

**Title: Postdoc Parental Leave Policy, Including Adoption and Foster Care Leave**

**Approved by:** Faculty Senate

**Effective date:** January 19, 2022

**Responsible Official:** Director of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs in partnership with the Human Resources Employee Relations Department

**Responsible University Office:** Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

**Revision History:** October 10, 2011

**Related University and Postdoctoral Policies:** Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Postdoc Time Away from CWRU – Postdoc Sick and Vacation Policy

**Relates to:** Postdoctoral Scholars and Postdoctoral Fellows

**Policy Statement**

Case Western Reserve University recognizes the need to support postdocs as they balance career, childbirth, and family life. This Paid Parental Leave policy recognizes that family and work-life balance are legitimate, important, and vital to the success of the university. The purpose of this policy is to provide paid time off that can be taken by a postdoc to recover from childbirth and/or medical conditions related to childbirth and for any postdoc who becomes a new parent (birth, adoptive, or foster) to bond with a new child.

**Overview of Paid Parental Leave for Postdoctoral Scholars and Fellows**

- Postdoc Scholars are eligible for Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave if they satisfy the eligibility requirements for FMLA.
- Postdoc Fellows are not eligible for FMLA leave.
- All postdocs may receive Paid Parental Leave under this policy regardless of eligibility for FMLA.\*

Postdoc parents may receive [Paid Parental Leave](#) for any of the following up to a maximum of eight (8) weeks for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child. All postdoc parents may apply for such leave by notifying the institution (Office of Postdoctoral Affairs) and their supervisor in advance.

Any medical leave which is necessary prior to delivery of a newborn due to a serious health condition is considered personal medical leave or family medical leave and must be authorized by a health care provider. This Paid Parental Leave policy does not apply to and is not available for personal medical leave or family medical leave taken prior to the birth or adoption of a [child](#). In the event of need for personal medical or family medical leave, the postdoc would be required to exhaust any available sick and/or vacation time before commencing an unpaid personal medical or family medical leave.

If both parents/certified domestic partners work at the university, the maximum paid parental leave for both together is eleven (11) weeks. This leave may be split up however the two parents agree, provided no parent takes more than eight (8) weeks paid parental leave.

Postdoc parents have the option of electing to use Paid Parental Leave in addition to their available vacation time, and, if applicable, sick time.

Paid Parental Leave is administered in conjunction with and will run concurrently with FMLA leave for those who are covered by the university's Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy. Eligible postdocs may receive up to twelve (12) weeks FMLA leave for parenting leave, depending on the amount of their available FMLA leave. Eligible postdocs with remaining FMLA leave time may combine the eight (8) weeks Paid Parental Leave with other available paid time off (i.e., accrued vacation time, paid sick time, if applicable, accrued vacation time), to achieve the maximum amount of paid time during FMLA parenting leave. Pursuant to the FMLA policy, postdocs may be paid while on FMLA leave by:

- Using accrued sick pay if such leave is medically necessary;
- Using accrued vacation time if sick pay is exhausted and the leave is medically necessary; or
- Using accrued vacation time if the continued FMLA leave is not medically necessary (i.e., leave for bonding).

Prior to commencing an unpaid FMLA leave, a postdoc must have exhausted all available sick pay and accrued vacation hours. Consult the [Family Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\) Absences and Leave Policy](#) for more information.

For those not covered by the university's FMLA policy: the postdoc may use up to eight (8) weeks of Paid Parental Leave, combined with other available paid time off (sick and vacation time and, if applicable, sick time) up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

All Paid Parental Leave must be completed within twelve (12) months of the date of birth, adoption, or foster placement of the child. Proof of the birth, adoption, or foster placement is required to receive Paid Parental Leave. Additional documentation of proof of eligibility may be requested by Employee Relations in partnership with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

Postdocs may receive up to two (2) weeks of Paid Parental Leave for stillbirth. Additional leave time may be available under the university's FMLA policy.

The number of children born, adopted, or fostered at the same time does not affect the amount of the Paid Parental Leave for that event.

### **Health Care Benefit Coverage and Service Time Accrual**

Postdocs on Paid Parental Leave remain in their Postdoc Benefits Program according to plan provisions and continue to accrue service time toward benefits based on active service.

### **Documentation Requirements**

When the need for parenting leave is known, the postdoc parent must notify their supervisor and submit the following documentation to the Office of Postdoc Affairs and the Human Resources Leave Administrator at least thirty (30) days in advance of the leave:

Before the birth/adoption/foster placement:

1. The Leave of Absence (LOA) form
2. The Certificate of Health Care Provider – Personal Medical (for postdocs who give birth)

After delivery, adoptive or foster placement:

1. A copy of the Proof of Birth. Proof of Birth documents may include a crib card, a letter from the hospital with the parents' and child's name and/or birth certificate documents
2. A copy of the adoptive or foster placement documents.
3. Certification by a Health Care Provider for Returning to Work (for postdocs who give birth)

### **Intermittent Leave**

Postdocs who request intermittent leave or a reduced work schedule must try to coordinate their leave time to minimize the disruption of the department's operations. Any parenting leave must be taken within 12 months of a child's birth or placement.

### **Additional Leave**

Eligible postdocs may receive twelve (12) weeks FMLA leave. Eligible postdocs with remaining FMLA leave may combine the eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave with other paid time off (i.e., paid sick time, accrued vacation time), to achieve the maximum amount of paid time off from work. Pursuant to the FMLA policy, postdocs may be paid while on FMLA leave by:

Using accrued sick pay if such leave is medically necessary;

Using accrued vacation time if sick pay is exhausted and the leave is medically necessary; or

Using accrued vacation time if the continued FMLA leave is not medically necessary (i.e., leave for bonding).

Prior to commencing an unpaid FMLA leave, a postdoc must have exhausted all available sick pay and accrued vacation hours. Consult the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Absences and Leave Policy for more information.

### **Paying for Leave**

Specific leave provisions may be dictated by your funding source. Some grants and fellowships may have their own guidelines for maternity, family leave, or paid leave (which may not allow for paid leave). Consult your paperwork or funding agency for details. If the funding source does not have provisions for Paid Parental Leave, the home department is responsible.