



Applies to: Faculty and staff

(Staff who are members of a bargaining unit and are covered by a collective bargaining agreement are included in this policy. However, when this policy conflicts with specific terms in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, the language in the collective bargaining agreement will prevail.)

Responsible Office

Office of Human Resources

## POLICY

Issued: 10/01/1973

Revised: 01/03/2021

The university strives to recruit and retain a world-class faculty and staff and to stand out as an employer of choice. The university recognizes that supporting faculty and staff as they balance career, family, and personal life ultimately benefits the faculty, staff, and institution alike. Accordingly, the university provides its faculty and staff with unpaid leave options. Faculty and staff may request an unpaid leave for personal, professional, or medical reasons, including pregnancy.

### Purpose of the Policy

To provide guidance on and consistent application of unpaid leave benefits designed to support faculty and staff as they balance career, family, and personal life.

### Definitions

Term	Definition
Holidays	The holidays observed by the university are listed in the <a href="#">Holidays 6.20 policy</a> .
Medical Leave	Approved intermittent or continuous absence from work for an employee's medical condition.
Personal Leave	Approved continuous absence from work for non-medical reasons and/or to care for an immediate family member with a medical condition.
Unit	College or administrative unit.

### Policy Details

- I. Requests for leave are subject to approval by the appropriate administrative official and are approved at the discretion of the university and in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.
- II. Subject to III below, when a leave is granted, the same, or a similar, position will be held for the faculty or staff member or will be made available upon their return subject to the provisions set forth in the Reduction in Workforce policies, [9.15](#) and [9.20](#).
- III. Leave requests or approvals do not halt disciplinary or employment actions that were initiated prior to the commencement of leave.
- IV. Leave requests must have a definite start and end date.
- V. Being in an unpaid status (e.g., job abandonment) does not constitute approved unpaid leave and is not governed by this policy.
- VI. Faculty and staff do not receive pay for **holidays** that occur during a week in which no pay is received.
- VII. Vacation and sick time do not accrue during an unpaid leave or time off.
- VIII. Paid time off may run concurrently with personal, medical, or other leave, and available vacation and sick time must be exhausted prior to utilizing unpaid time off in accordance with the [Paid Time Off 6.27 policy](#).



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- A. The university may waive this requirement for military leave and in workers' compensation, short-term disability, and long-term disability cases.

IX. Medical Leave

- A. Faculty and staff may be granted **medical leave** in accordance with medical documentation they have submitted, their anticipated return to work plan, the operational needs of the **unit**, and any legal or regulatory requirements.
- B. Medical leave requests will be evaluated consistent with [University Rules for the Classified Civil Service, Chapter 73](#), other applicable rules and policies, and pursuant to any applicable bargaining unit agreements.
- C. Medical leave must be designated as [Family and Medical Leave](#) (FML) and counted toward the 12 weeks of FML, when applicable.
- D. The university reserves the right to require the employee to provide documentation from a health care provider indicating a projected date for return to work or reevaluation, medical verification of ability to return to work, and/or any other information necessary to determine eligibility for medical leave.

X. Personal Leave

- A. Available vacation time off must be exhausted prior to the use of unpaid **personal leave**, in accordance with the [Paid Time Off 6.27 policy](#).

XI. Additional Faculty-Specific Requirements

- A. Faculty requests for unpaid leave for non-medical reasons are subject to approval by the chair and dean.
- B. Faculty unpaid leave is generally limited to one year in length. In extenuating circumstances, faculty unpaid leave may be extended after review and approval from the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA).
- C. The university normally grants an unpaid leave only with the clear understanding that the faculty member will return to their university position. A leave will not be granted to accept an ongoing position at another institution or business, unless such action is considered by the chair, dean, and OAA as an outstanding professional development opportunity for the faculty member, who intends to return to their university position.
- D. Tenured faculty may be eligible for paid faculty professional leave (FPL) in accordance with OAA's [Faculty Professional Leave policy](#).

XII. Benefits

- A. Certain benefits may be available for continuation while on unpaid leave, subject to the terms of the applicable benefit plan, program, or policy. To the extent that benefits are continued during an unpaid leave of absence, faculty and staff will be billed for employee contributions while on unpaid leave. Faculty and staff are responsible for ensuring they elect benefits they wish to continue pursuant to [Benefits Continuation while on Approved Leave of Absence](#).

XIII. Retirement Service Credit for Unpaid Leave

- A. STRS members – A member of the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS) may be allowed to contribute to the retirement system to obtain service credit for the leave period. Eligibility requirements, procedures, and terms and conditions are outlined on the [STRS Purchasing Service website](#).
- B. OPERS members – A member of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) may be allowed to contribute to the retirement system to obtain service credit for the period of leave. Eligibility requirements, procedures, and terms and conditions are outlined on the [OPERS Purchase of Service Credit website](#).
- C. Faculty and staff will be responsible for contacting the appropriate retirement entity to arrange for service credit during leave periods.

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### PROCEDURE

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- I. Medical Leave
  - A. Faculty and staff should request medical leave via Workday to their supervisor and Integrated Absence Management and Vocational Services (IAMVS).
  - B. Documentation from a health care provider stating the nature of the illness or injury may be required.
  - C. Faculty and staff are responsible for submitting, or ensuring the submission of, the appropriate time off and/or leave request associated with their medical leave.
  - D. Medical leaves are reviewed and approved by IAMVS in coordination with the unit.
  - E. For approval or denial of unpaid leave which exceeds available FML balances, the unit must consult with HR Employee and Labor Relations and IAMVS.
    1. Approval of additional leave will be based on the employee's return-to-work date, ability to perform the essential functions of the job upon returning to work, operational needs of the unit, and any other relevant factors.
  - F. If approved pursuant to the disability separation guidelines outlined in the [University Rules for the Classified Civil Service, Chapter 73](#), classified civil service staff may apply for, or be placed on, disability separation.
- II. Personal Leave
  - A. Faculty and staff must request an unpaid personal leave in Workday and provide their supervisor with the rationale for the request. Unpaid personal leave will be considered based on academic or business needs of the unit.
  - B. Faculty and staff are responsible for submitting a time off and/or leave request.
- III. Other Unpaid Faculty Leave
  - A. Tenure initiating unit (TIU) heads and unit staff must approve or deny unpaid leave requests and send approved requests to the college. Deans and college staff provide the next level of approval or denial for a request. Provost and OAA staff provide final approval or denial for a request.
  - B. Deans and college staff must submit a letter of request to OAA, including complete information regarding the proposed leave, statement of duties vacated, how duties will be covered during the leave, and the faculty member's address during the leave.
  - C. Provost and OAA staff must inform the dean of the decision.
  - D. Deans and college staff must inform the TIU head of the decision upon approval by OAA.
  - E. TIU heads and unit staff must inform the faculty member of the decision upon approval by OAA and ensure the leave is accurately recorded in Workday as appropriate.
  - F. Funds must be reserved for the position of the faculty member on leave.
- IV. Reductions of Exempt Employees' Pay
  - A. Under the principles of public accountability, an exempt employee's pay may be reduced, or an exempt employee may be placed on leave without pay, for absences due to personal reasons or because of illness or injury of less than one work-day when accrued leave is not used by the employee because (1) accrued leave has been denied or (2) accrued leave has been exhausted by the employee.
- V. Compliance and Fraud
  - A. Faculty and staff failing to comply with policies and procedures may be denied use of leave, and corrective action may be initiated.
  - B. False representation in requests for leave and/or falsification of leave documentation will result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

Applies to: Faculty and staff

- C. Use of unpaid leave for a reason other than the approved purpose may result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

### Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Dean and college staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve or deny requests for faculty unpaid leave.</li> <li>2. If approved, submit letter of request to OAA as outlined in the policy and inform TIU head of decision.</li> </ol>
Faculty and staff	Request leave and provide any required documentation, as outlined in this policy.
Integrated Absence Management and Vocational Services	Approve or deny medical leaves in coordination with units.
Unit or supervisor	Approve or deny non-medical leave requests and consult with IAMVS on all medical leave requests, informing the employee of the decision.
Office of Academic Affairs	Approve or deny non-medical leave request for faculty, in partnership with the dean and/ or TIU head.
TIU head and unit staff (faculty)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve or deny non-medical leave requests and consult with IAMVS on all medical leave requests, as outlined in this policy.</li> <li>2. Send approved requests to the college.</li> <li>3. Inform faculty member of decision upon approval by OAA.</li> <li>4. Ensure leave is accurately recorded.</li> <li>5. Reserve funds for position of faculty member on leave.</li> </ol>

### Resources

#### Forms

Benefit Continuation During Unpaid Leave Election Form, [hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-benefit-continuation-unpaid-leave.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-benefit-continuation-unpaid-leave.pdf)

#### Governance Documents

Benefit Eligibility by Appointment, [hr.osu.edu/benefits/eligibility](http://hr.osu.edu/benefits/eligibility)

Family and Medical Leave 6.05 policy, [hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy605.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy605.pdf)

Paid Faculty Professional Leave policy, [oaa.osu.edu/assets/files/documents/facultyprofessionalleave.pdf](http://oaa.osu.edu/assets/files/documents/facultyprofessionalleave.pdf)

Paid Time Off 6.27 policy, [hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy627.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy627.pdf)

University Rules for Classified Civil Service, Chapter 73 – Unpaid Leaves, [hr.osu.edu/policies-forms/rules-for-ccs/](http://hr.osu.edu/policies-forms/rules-for-ccs/)

#### Additional Guidance

Medical Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee’s Serious Health Condition (FML),

[hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-fml-employee-health.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-fml-employee-health.pdf)

Medical Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member’s Serious Health Condition (FML),

[hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-fml-family-health.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-fml-family-health.pdf)

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), [opers.org](http://opers.org)

State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), [strsoh.org](http://strsoh.org)

Unpaid Leave Frequently Asked Questions, [hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/645faq.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/645faq.pdf)

### Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Benefits	HR Connection	614-292-1050 800-678-6010	<a href="mailto:HRConnection@osu.edu">HRConnection@osu.edu</a>
Faculty leave	Office of Academic Affairs	614-292-5881	<a href="http://oaa.osu.edu">oaa.osu.edu</a>



Applies to: Faculty and staff

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Medical Leave, Short or long term disability or Workers' Compensation	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	<a href="mailto:HRConnection@osu.edu">HRConnection@osu.edu</a>
Policy questions	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	<a href="mailto:HRConnection@osu.edu">HRConnection@osu.edu</a>
Staff leave	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	<a href="mailto:HRConnection@osu.edu">HRConnection@osu.edu</a>

### History

Issued:	10/01/1973	Issued as Leaves of Absence
Revised:	10/01/1980	
Revised:	02/01/1983	
Deleted:	1993	Deleted in error when the Family and Medical Leave Policy 6.05 was issued in 1993
Revised:	10/01/1997	Reinstated as Unpaid Leave
Edited:	09/06/2002	
Revised:	06/01/2011	
Revised:	05/01/2013	
Edited:	04/15/2014	
Revised:	01/03/2021	Reflects material revision approved by President's Cabinet and subsequent edit inserting HR Connection in the Contacts section