



## Paid Parental Leave Policy

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**1. How much Paid Parental Leave will be provided to eligible employees?**

- An eligible regular, active faculty or staff employee will be provided up to 6 weeks (240 hours) of paid parental leave within 12 months following the birth or adoption of a child. The amount of leave is prorated based on the employee's Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) at the time of the leave.

**2. What is the total maximum amount of leave I can take for childbirth or adoption?**

- State of Tennessee law provides a period of up to four (4) months of leave to employees for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth and nursing an infant, where applicable.

**3. Will my accrued leave balances be reduced when I take Paid Parental Leave?**

- Paid parental leave will not reduce any employee's (staff and faculty) balance of accrued sick or annual leave or any faculty member's eligibility for any other form of academic leave.

**4. Can I use other leave benefits (i.e. sick/annual/short/long-term disability) with paid parental leave?**

- Paid parental leave is an addition to all other leave benefits at UT, including sick leave, annual leave, short/long-term disability, and leave without pay. Those leave categories will not be reduced while an employee is on Paid Parental Leave. An eligible employee should consult with the Office of Human Resources for assistance when planning a paid parental leave.

**5. Do I have to take Paid Parental Leave immediately following the birth or adoption of a child?**

- Paid parental leave may be taken within the 12 months following the birth or adoption of a child and is available on a continuous, intermittent (separate blocks of time), or reduced schedule (reduces number of work hours per day or per week) basis. However, intermittent or reduced schedule paid parental leave requires approval by the immediate supervisor/chair and may require approval by the Dean, Director or Department Head in accordance with the respective department's procedures. Intermittent or reduced schedule leave may not be taken in increments of less than one day.

**6. Is Paid Parental Leave paid at 100 percent of employee's base rate pay?**

- Yes. Paid parental leave will be paid at 100 percent of the employee's base pay rate.



**7. Both parents are UT employees. Can we take Paid Parental Leave at the same time?**

- If both eligible parents are employed at UT, each parent may receive up to 6 weeks (240 hours) of paid parental leave. Parents may choose to take paid parental leave concurrently or at separate times so long as they ensure coordination and negotiation with the department/division leadership in consideration of the institution's business needs. An eligible employee should consult with the Office of Human Resources for assistance when planning a paid parental leave.

**8. Paid Parental Leave versus Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Is there a difference?**

- Paid parental leave is to be used concurrent with FMLA, the State of Tennessee Leave for Adoption, Pregnancy, Childbirth and Nursing an Infant, and the State of Tennessee Leave for Adoptive Parents. After the concurrent use of paid parental leave with FML, if applicable, the remaining amount of FML leave will be available to the employee.

**9. Are there any additional provisions for the adoption of a child?**

- When the adoption is in the legal process, the paid parental leave may begin from the point the child is placed with the eligible employee (granted custody) for the purpose of adoption. The paid parental leave will generally commence immediately following the adoption of a child. However, paid parental leave may occur prior to an adoption when deemed necessary to fulfill the legal requirements for an adoption. 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.

**10. Do University Holidays and Emergency/Inclement Weather Closings count against Paid Parental Leave?**

- **Holidays** - If an official University holiday occurs during the eligible employee's paid parental leave, the eligible employee will receive holiday pay in lieu of a paid parental day, provided the eligible employee is in pay status the day before and the day after the official University holiday. Official University holidays will not count against the employee's paid parental leave balance.
- **Emergency/Inclement Weather** - Employees on scheduled paid parental leave before the decision to close the University due to emergency or inclement weather should continue to report their leave as paid parental leave.

**11. What happens if I haven't used all Paid Parental Leave within the months following the birth or adoption of a child?**

- Any unused paid parental leave at the conclusion of the 12 months following the birth or adoption of a child will be considered forfeited. 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.



## **12. How many times can I take Paid Parental Leave during my career at UT?**

- An eligible faculty or staff employee is limited to receiving the paid parental leave benefit up to three times during their career at the University, regardless of any breaks in service.

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **Requesting Leave:**

1. Notify HR and supervisor of the request for leave: To request paid parental leave under this policy, employees should contact the central campus/institute (or system) Office of Human Resources for detailed guidance. At the same time, employees should notify their supervisor of the intent to take parental leave, in order to ensure that University operations are not disrupted. Employees should reach out to HR and their supervisor as soon as feasible, and in any case at least 30 days before the requested leave begins.
2. Provide information on staff or faculty forms: The forms associated with this policy are designed to ensure that the University coordinates HR and departmental response to the request for parental leave, such as start/end dates of the leave, pay rate during the leave, etc.