

Northwestern



Manager and Administrators Reference Guide Staff Leave Administration



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PURPOSE STATEMENT

This quick reference guide is designed to assist managers and administrators in understanding the various types of leave and job protection offered to staff. This guide is not intended to be all inclusive. Please refer to the HR website for complete information.

LEAVE TYPES DISCUSSED IN THIS GUIDE:

- Medical Leave
- Pregnancy Leave
- Parental Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Family Care Leave
- Accommodations for Non-Job Protected Leave Requests
- Illinois Victims Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Leave
- Military Leave
- Military Caregiver Leave

LEAVE TYPES NOT DISCUSSED IN THIS GUIDE:

- Paid University Holidays
- Vacation Time
- Personal Floating Holidays
- Incidental Sick Time
- Worker’s Compensation Leave
- Personal Leave
- Repatriation Leave (Qatar Only)
- Winter Recess
- Bereavement Absence
- Furloughs
- Visa Renewal
- Jury Duty
- Voting Time
- School Visitation

This guide is for reference purposes only. Any information provided in the Staff Handbook, SPD, or Plan Documents takes precedence over any information provided in this guide.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEAVE AND PAY

There are two important elements of each leave type described in this guide: 1) job protection and 2) income protection. When an individual applies for leave, a determination will be made as to whether the leave will be job-protected and whether there is income protection during the leave. Here are examples of leave types and their associated income protection:

Leave Type	Income Protection	Job Protection
Pregnancy Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Sick Time • BAPL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FML • IL Pregnancy Accom. Act
Medical Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Sick Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FML

There are situations in which an individual will be approved for a job protected leave but not for income protection as well as the reverse of being approved for income protection but not job protection. In situations, where a staff member is approved for income protection, but not approved for job protection, the employee and school/unit must work with the Office of Equity to secure an accommodation for job protection.

BENEFITS WHILE ON LEAVE

PAID LEAVE

An individual on a paid leave will continue to have benefits coverage. The University will also continue to pay the employer contribution of benefit premiums during a leave. If enrolled in the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA), this benefit is frozen until the individual returns from leave. The Dependent Care FSA can only be used when the employee is actively at work. Commuter benefits are temporarily terminated when on a leave of absence. These can also only be used when the employee is actively at work. Commuter benefits will be terminated by Human Resources as soon as administratively possible. Employees may request to end the benefit directly through the [Payflex](#) portal.

The deadline to make changes to commuter benefits is the 5th of the month prior to the month of use. Please make any necessary changes prior to that deadline. For additional question on the commuter benefits, visit the [commuter benefits page](#). Employees must reactivate the commuter benefit upon their return.

UNPAID LEAVE

An individual on an unpaid leave will be billed for benefits coverage via our direct billing provider, WageWorks. The process of billing is automatic once an employee has been placed on an unpaid leave status. The employee does have the option to waive some or all benefits while on an unpaid leave. This is done in [myHR](#) after the leave of absence is entered into the system and processed. The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) is temporarily frozen during an unpaid leave of absence, as well. Commuter benefits are temporarily terminated when on a leave of absence, paid or unpaid. Similar to paid leaves, this benefit can only be used when the employee is actively at work. The deadline to make changes to commuter benefits is the 5th of the month prior. Please make any necessary changes prior to that deadline. For additional questions on the commuter benefits, visit the [commuter benefits page](#).

LONG TERM DISABILITY

Long Term Disability (LTD) provides a monthly benefit if a staff member is unable to perform their regular job (during the first two years of your disability) or any reasonable job (after two years of disability) due to illness or injury. The staff member must be absent from work for six months of continuous disability. Employees must file an LTD claim with The Hartford before the receiving the benefit.

In most cases, all job protection will have expired and the position will have been released by the time LTD payments begin. The Benefits Office will provide notification to the employee that their position has

been released. The Benefits Office will manage the employee's record within myHR during LTD. The department will not need to submit a position appointment form.

EXTENDED SICK TIME (EST) SALARY RELIEF

Schools and units can recover salary paid to an employee when the employee's leave includes Extended Sick Time (EST). The HR Extended Sick Pool is charged for eligible employees on an approved leave following the fifth work day (seventh calendar day), known as the Waiting Period.

BIWEEKLY EMPLOYEES

For biweekly employees, the HR Extended Sick Pool automatically reimburses departments for any EST paid to the employee. The use of the Kronos system for logging leave time allows this reimbursement process to be automated.

MONTHLY EMPLOYEES

Schools and units must request EST reimbursement using the Payroll Journal process. To calculate the reimbursable amount, please use the [EST Quick Guide](#) as a reference. A Payroll Journal should be submitted at the end of each month for impacted employees. Managers and administrators should be sure to submit journals within 90 days of the EST so as to avoid additional processing steps.

For schools and units who use the online [Deployed Funding](#) payroll journal, an online journal must be submitted – paper journal forms will not be accepted. Use the [online journal process](#) with chart string **120-1130001 to charge the salary to the HR Extended Sick Pool**.

For schools and units who do not use the online Deployed Funding payroll journal, a paper [payroll journal form](#) will need to be submitted to the Payroll Department. Use chart string **120-1130001 to charge the salary to the HR Extended Sick Pool**.

APPLYING FOR LEAVE

In an effort to keep personal health information confidential for staff, Northwestern has partnered with The Hartford to review both leave and income protection eligibility. Staff who wish to take a leave must contact The Hartford within 30 days of the start of a planned leave and within 5 days of the start of an unplanned leave. Individuals can reach The Hartford at (888) 541-7283 or online (view the [step-by-step process](#) of applying for a leave).

PEX AND MERIT INCREASES WITH LEAVE

While on leave, staff do not need to complete their annual performance reviews. Once the employee has returned from leave, the supervisor should work with the employee to complete the review and set goals for the upcoming year. The school/unit should work with the Compensation Office for the employee to be assessed for [salary planning](#).

UNLAWFUL ACTS BY EMPLOYER

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA. It also makes it unlawful for any employer to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Schools and units should not ask employees:

- What condition or specific reason for leave;
- What is wrong with their family member;
- Ask for doctor's statement verifying condition related to FML.

LEAVE ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAL LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A medical leave is an absence to care for a personal serious health condition, as confirmed by the employee's healthcare provider.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

A medical leave is an eligible leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Staff who have at least one year of service at Northwestern University **AND** who have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past continuous 12 months prior to their leave, are eligible for FMLA to coincide with their medical leave. FMLA provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. If after contacting The Hartford, an employee is determined to be ineligible for or has exhausted FMLA they should contact the Benefits Office to discuss their options. In some instances, they may be referred to our Office of Equity to request medical leave as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

USE OF PAID TIME

Continuous Leave

Benefits eligible staff who have at least six months of continuous service with Northwestern University are eligible for Extended Sick Time (EST) income protection benefits. EST pays out 100% of the employee's salary, after satisfying a seven day consecutive wait period. Staff may use Incidental Sick Time (IST), vacation, and personal floating holiday time to cover the seven day wait period. EST runs concurrently with FML.

If a staff member is not eligible for EST, they must use their own Incidental Sick Time, Vacation, and Personal Floating Holiday time to receive pay during

their leave. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

Intermittent Leave

EST benefits do not apply to intermittent medical leaves. The staff member must use their own Incidental Sick Time, vacation, and personal floating holiday time to receive pay during their intermittent medical leave. Once this paid time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave would be unpaid. For non-exempt employees, the code, "EXA" may be utilized for unpaid but approved FMLA time off in their Kronos timecards. For exempt employees, also use EXA for unpaid but approved FMLA time off each month. The Benefits Office will work with the Payroll Department to have the following month's paycheck adjusted accordingly.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

Self-certification is required when staff return to work. See the Return to Work section below.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's time card.

Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected. If a reasonable accommodation is required for the employee to perform their essential job duties, it is imperative to contact the Office of Equity to request an accommodation.

Intermittent Leave

Employee and supervisor should continue to manage the timecard in Kronos. Employee can use Incidental Sick Time/PFH/VAC to receive pay for time missed towards leave. Once exhausted:

- Bi-Weekly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time.
- Monthly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time. Also report any unpaid time to the Benefits Office at the end of each month. We will work with the Payroll Department to have the following month's paycheck adjusted accordingly.

If the employee is taking time towards intermittent leave and the department is not receiving notification letters, they will need to contact the Benefits Office for an update.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

Intermittent Leave

The Benefits Office will continuously notify the department of any updates provided by the Hartford regarding time off requests, and communicate with both the employee and their departments of intermittent policy to clarify information.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from leave for their own personal health condition or pregnancy must self-certify that their personal health care provider has cleared them to return to work in advance of their return from leave. To self-certify, the employee must complete the self-certification form provided by The Hartford and submit it to Benefits at benefits@northwestern.edu in advance of their return from leave. In addition to the self-certification, in certain cases, Northwestern can require additional information from the employee's health care provider before clearing you to return to work (note schools/units should not request documentation from the employee's health care provider).

If the employee is subject to restrictions or requires a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the

essential functions of their position, they should contact the Office of Equity prior to their return from leave.

PREGNANCY LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A Pregnancy leave is an absence by a pregnant employee for the birth of a child. Leave of absence for other child care needs is a Family Care Leave of Absence.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

A Pregnancy leave is an eligible leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This leave would also fall under Northwestern’s Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) policy.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Staff who have at least one year of service at Northwestern University **AND** who have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past continuous 12 months, are eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to coincide with their Pregnancy leave. FMLA provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA should contact the Benefits Office to discuss their options. In some instances, they may be referred to our Office of Equity to request medical leave as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) is four weeks of paid leave for parents with a newborn or newly adopted child. To be eligible for BAPL, staff must have completed one year of continuous, full-time benefit-eligible service no later than when the approved BAPL would commence. The continuous, full-time benefit-eligible service must be immediately prior to the leave date. Part-time benefit-eligible and non-benefits eligible employment types are not eligible for BAPL. BAPL should run concurrent with FMLA but the

four weeks of additional leave can be granted in circumstances where an employee does not have the full 12 weeks of FML available, or in the event the newborn is in the NICU.

USE OF PAID TIME

While on Pregnancy leave, eligible staff may qualify for income protection from both Extended Sick Time (EST) and Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL). Staff members are also able to use any available vacation and personal floating holiday time to cover any additional time off following the period of disability within their approved leave period. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

Leave Type	Income Protection	Job Protection
Pregnancy Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-weeks Extended Sick Time • 4-weeks BAPL • 2-weeks PFH/Vacation/Unpaid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12-weeks FML

Extended Sick Time

Benefits eligible staff who have at least six months of continuous service with Northwestern University are eligible for Extended Sick Time (EST) income protection benefits. EST pays out 100% of the employee's salary, after satisfying a seven consecutive day wait period. For staff, Incidental Sick Time (IST), vacation, and personal floating holiday time can be used to cover the seven day wait period.

If a staff member is not eligible for EST, they must use their own Incidental Sick Time, vacation, and personal floating holiday time to receive pay during their leave. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)

BAPL provides an additional four weeks of paid leave to eligible staff. This benefit pays out 100% of the staff member's salary and would apply after the disability period. For more information, please visit the [Birth/Adoption Parental Leave \(BAPL\)](#) site.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

Self-certification is required when staff return to work. See the Return to Work section below.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's timesheets.

Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected. If a reasonable accommodation is required for the employee to perform their essential job

duties, contact the Office of Equity to request an accommodation.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from leave for pregnancy must self-certify that their personal health care provider has cleared them to return to work in advance of their return from leave. To self-certify, the employee must complete the self-certification form provided by The Hartford and submit it to Benefits at benefits@northwestern.edu in advance of their return from leave. In addition to the self-certification, in certain cases, Northwestern can require additional information from the employee's health care provider before clearing you to return to work (note schools/units should work with their HR Business Partner and the Benefits Office to obtain any documentation).

If the employee is subject to restrictions or requires a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of their position, they should contact the Office of Equity prior to your return from leave.

PARENTAL LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A Parental leave is an absence by an employee for the birth or adoption of a child. Parental leave is for the parent not giving birth. See Pregnancy leave for leave pertaining to the birth parent. Leave of absence for other child care needs is a family care leave of absence.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

A Parental leave would fall under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Northwestern’s Birth/Adoption and Parental Leave policy.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Staff who have at least one year of service at Northwestern University **AND** who have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past continuous 12 months, are eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to coincide with their Parental leave. FMLA provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA should contact the Benefits Office to discuss their options. In some instances, they may be referred to our Office of Equity to request medical leave as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) is four weeks of paid leave for parents with a newborn or newly adopted child. Staff require one year of continuous, full-time benefit-eligible service no later than when the approved BAPL would commence. The continuous, full-time benefit-eligible service must be immediately prior to the leave date. Part-time benefit-eligible and non-benefits eligible employment types are not eligible for BAPL. BAPL

should run concurrent with FMLA but the four-weeks of additional leave can be granted in circumstances where an employee does not have the full 12 weeks of FML available, or in the event the newborn is in the NICU.

USE OF PAID TIME

While on Parental leave, eligible staff may qualify for income protection from both Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) as well as their own vacation and personal floating holidays. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

Leave Type	Income Protection	Job Protection
Parental Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-weeks BAPL • 8-weeks PFH/Vacation/Unpaid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12-weeks FML

Birth and Adoption Parental Leave

Benefits-eligible staff with at least one year of full-time, benefit-eligible continuous service at Northwestern University may qualify for additional paid time through our Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL). BAPL provides an additional four weeks of paid leave to eligible staff. This benefit pays out 100% of the staff member's salary and would apply after the disability period. For more information, please visit the [Birth/Adoption Parental Leave \(BAPL\)](#) site.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member’s responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows

when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's timesheets.

Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected. If a reasonable accommodation is required for the employee to perform their essential job duties, contact the Office of Equity to request an accommodation.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update

timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from Parental leave must inform The Hartford, HR Benefits, and their department of their intended return date. Since Parental leave is not for the staff members own serious health condition, no return to work self-certification is required.

ADOPTION LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

An adoption leave is an absence by an employee for the adoption of a child. Leave of absence for other child care needs is a Family Care Leave of Absence.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

An adoption leave would fall under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Northwestern's Birth/Adoption and Parental Leave policy.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Staff who have at least one year of service at Northwestern University **AND** who have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past continuous 12 months, are eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to coincide with their adoption leave. FMLA provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA should contact the Benefits Office to discuss their options. In some instances, they may be referred to our Office of Equity to request medical leave as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)

Birth/Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) is four weeks of paid leave for parents with a newborn or newly adopted child. Staff require one year of continuous, full-time, benefit-eligible service no later than when the approved BAPL would commence. The continuous, full-time benefit-eligible service must be immediately prior to the leave date. Part-time benefit-eligible and non-benefits eligible employment types are not eligible for BAPL. BAPL should run concurrent with FMLA but the four weeks of additional leave can be granted in circumstances where an employee does not have the full 12 weeks

of FMLA available, or in the event the newborn is in the NICU.

USE OF PAID TIME

While on adoption leave, eligible staff may qualify for income protection from both Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL) as well as their own vacation and personal floating holidays. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

Birth and Adoption Parental Leave

Benefits eligible staff with at least one year of full-time, benefit-eligible, continuous service at Northwestern University may qualify for additional paid time through our Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL). BAPL provides an additional four weeks of paid leave to eligible staff. This benefit pays out 100% of the staff member's salary and would apply after the disability period. For more information visit birth and adoption parental leave (BAPL).

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's timesheets.

Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected. If a reasonable accommodation is required for the employee to perform their essential job duties, contact the Office of Equity to request an accommodation.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from adoption leave must inform The Hartford, HR Benefits, and their department of their intended return date. Since an

adoption leave is not for the staff member's own serious health condition, no return to work self-certification is required.

FAMILY CARE LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A family care leave is absence for the birth or adoption of a child, for placement of a child in foster care, or for a serious health condition affecting a spouse, parent, or child who is under 18 years of age. It is available for the care of those over the age of 18 if they are incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability at the time FMLA leave is to commence.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

A family care leave would fall under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This leave can be continuous or intermittent.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Staff who have at least a year of service at Northwestern University **AND** who have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past continuous 12 months, are eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to coincide with their leave. FMLA provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA should contact the Benefits Office to discuss their options. In some instances, they may be referred to our Office of Equity to request medical leave as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

USE OF PAID TIME

While on a family care leave, eligible staff may qualify for income protection utilizing their own vacation, Incidental Sick Time, and personal floating holidays. Once this time is exhausted, the remainder of the leave is unpaid.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

Intermittent Leave

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

It is also the employee's responsibility to follow normal call-off procedure. The employee should report all time missed towards intermittent family care leave to the Hartford at 888-541-7283 within 24 hours or as soon as possible. Employee and supervisor should continue to manage the timecard in Kronos. Employee can use IST/PFH/VAC to receive pay for time missed towards leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows

when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

The employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as to not unduly disrupt the employer's operations.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's timesheets. Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected.

Intermittent Leave

Employee and supervisor should continue to manage the timecard in Kronos. Employee can use incidental sick time/PFH/VAC to receive pay for time missed towards leave. Once exhausted:

- Bi-Weekly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time.
- Monthly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time. Also report any unpaid time to the Benefits Office at the end of each month. We will work with the Payroll

Department to have the following month's paycheck adjusted accordingly.

If the employee is taking time towards intermittent leave and the department is not receiving notification letters, they will need to contact the Benefits Office for an update. If a reasonable accommodation is required for the employee to perform their essential job duties, it is imperative to contact the Office of Equity to request an accommodation.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

Intermittent Leave

The Benefits Office will continuously notify the department of any updates provided by the Hartford regarding time off requests, and communicate with both the employee and their departments of intermittent policy to clarify information

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from a family care leave must inform The Hartford, HR Benefits, and their department of their intended return date. Since a family care leave is not for the staff member's own serious health condition, no return to work self-certification is required.

ILLINOIS VICTIMS' ECONOMIC SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT (VESSA) LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) allows employees who are victims of domestic or sexual violence or who have family or household members who are victims of such violence to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave per any twelve (12) month period to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance.

Definition of Household Member

For employees with a family or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence, a family or household member is defined as a spouse, parent, son, daughter, other person related by blood or by present or prior marriage, other person who shares a relationship through a son or daughter, and persons jointly residing in the same household.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

This leave has no length of service requirement. The job is held for up to 12 weeks in any 12 month period. In the case of intermittent leave of absence taken through a reduced work schedule, the job may be held for the time equivalent to 12 weeks of the employee's work schedule.

USE OF PAID TIME

VESSA leave may be taken with either with or without pay, and staff may use accrued vacation, personal floating holiday time, Extended Sick Time (if approved by the claims administrator), or Incidental Sick Time to care for him or herself or a family member. While Incidental Sick Time is limited to seven calendar days immediately prior to an approved Extended Sick Time absence, there are specific circumstances when a staff member may use up to their annual allowance

of Incidental Sick Time. These circumstances arise when:

- Staff members with less than six months of service are unable to work due to their own illness (this includes birth of a child),
- Staff members have been approved for intermittent FMLA and need to be away from work, and,
- Staff members must care for a sick family member and be absent from work.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Continuous Leave

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. If a staff member is not approved for a job protected leave but requires time off, the employee and school/unit should work with the Office of Equity to request an accommodation. Schools/units should

not grant their own job protected leave outside of general University policies.

Until the leave is approved, it is the department's responsibility to complete and approve the employee's time card.

Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected.

Intermittent Leave

Employee and supervisor should continue to manage the timecard in Kronos. Employee can use incidental sick time/PFH/VAC to receive pay for time missed towards leave. Once exhausted:

- Bi-Weekly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time.
- Monthly – Use code of EXA in Kronos for excused unpaid time. Also report any unpaid time to the Benefits Office at the end of each month. We will work with the Payroll Department to have the following month's paycheck adjusted accordingly.

If the employee is taking time towards intermittent leave and the department is not receiving notification letters, they will need to contact the Benefits Division for an update.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefit Department is responsible for clarifying information to the employee and to the departments regarding VESSA policy. The Benefits Department will guide the employee on how to submit a claim with the Hartford.

If the employee is eligible for VESSA, the Benefits Office will remind the employee to follow up with The Hartford and provide the information required.

If the VESSA leave is not approved, the Benefits Office will notify the employee and provide a reason for ineligibility.

Once the leave is approved, the Benefits Office is responsible for completing time sheets on behalf of the employee while they are on leave. If any time needs to be unpaid, the Benefits Office will inform the employee about how unpaid time will affect their benefits and payroll deductions.

RETURN TO WORK

At the expiration of a VESSA Leave, staff members return to the same or equivalent position held when the VESSA Leave began. An employee on VESSA leave may be required to report periodically to the supervisor regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.

MILITARY ACTIVE DUTY AND TRAINING LEAVES

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A military active duty leave is an absence by an employee who enlists or is inducted into the armed forces of the United States for active military service. Employees may also use military training leave for absence due to military reserve or National Guard training.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

Military leave and its components are provided for by these Acts:

- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) - for Active Duty Leave
- National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and
- The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

An Active Duty Leave, under FMLA, is granted by the University, when service members of the Armed Forces' Reserve components, National Guard, retired service members, or Reservists are on active duty or called to active duty in support of a contingency operation.

Similarly, the National Defense Authorization Act provides up to 12 weeks of leave for a qualifying obligation when service members of the regular Armed Forces are deployed to a foreign country under a certain call or order to active duty.

Leave for military training is granted at any time during active employment.

The University provides broad re-employment protections for members of uniformed services following periods of military service in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

USE OF PAID TIME

Military leaves are unpaid. However, a staff member may choose to use vacation and personal floating holiday time during the absence or receive the value of accrued but unused vacation and personal floating holiday time in a lump sum payment subject to the maximum vacation payout.

Military training leaves are eligible for maximum of 2 weeks' pay – which would reimburse the difference of their Northwestern University pay with what they received from the military. The remainder of the leave is then unpaid or the employee could exhaust vacation and PFH time to remain paid. To receive reimbursement of 2 weeks paid leave, the employee will need to submit a military voucher/LES voucher directly to the Payroll Department upon their return from leave.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of

work. Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from military leave or training leaves must inform The Hartford, HR Benefits, and their department of their intended return date. An employee returning from military leave is reinstated to their former or a comparable position without losing seniority unless it is impossible or unreasonable for the University to reinstate the employee. The following conditions govern reinstatement:

Certification of discharge: The employee must have received from the military service a certificate of honorable discharge or discharge under honorable conditions or of satisfactory service.

Timely application: The employee applies for reinstatement at the campus employment office within the legal time limits, as stated in "Duration," above.

Rate of pay: An employee reinstated to his or her former position receives the rate of pay in effect when the military leave began, plus any general increases granted for such classifications during the

absence. An employee assigned to a higher-graded position receives the minimum rate for the new position or the former rate of pay plus any general increase for the previous classification, whichever is higher, plus the normal promotional increase that would be awarded for the promotion.

Return from training: An employee returning from the active duty for training in the reserve or National Guard is to be retained under the same conditions as above for six months.

Return to work: The department contacts the Office of Human Resources to arrange reinstatement in order to assure appropriate job assignment, pay rate, benefits enrollment, service accrual, and accrual plan for paid time off.

Retention: After return from military leave, an employee must be retained for a period of not less than one year unless they are discharged for cause or on account of a layoff carried out in seniority order in accordance with a contract or established practice.

MILITARY CAREGIVER LEAVE

DEFINITION AND LEAVE USE

A military caregiver leave is an absence by an employee used to care for a military service member who is the staff/faculty member's spouse, domestic partner/civil union partner, child or parent with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of active duty as a member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserves and is:

- Undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy
- Assigned as an outpatient to a military medical treatment facility
- Assigned to a unit providing command and control of Armed Forces' members who are receiving outpatient medical care, or
- On the temporary disability retired list.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM DURATION

If the Military Caregiver Leave is approved, the University will grant up to 26 weeks of leave during a single, 12 month period to eligible staff members to care for the service member in their family as described above. Staff members who do not take all 26 weeks of leave during the single, 12-month period will forfeit the remaining part of the leave.

USE OF PAID TIME

While on a military caregiver leave, eligible staff may qualify for income protection from their own vacation, personal floating holidays and incidental sick time. While on an approved military caregiver leave, the staff member must exhaust all paid time before going into unpaid leave status.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are required to apply for leave with The Hartford in a timely manner. Late or incomplete applications/documentations can delay the approval process. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure The Hartford has all the information required

to substantiate the leave. This includes providing status updates and updated medical documentation while on leave.

Employees must stay in communication with their school/unit as well as the Benefits Office during their leave. They should ensure the school/unit knows when their leave begins and ends. Staff should not disclose medical information/condition. They must notify The Hartford, HR Benefits, and the school/unit if: the dates of the leave change, an extension to their leave is needed, or if there are any other changes to their leave status.

SCHOOL/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The school/unit should review all leave documentation provided from The Hartford to ensure staff maintain their eligibility for leave while out of work. Once the leave has ended, it is the school/unit's responsibility to ensure the employee returns to work on time and is performing their responsibilities as expected.

HR BENEFITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Benefits Office will provide schools/units with leave administration letters provided by The Hartford. These letters will inform the schools/units of the status, length, and pay eligibility of the leave. Any questions regarding the letter or information provided should be directed to the Benefit Counselor who forwarded the letter.

Additionally, the Benefits Office will update the leave status for staff in myHR as well as complete staff timesheets during the leave. Departments should not adjust the employee's job record or update timesheets without first contacting the Benefits Office.

RETURN TO WORK

Staff members returning from military caregiver leave must inform The Hartford, HR Benefits, and their department of their intended return date. Since a

military caregiver leave is not for the staff member's own serious health condition, no return to work self-certification is required.

Northwestern | HUMAN RESOURCES
Benefits

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