements of the WFMLA. The concurrent use of Paid Parental Leave and WFMLA leave will decrease, in whole or in part, the amount of WFMLA leave available to an employee.
3. Paid Parental Leave hours may be used in conjunction with other forms of paid or unpaid time off available to the employee, including but not limited to sick leave vacation leave, sabbatical leave, holiday leave, personal leave and unpaid time. An employee may be eligible to receive leave donations through the Catastrophic Leave Donation program after their Paid Parental Leave hours are exhausted, assuming they meet the other requirements for participation. For child bonding purposes, Paid Parental Leave must be used entirely before other forms of paid and unpaid leave may be used after the birth or adoption.
4. If an official [UWS Legal Holiday](#) occurs during the Eligible Employee's Paid Parental Leave, the Eligible Employee will receive holiday pay in lieu of a Paid Parental Leave day, provided that the Eligible Employee is in a paid status the day before or the day after the official UWS holiday.
5. While using Paid Parental Leave, an Eligible Employee will continue to accrue other paid leave balances, including sick leave and earned vacation leave.
6. Any time off prior to the birth or adoption or in excess of the six weeks of Paid Parental Leave must be requested separately, either:
  - a) By completing the appropriate FMLA request form, if the employee is eligible for FMLA and has FMLA leave available, or
  - b) If the employee is not eligible for FMLA or has no FMLA remaining, by requesting the use of accrued paid time off (personal holiday, vacation, comp time) or leave without pay subject to the discretion of the institution. Sick leave may also be used in this circumstance if the reason for the request qualifies as an authorized use of sick leave.

F. Reinstatement

1. At the conclusion of the Paid Parental Leave, the employee will return to the same position held at the time the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay,



benefits, and working conditions; provided the employee can perform the essential functions of the position.

2. An employee on a Paid Parental Leave is still subject to a layoff or reassignment that would have occurred otherwise had the employee been working.

3. A fitness for duty exam may be required should the employee experience a serious health condition during the Paid Parental Leave.

4. The University's obligation to reinstate the employee to the same or equivalent position ceases if and when the following take place:

a) The employment relationship would have ended if the employee had not taken Paid Parental Leave.

b) The employee informs the UWS of their intent not to return to work at the end of the Paid Parental Leave.

c) The employee fails to return to work at the end of the Paid Parental Leave.

G. Limitations

1. Foster care, Kinship Care, Guardianship, and other child welfare placements are not qualifying events under this policy

2. Sperm donors do not incur a qualifying event under this policy.

3. Employees receiving a child from a surrogate incur a qualifying event under this policy. An employee serving as a surrogate does not incur a qualifying event under this policy.

4. In the case of multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.), all children are treated as one qualifying event. In the case of multiple children being adopted within a 12-month period, all children are treated as one qualifying event.

5. The adoption of a stepchild (a child of the employee's spouse from a previous relationship) by an employee does not qualify for a benefit under this policy.

6. One qualifying event every 12 months. In the case of multiple qualifying events by an employee in the same 12-month period, the eligible employee will be entitled to only one instance of paid parental leave.

7. University Staff Temporary employees are excluded from this policy

8. Upon termination of employment, the employee shall not be eligible for payment for any unused Paid Parental Leave balances.

## 7. Related Documents

[Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)

[Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act](#)

[SYS 1213 Wisconsin and Federal Family and Medical Leave Acts](#)

[SYS 1219 Continuous Service](#)

## 8. Policy History

First approved: XXXXX, XXth, 2024

## 9. Scheduled Review

XXXXXX, XXth, 2029

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**APPROVED BY:**

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**Jay O. Rothman**  
President  
University of Wisconsin System

DRAFT



Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources

## PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

### Rationale/Purpose of the Policy

The Paid Parental Leave policy provides eligible employees with a maximum of up to 6 (six) weeks of paid time off every 12 months when they experience a qualifying event covered by this policy. Employees may take up to 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave following a birth or adoptive event to allow for time to bond with their new child, adjust to their new family situation, and balance personal obligations that result from a birth or adoptive event. When an employee experiences multiple events that would qualify for Paid Parental Leave in the same 12-month period, the eligible employee will only be entitled to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave.

### Definitions

<b>Adoption:</b>	The social, emotional, and legal process in which children who will not be raised by their birth parents become full and permanent legal members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family.
<b>Birth or Adoptive Event:</b>	The birth or adoption of a child under the age of 18 (eighteen) on or after [the effective date of this policy]. If the adoption involves a child who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability, the age limit of 18 (eighteen) may be waived.
<b>Child(ren):</b>	A person under the age of 18 (eighteen). For the purposes of this policy, the child's parent must be an employee of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.
<b>Foster Care:</b>	Home-like care provided by licensed foster parents for children who cannot live with their parents. Placement in foster care is usually temporary.
<b>Full Time Equivalent (FTE):</b>	Amount of hours budgeted for a position. A position budgeted for 80 (eighty) hours in a bi-weekly pay period would be 1.0 FTE; a position budgeted for 40 (forty) hours in a bi-weekly pay period would be .5 FTE.

- Guardianship:** A legal relationship in which one party is empowered to act for the benefit of another. The decision-making authority and legal responsibility of the child is transferred to the guardian; however, parents' rights are not terminated.
- Kinship Care:** When grandparents, other adult family members or close family friends are raising children, with no parents in the home.
- Paid Parental Leave:** A maximum of up to a total of 6 (six) weeks of paid time off from work in a 12-month period
- Up to 6 (six) weeks of paid time off to enable an employee to care for and to bond with their newborn or a newly adopted child.
  - Employees receive paid time off based on their FTE, pro-rated for less than full-time appointments.
- Employees with an appointment of 1.0 FTE receive up to 240 (two hundred forty) hours of paid time off.
- Employees with an FTE less than 1.0 receive prorated paid time off according to their FTE. For example, an eligible employee with a 0.5 FTE would be eligible for up to 6 (six) weeks of paid time off at their 0.5 FTE totaling 120 (one hundred twenty) hours.
- Parent:** A person identified on a child(ren)'s birth certificate, adoption certificate, certified copy of a foreign adoption order that has been registered with the State of Wisconsin, or other legal document certifying an adoption.
- Qualifying Event:** Birth and adoptive event
- For birth, the qualifying event is the date the child is born.
  - Employees receiving a child from a surrogate incur a qualifying event on the date the child is placed with the employee.
  - For adoption, the qualifying event is the date the child is placed with the employee.
- Paid Parental Leave may not be used prior to the date of the qualifying event.

**12-Month Period:** Eligible employees are able to take up to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period. That 12-month period begins on the date of their qualifying event. When an employee experiences multiple events that would qualify for Paid Parental Leave in the same 12-month period, the eligible employee will only be entitled to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave.

When an employee takes the full 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period, they are next eligible for additional Paid Parental Leave when they have a qualifying event that occurs after the original 12-month period of time has ended.

Example: Eligible employee has a qualifying birth event on August 31 and requests to take six weeks of Paid Parental Leave. The employee had not had any prior qualifying events, so they are entitled to the 6 (six) weeks they had requested. Their 12-month period begins on August 31 and will end on August 30 of the following year.

That same employee has a second qualifying event on May 1 of the next year. The employee will not be eligible for any additional Paid Parental Leave for this qualifying event because it is occurring within 12 months of their prior qualifying event and they have already used all 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave available in that 12-month period. This employee would not be able to qualify for any additional Paid Parental Leave until they had a qualifying event that occurred on or after August 31 of the following year.

## Scope:

This policy applies to the following UW–Madison employees:

- Faculty, Academic Staff, University Staff and Limited appointees.
- The following [Graduate Assistantship titles](#): Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Project Assistant (including reader/grader), Lecturer.
- The following Post Degree Training titles: Research Intern

This policy does not apply to:

- Graduate Assistantship titles not included above
- Post Degree Training titles not included above
- Temporary Employees
- Student Hourly employees

The Postdoc Absence with Pay & Legal Holidays policy provides Absence with Pay (Parental) to eligible Employee-In-Training appointments (Research Associate, Postdoctoral Fellow, [Postdoctoral Trainee](#)).

## **Policy:**

### **Policy Summary**

It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin–Madison to provide up to 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave to eligible employees following a birth or adoptive event. Employees are eligible for a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period. When an employee experiences multiple events that would qualify for Paid Parental Leave in the same 12-month period, the eligible employee will only be entitled to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave. This Paid Parental Leave Policy ("Policy") exceeds any legal requirement.

### **Policy Detail**

Employees do not need to qualify for federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA) to qualify for Paid Parental Leave.

When an employee does qualify for family leave under FMLA and/or WFMLA and is eligible for Paid Parental Leave, the leaves will run concurrently. The use of Paid Parental Leave does not delay the designation of FMLA and/or WFMLA when an employee qualifies for both. The number of weeks of Paid Parental Leave time taken will also count as workweeks taken under FMLA and/or WFMLA.

### **I. Eligibility**

To qualify for Paid Parental Leave, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:

- A. On or after the effective date of this Policy, the employee or the employee's spouse/partner has a qualifying event.
- B. The employee holds an appointment eligible for paid parental leave with UW-Madison at the time of their qualifying event.
- C. The employee must also meet the eligibility requirements for their employment category:
  - a. University Staff
    - i. All University Staff are eligible for paid parental leave when they have completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event.
  - b. Faculty, Academic Staff and Limited appointee
    - i. Faculty, Academic Staff and Limited appointees are eligible for paid parental leave when the employee is:
      1. Covered by the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) through employment; or
      2. Expected to work at least 440 hours (21% for annual-basis and 28% for academic year appointment) for at least one year. Employees initially hired on an academic year contract meet the one-calendar-year-duration

requirement if they are expected to return the following academic year; and,

3. Whether qualifying under section (1) or (2) immediately above, has completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event. Periods spent on a work break, with an expectation of continuing employment, for those employees who are appointed to a 9-, 10- or 11-month renewable position count towards the six months.

- c. Graduate Assistantship titles: Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Project Assistant (including reader/grader), Lecturer.
  - i. Has completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event. Periods spent on a work break, with an expectation of continuing employment, for those employees who are appointed to a 9-, 10- or 11-month renewable position count towards the six months.
- d. Post Degree Training titles: Research Intern
  - i. Has completed six months of continuous employment with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event.

- D. The employee must complete and submit the Request for Paid Parental Leave form to their Divisional Disability Representative (DDR) or supervisor according to the notice requirement (see Section III). Additional documentation may be required based on the nature of the qualifying event.
- E. The employee takes Paid Parental Leave within 12-months of the date of their qualifying event. The 12-month period begins on the date of the initial qualifying event and the employee has not exhausted their Paid Parental Leave entitlement. Any additional qualifying events that occur within that 12-month period will not qualify for Paid Parental Leave beyond the maximum 6 weeks.
- F. Employees with academic year or C-basis appointments may be eligible to take Paid Parental Leave during their short work break when they hold a summer service or summer session appointment. Paid Parental Leave is available during the dates of their summer contract period.
- G. When two UW–Madison employees have the same qualifying event, each will receive the full Paid Parental Leave benefit they are eligible for.

#### Six-Month Eligibility Period and Movement Between Appointments

- A. The 6-months of continuous employment is completed 6-months following consecutive employment in a Paid Parental Leave eligible appointment.



- a. Example: Employee is hired into a Paid Parental Leave eligible appointment on January 2. They maintain their active appointment. They will complete the 6-month eligibility period on June 1.
- B. When employees move between Paid Parental Leave eligible appointments without a break in service, time spent in prior Paid Parental Leave eligible appointments counts towards the six months of consecutive services.
- C. When an employee moves from a Paid Parental Leave ineligible appointment to an eligible appointment, they must complete six months of consecutive service in the eligible appointment, prior to the date of the qualifying event.
- D. Any break in service between Paid Parental Leave eligible appointments, will require an employee to satisfy a new 6-month eligibility period when they return to a Paid Parental Leave eligible appointment.

## II. Leave Provisions

- A. Birth or Adoptive Event
  1. An eligible full-time employee will be provided up to 6 (six) weeks (240 hours) of Paid Parental Leave following the occurrence of a qualifying birth or adoptive event. Employees working less than 1.0 FTE will be provided up to 6 weeks Paid Parental Leave in a prorated amount according to their FTE status at the time their leave of absence begins.
  2. Paid Parental Leave must be taken and completed within 12 months following birth or adoption. Any unused Paid Parental Leave remaining at the end of the 12-month period is forfeited and may not be banked for later use, paid out, or combined with any future Paid Parental Leave.
- B. Employees are eligible for a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period. When an employee experiences multiple events that would qualify for Paid Parental Leave in the same 12-month period, the eligible employee will only be entitled to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave.
- C. University benefits (such as, medical, dental, retirement, time off accruals, etc.) in which the employee is enrolled will continue while the employee is on Paid Parental Leave.
- D. Paid Parental Leave may be taken continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis.
  1. Employees are entitled to take Paid Parental Leave on a continuous basis.
  2. Taking Paid Parental Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule requires the advanced approval of the eligible employee's department except when leave is designated as WFMLA.

- a. WFMLA entitles employees to take family leave intermittently and on a reduced schedule basis within 16 (sixteen) weeks of birth or adoption. Prior approval from their department is not required while their leave is designated as WFMLA. When WFMLA is designated, Paid Parental Leave will run concurrently.
- b. Taking Paid Parental Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis does not extend the 12 months after the birth or adoption in which the leave must be taken.
- c. All employees taking Paid Parental Leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule remain eligible to use other types of leave available to them (sick leave, vacation, personal holiday, etc.) when they must be absent from their scheduled work hours for reasons not related to parental leave. Employees must follow their department's normal procedures for requesting time off and calling in absences when on intermittent or reduced schedule Paid Parental Leave. Failure to do so may result in Paid Parental Leave not being approved for those absences.

E. Paid Parental Leave cannot be donated or transferred to other employees through the Catastrophic Leave Program.

### **III. Notice Requirement and Other Considerations**

- A. An eligible employee must submit the completed Request for Paid Parental Leave form at least 30 (thirty) calendar days in advance of the start date of leave. If 30 (thirty) days' notice is not given, the leave may be denied until 30 (thirty) days after the notice is received.
- B. Under some circumstances, the request for Paid Parental Leave may not be foreseeable or the employee may need to change the dates of their requested leave and employees may not be able to provide 30 (thirty) days' notice. In these cases, the employee must submit the Request for Paid Parental Leave form and notify their Divisional Disability Representative (DDR) within 14 (fourteen) days of becoming aware of their need to take leave or modify the dates of leave. Employees must follow their department's normal procedures for requesting time off and calling in absences.

### **IV. Confidentiality**

- A. All medical information relating to the use of Paid Parental Leave, whether verbal or written, including FMLA medical documentation, shall be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. All medical documents including, but not limited to, medical statements and FMLA medical certifications must be maintained within the Human Resources Department in the employee's confidential medical file.

### **V. Relation to Other Leave**

- A. Paid Parental Leave will run concurrently with FMLA and/or WFMLA designated leave if the employee meets the eligibility requirements of the FMLA and/or WFMLA. The concurrent use of

Paid Parental Leave and FMLA and/or WFMLA leave will decrease, in whole or in part, the amount of FMLA and/or WFMLA leave available to an employee.

- B. Paid Parental Leave may not be taken prior to the date of the qualifying event. Requests to take leave prior to the birth or adoption or beyond up to 6 (six) weeks of Paid Parental Leave require approval. Employees should discuss any additional family or medical leave they would like to take with their Divisional Disability Representative (DDR). Additional documentation may be required. UW–Madison paid and unpaid leave policies apply.
- C. If an official [Legal Holiday](#) occurs during the eligible employee's Paid Parental Leave
  - a. University, Faculty, Academic Staff and Limited appointees will receive legal holiday pay, in lieu of a Paid Parental Leave day, provided that the employee meets the eligibility requirements under the Personal and Legal Holiday policy and is in a paid status the day before or the day after the official legal holiday.
  - b. Eligible Graduate Assistant appointments will follow state legal holiday policy as provided by the Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures.
- D. While using Paid Parental Leave, an eligible employee will continue to accrue other paid leave balances according to the applicable leave policy, including sick leave and earned vacation leave.
- E. Eligible employees may receive leave donations through the Catastrophic Leave Donation program after their Paid Parental Leave hours are exhausted when they meet the eligibility requirements according to the [Catastrophic Leave policy](#) .

## **VI. Reinstatement**

- A. At the conclusion of the Paid Parental Leave, the employee will typically return to the same position held at the time the leave began. In limited circumstances the employee may be returned to an equivalent position.
  - 1. An employee on Paid Parental Leave is still subject to a layoff or reassignment that would have occurred otherwise had the employee been working.
  - 2. A fitness for duty may be required should the employee experience a serious health condition during Paid Parental Leave.
  - 3. The University's obligation to reinstate the employee to the same or equivalent position ceases if and when any of the following take's place:
    - a. The employment relationship would have ended if the employee had not taken Paid Parental Leave; or
    - b. The employee informs the University of their intent not to return to work at the end of the Paid Parental Leave; or
    - c. The employee fails to return to work at the end of Paid Parental Leave and are not on an approved leave of absence.

## **VII. Limitations**

- A. When a pregnancy results in the birth of more than one child (twins, triplets, etc.), all children born are treated as one qualifying event.
- B. In the case of multiple children being adopted on the same date, all children are treated as one qualifying event.
- C. The adoption of a stepchild (a child of the employee's spouse from a previous relationship) by an employee is not a qualifying event under this policy.
- D. An employee serving as a surrogate does not incur any qualifying events under this policy.
- E. Foster care, Kinship Care, Guardianship, and other child welfare placements are not qualifying events under this policy.
- F. Sperm donors do not incur a qualifying event under this policy.
- G. Upon termination of employment, the employee shall not be eligible for payment for any unused Paid Parental Leave balances.

## **VIII. Consequences for Non-Compliance**

- A. Consequences for providing false information on the Paid Parental Leave request form or when requesting Paid Parental Leave may include:
  - 1. Denial of the Paid Parental Leave request
  - 2. Responsibility of employee to repay Paid Parental Leave taken
  - 3. Disciplinary Action



Policy Number: UW-5054  
**University**

Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources

**Related UW-Madison Policies:**

[Catastrophic Leave](#)

Sick Leave

[Personal and Legal Holidays](#)

[Vacation](#)

[Leave usage for Funerals or Bereavement](#)

External References:

[Federal Family and Medical Leave Act](#)

[Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act](#)

UW System's PPL policy link

## **Policy Administration**

### **Approval Authority**

Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

### **Policy Manager**

Chief Human Resources Officer

### **Policy Contact**

Director, Workforce Relations -- Megan Dzyuba, [megan.dzyuba@wisc.edu](mailto:megan.dzyuba@wisc.edu), (608) 265-2257

### **Policy History**

### **Date Issued**

### **Revised Dates**



Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources

## POST DOCTORAL FELLOW PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

### Rationale/Purpose of the Policy

- Postdoc:** Individuals with the appointment: research associate, postdoctoral fellow and/or postdoctoral trainee.
- Adoption:** The social, emotional, and legal process in which children who will not be raised by their birth parents become full and permanent legal members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family.
- Birth or Adoptive Event:** The birth or adoption of a child under the age of 18 (eighteen) on or after [the effective date of this policy update]. If the adoption involves a child who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability, the age limit of 18 may be waived.
- Child(ren):** A person under the age of 18 (eighteen). For the purposes of this policy, the child's parent must be in an active postdoc appointment at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Foster Care:** Home-like care provided by licensed foster parents for children who cannot live with their parents. Placement in foster care is usually temporary.
- Guardianship:** A legal relationship in which one party is empowered to act for the benefit of another. The decision-making authority and legal responsibility of the child is transferred to the guardian; however, parents' rights are not terminated.
- Kinship Care:** When grandparents, other adult family members or close family friends are raising children, with no parents in the home.

**Absence with Pay (Parental):** Hours a postdoc may be absent from their training due to a qualifying event and still receive their stipend or salary.

**Parent:** A person identified on a child(ren)'s birth certificate, adoption certificate, certified copy of a foreign adoption order that has been registered with the State of Wisconsin, or other legal document certifying an adoption.

**Qualifying Event:**

Birth and adoptive event

- For birth, the qualifying event is the date the child is born.
- A postdoc receiving a child from a surrogate incurs a qualifying event on the date the child is placed with the postdoc.
- For adoption, the qualifying event is the date the child is placed with the postdoc.

Absence with Pay (Parental) may not begin prior to the date of the qualifying event.

**12-Month  
Period:**

Eligible postdocs are able to take up to a total of 6 (six) weeks of Absence with Pay (Parental) in a 12-month period. That 12-month period begins on the date of their qualifying event. When a postdoc experiences multiple events that would qualify for Absence with Pay (Parental) in the same 12-month period, the eligible postdoc will only be entitled to take a total of 6 (six) weeks of Absence with Pay (Parental).

When a postdoc takes the full 6 (six) weeks of Absence with Pay (Parental) in a 12-month period, they are next eligible for additional Absence with Pay (Parental) when they have a qualifying event that occurs after the original 12-month period of time has ended.

Example: Eligible postdoc has a qualifying birth event on August 31 and requests to take six weeks of Absence with Pay (Parental). The postdoc had not had any prior qualifying events, so they are entitled to the six weeks they had requested. Their 12-month period begins on August 31 and will end on August 30 of the following year.

That same postdoc has a second qualifying event on May 1 of the next year. The postdoc will not be eligible to take any additional Absence with Pay (Parental) for this qualifying event because it is occurring within 12 months of their prior qualifying event and they have already taken all 6 weeks of Absence with Pay (Parental) available in that 12-month period. This postdoc would not be able to qualify for any additional Absence with Pay (Parental) until they had a qualifying event that occurred on or after August 31 of the following year.

**Policy Summary:**

This policy establishes the administration of absence with pay: personal, medical, and parental, and legal holidays for UW–Madison postdocs. The policy covers eligibility, accrual, use, reporting, carryover, banking, cash-outs, and treatment of absence with pay and legal holiday balances when a postdoc:

- changes their appointment within UW–Madison,
- moves to UW–Madison from another UW System Institution, or
- terminates their appointment with UW–Madison.

**Policy Detail:** The absence with pay and legal holidays policy provides eligible UW–Madison postdocs with absences with pay from mentored research training for personal purposes, personal and immediate family medical reasons, the birth or adoption of their child, and legal holidays.



**(include this after Absence with Pay (Medical) section.**

### **III. Absence with Pay (Parental)**

**A. To qualify for Absence with Pay (Parental), the postdoc must meet all of the following conditions:**

- 1) On or after the effective date that absence with pay (parental) was included in this policy, the postdoc or their spouse/partner has a qualifying event.
- 2) The postdoc holds a postdoc appointment with UW-Madison at the time of their qualifying event.
- 3) The postdoc has held a postdoc appointment for 6 consecutive months with the University of Wisconsin System at the time of the qualifying event. This includes periods spent on a work break with an expectation of a continuing appointment for those postdocs who are appointed to a 9-month renewable position.
  - a) When a postdoc moves into an eligible postdoc appointment from an appointment that was covered under the Paid Parental Leave policy without a break in service, the time spent in that appointment will count toward the 6 months continuous employment.

**B. Absence with Pay (Parental) Provisions:**

- 1) Birth or Adoptive Event
  - a) An eligible full-time postdoc will be provided up to 6 (six) weeks (240 hours) of absence with pay (parental) following the occurrence of a qualifying birth or adoptive event. Postdocs working less than 1.0 FTE will be provided up to 6 weeks absence with pay (parental) in a prorated amount according to their FTE status at the time their use of absence with pay (parental) begins.
  - b) Absence with pay (parental) must be taken and completed within 12 months following the birth or adoption. Any unused absence with pay (parental) remaining at the end of the 12-month period is forfeited and may not be banked for later use, paid out, or combined with any future absence with pay (parental).
- 2) Postdocs are eligible for a total of 6 (six) weeks of absence with pay (parental) in a 12-month period. The 12-month period begins on the date of the initial qualifying event. When a postdoc experiences multiple events that would qualify for absence with pay (parental) in the same 12-month period, the eligible postdoc will only be entitled to a maximum total of 6 (six) weeks of absence with pay (parental).
- 3) Postdocs may not be granted more than 6 weeks of absence with pay (parental) in a 12-month period unless they are eligible for additional absence with pay (parental) hours due to sponsoring agency policy.
- 4) University benefits (such as medical, dental, etc.) in which the postdoc is enrolled will continue while the postdoc is taking absence with pay (parental).
- 5) Postdocs with academic year or C-basis appointments may be eligible for absence with pay (parental) during their short work break when they hold a summer service or summer

session appointment. Absence with pay (parental) is available during the dates of their summer contract period.

- 6) When two UW–Madison postdocs have the same qualifying event, each will receive the full absence with pay (parental) benefit they are eligible for.
- 7) When a postdoc and an employee covered under the campus Paid Parental Leave policy have the same qualifying event, each will receive the full absence with pay (parental) and paid parental leave benefit they are eligible for.
- 8) The absence with pay (parental) benefit ends immediately if the postdoc no longer meets the criteria for eligibility.
- 9) Absence with pay (parental) will run concurrently with FMLA and/or WFMLA designated leave if the postdoc meets the eligibility requirements of the FMLA and/or WFMLA. The concurrent use of absence with pay (parental) and FMLA and/or WFMLA leave will decrease, in whole or in part, the amount of FMLA and/or WFMLA leave available to a postdoc.

### **C. Absence with Pay (Parental) Usage, Carryover, and Exchange**

- 1) Absence with pay (parental) may be taken continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis.
  - a) Postdocs are entitled to take absence with pay (parental) on a continuous basis.
  - b) Taking absence with pay (parental) on an intermittent or reduced schedule requires the advanced approval of the postdoc's department except when leave is designated as WFMLA.
  - c) WFMLA entitles eligible postdocs to take family leave intermittently and on a reduced schedule basis within 16 (sixteen) weeks of birth or adoption. Prior approval from their department is not required while their leave is designated as WFMLA. When WFMLA is designated, absence with pay (parental) will run concurrently.
  - d) Taking absence with pay (parental) on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis does not extend the 12 months after the birth or adoption in which the leave must be taken.
  - e) All postdocs taking absence with pay (parental) intermittently or on a reduced schedule remain eligible to use other types of absence with pay when they must be absent from their scheduled work hours for reasons not related to parental leave. Postdocs must follow their department's normal procedures for requesting to use absence with pay and calling in absences when on intermittent or reduced schedule absence with pay (parental). Failure to do so may result in absence with pay (parental) not being approved for those absences.
- 2) Absence with pay (parental) cannot be donated or transferred to other postdocs or employees.

### **D. Absence with Pay (Parental) Scheduling**

- 1) The postdoc must submit the completed Request for Parental Leave form at least 30 calendar days in advance of the start date of leave. If 30 days' notice is not given, the leave may be denied until 30 days after the notice is received.
- 2) Under some circumstances, the request for absence with pay (parental) may not be foreseeable or the postdoc may need to change the dates of their requested leave and postdocs may not be able to provide 30 days' notice. In these cases, the postdoc must submit the Request for Parental Leave form and notify their Divisional Disability Representative (DDR) within 14 (fourteen) days of becoming aware of their need to take leave or modify the dates of leave. Postdocs must follow their department's normal procedures for requesting time off and calling in absences.

#### **E. Confidentiality**

- 1) All medical information relating to the use of absence with pay (parental), whether verbal or written, including FMLA medical documentation, shall be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. All medical documents including, but not limited to, medical statements and FMLA medical certifications must be maintained within the Human Resources Department in the postdoc's confidential medical file.

#### **F. Relation to Other Absence with Pay Types**

- 1) Absence with pay (parental) will run concurrently with FMLA and/or WFMLA designated leave if the postdoc meets the eligibility requirements of the FMLA and/or WFMLA. The concurrent use of absence with pay (parental) and FMLA and/or WFMLA leave will decrease, in whole or in part, the amount of FMLA and/or WFMLA leave available to a postdoc.
- 2) Absence with pay (parental) may not be taken prior to the date of the qualifying event. Requests to take leave prior to the birth or adoption or beyond up to 6 (six) weeks of absence with pay (parental) require approval. Postdocs should discuss any additional family or medical leave they would like to take with their Divisional Disability Representative (DDR). Additional documentation may be required.
- 3) If an official Legal Holiday occurs, during the eligible postdoc absence with pay (parental), the eligible postdoc will receive legal holiday pay in lieu of an absence with pay (parental) day, provided that the eligible postdoc is in an active appointment on the date of the legal holiday.
- 4) While taking absence with pay (parental), other absence with pay that the postdoc is eligible for will not be impacted.

#### **G. Reinstatement**

- 1) At the conclusion of absence with pay (parental), the postdoc will typically return to the same position held at the time the absence began. In certain circumstances the postdoc may be returned to an equivalent position.
  - a) A fitness for duty may be required should the postdoc experience a serious health condition while taking absence with pay (parental).

- b) The University's obligation to reinstate the postdoc to the same or equivalent position ceases if and when any of the following events take place:
  - i) The appointment would have ended if the postdoc had not taken absence with pay (parental); or
  - ii) The postdoc informs the University of their intent not to return at the end of the absence with pay (parental); or
  - iii) The postdoc fails to return at the end of absence with pay (parental) and are not on an approved leave of absence.

## **H. Limitations**

- 1) When a pregnancy results in the birth of more than one child (twins, triplets, etc.), all children born are treated as one qualifying event.
- 2) In the case of multiple children being adopted on the same date, all children are treated as one qualifying event.
- 3) The adoption of a stepchild (a child of the postdoc's spouse from a previous relationship) by a postdoc does not qualify for a benefit under this policy.
- 4) A postdoc serving as a surrogate does not incur any qualifying events under this policy.
- 5) Foster care, Kinship Care, Guardianship, and other child welfare placements are not qualifying events under this policy.
- 6) Sperm donors do not incur a qualifying event under this policy.
- 7) The postdoc shall not be eligible for payment for any unused absence with pay (parental) balances.
- 8) When postdocs move from one postdoc appointment to another postdoc appointment, they cannot take more than a maximum of 6 weeks of absence with pay (parental) in a 12-month period.
- 9) If a postdoc moves into an appointment at UW-Madison that is covered by the Paid Parental Leave policy and has taken absence with pay (parental) in the postdoc appointment, they will not be eligible for more than a maximum of 6 weeks of both absence with pay (parental) and Paid Parental Leave within the same 12-month period of the original qualifying event date.

## **Consequence of Non-Compliance**

Failure to appropriately report absence with pay usage may result in the denial of absence with pay, requirement to reimburse the university for inappropriately utilized absence with pay, the loss of absence with pay hours, and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Postdocs who change FTE may be required to refund any absence with pay (personal) or legal holidays used in excess of the prorated amount to which they are eligible. Postdocs who terminate their appointment before the end of the fiscal year may be required to refund any absence with pay (personal) or legal holidays used in excess of the prorated amount to which they are eligible.

Consequences for providing false information on the Parental Leave request form or when requesting absence with pay (parental) may include:

- 1) Denial of the absence with pay (parental) request
- 2) Responsibility of the postdoc to repay absence with pay (parental) taken
- 3) Disciplinary Action

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