

System-wide Policy: HR0339 - Parental Leave Policy	
Version: 1	Effective Date: 07/01/2021

HR0339 - Parental Leave

Objective:

To provide eligible (75% or greater) University faculty and regular staff paid time off to spend time with a new child.

Policy:

Eligible faculty and staff are entitled to six weeks (30 days or 240 hours) of paid parental leave within the first twelve months following childbirth or adoption.

General Guidelines:

Eligibility:

1. This benefit is available to regular, active employees (including 9-month faculty) as defined in HR0105, assigned to work at least 75% and on payroll for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the start of the requested leave.
2. If both parents are employees of the University, each parent is entitled to receive six weeks (30 days or 240 hours) of paid leave. Parents may use their paid parental leave concurrently or during separate periods.
3. Benefits associated with this policy end if/when an employee's FTE is reduced below 75% or the employee separates from the University
4. Employees are limited to use this benefit three times during their careers at the university.

Use period: Employees must use their paid parental leave within 12 months after the birth or adoption of their child. However, adoptive parents may use their paid parental leave before the placement if necessary to fulfill the legal requirements of the adoption process. Employees may take paid parental leave in a block (or blocks) of time, or they may take their leave intermittently by one-day increments. Use of intermittent leave must be coordinated with the supervisor.

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Interaction with related policies:

1. Parental leave is concurrent with statutory entitlements to unpaid leave: The six weeks of paid parental leave under this policy run concurrent with the 12 weeks (480 hours) of unpaid leave provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the four months of unpaid leave provided by the Tennessee Maternity Leave Act (TMLA), and the 12 weeks of unpaid leave provided for adoptive parents under Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-50-806. See HR0380, Sick Leave. If employees wish to remain on leave after the expiration of their paid parental leave period, they may use accrued leave for the remainder of their leave entitlement periods.
2. No impact on health insurance or other group health benefits: During parental leave, the employee's health insurance and other group health benefits (e.g. flexible spending accounts, health savings accounts) will continue just as if the employee were not on leave.
3. Regular pay during leave: During paid parental leave under this policy, the employee's pay will be the employee's hourly or monthly salary, which includes pay increases and merit bonuses but does not include overtime, extra service pay, or other compensation.
 - a. Restricted funding sources: For employees paid through grant funds or other restricted funding, the University may be required to change the source of funding during paid parental leave. Such a change of funding source will not affect the employee's pay during the leave.
 - b. Holidays and administrative closures during parental leave: Employees will be paid for holidays and administrative closures during parental leave, which may extend the period of paid parental leave by the number of days covered by holiday pay.
 - c. Longevity payments: Longevity payments under HR0432 are not affected by the use of paid parental leave.

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- d. Retirement service credit: Parental leave will be treated as continuous service for purposes of retirement service and any other State of Tennessee service credit issues.
4. Sick Leave (HR0380) and Annual Leave (HR0305):
 - a. The six weeks of paid parental leave under this policy is available without regard to the amount of sick or annual leave accrued by the employee, and the employee will not use any accrued leave during this six-week period.
 - b. Employees may use Sick Leave or Annual Leave to extend the total period of paid leave related to birth or adoption up to the maximum amount of leave provided by the relevant statute (12 weeks under the FMLA, 4 months under the TMLA, and 12 weeks under Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-50-806).
5. **Coordination with faculty modified duties programs:** Chief academic officers will issue guidance on coordination of this leave policy with other procedures or practices related to reassignment of academic duties. The guidance and procedures for this policy may be found at the [Office of the Provost's Faculty and Family Care Policy](#). Chief academic officers will coordinate application of this policy to nine-month faculty.