

University-Wide Policy Framework for Parental Leave for Full-Time Ladder Faculty:

Medical Leave, Workload Reduction, and Clock/Contract Policies

Introduction

Harvard University is committed to supporting all ladder faculty parents as they welcome new children into their families, whether by birth or adoption, by providing paid parental leave in the form of medical leave for childbirth, workload reduction, and clock and contract extensions. The University-wide framework for these policies, described below, serves as a set of commitments that all Harvard Schools agree to provide to their ladder faculty who are caring for their young children. Differences in structure among the Schools make it impossible for one policy to work for all. Under this framework, Schools have the flexibility to tailor their own policies, and the freedom to provide more generous benefits to their faculty members where appropriate and in compliance with federal and state law. The Schools fund these benefits and are committed to implementing their policies so that they are meaningful and effective. Faculty members should consult their School's Faculty Handbook or Dean's Office to obtain the specific details of the policy in place in their individual School.

Eligibility

These benefits are available to all full-time ladder faculty.

Meeting the Basic Legal Requirement: Unpaid Parental Leave

Federal and state laws set minimum requirements for unpaid time off for the purpose of giving birth, or caring for a newborn or newly adopted child (parental leave). The federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides for up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave (to be taken and completed during a 12-month period) to care for a child within 12 months of birth, adoption, or the initiation of foster care. Similarly, the Massachusetts Parental Leave Act (MPLA) provides that a faculty member who has been employed for at least three months is entitled to eight weeks of full leave to care for a newborn or newly-adopted child. Massachusetts employers must offer at least these minimum periods of job-protected parental leave, which do not need to be paid.

Paid Medical Leave for Childbirth and Recovery

Under their School's medical leave policy, full-time ladder faculty members who are birth mothers may take eight weeks of paid medical leave out of their allotted medical leave benefit. The paid medical leave will not extend beyond the termination date of the

faculty member's appointment. These medical leaves count toward the fulfillment of the FMLA 12-week or MPLA eight-week leave entitlement, if the reason for the leave meets the FMLA or MPIA criteria. In this case, a faculty member may have the option of taking up to four weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in addition to her eight weeks of paid medical leave.

Workload Reduction

School policies provide that an eligible ladder faculty member who assumes substantial and sustained responsibility for the care of a newborn or newly-adopted child as the primary caregiver is entitled automatically to a workload reduction, as defined by the School, either for up to one semester on a full-time basis or over the course of two semesters or one year on a part-time basis. This reduction must be taken within the first year of the birth or adoption.

For Schools and faculty with significant teaching responsibilities, workload reduction may consist of Parental Teaching Relief or one semester on a full-time basis or over two semesters on a part-time basis. For Schools and faculty without significant teaching responsibilities, workload reduction will consist of an equivalent reduction of points to be earned or research to be performed. The expectation is that the primary caregiver would provide childcare during the hours that define primary caregiving (as stated below) and for the entire period (i.e., the semester(s)) of the workload reduction.

For birthmothers who are primary caregivers, the Schools may provide workload reduction that runs concurrent with paid medical leave for childbirth.

All new parents in ladder faculty positions who are primary caregivers can take a workload reduction following up to two birth or adoption events while in the ladder ranks. Faculty may request additional consideration for workload reduction for a third birth or adoption event while in the ladder ranks.

A ladder faculty member using workload reduction would be the primary caregiver for at least twenty hours during the workweek normally during the hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The faculty member should provide a statement to confirm his or her primary caregiver status. Workload reduction is not intended for parents whose newborn or newly adopted child is cared for more than half time by either a spouse/partner and/or a childcare provider.

Tenure Clock and Contract Extensions for Pre-Tenure Ladder Faculty

All new parents in pre-tenure ladder faculty positions who are primary caregivers will receive automatic one-year clock and contract extensions for up to two years (one year per birth or adoption event). Ordinarily, if an appointment is extended by a year due to the birth or adoption event, any promotion review (whether to associate professor or to full professor) will be automatically postponed by a year as well. However, if a birth or adoption

event takes place after a review is already underway, the review would not ordinarily be postponed. A review would also not ordinarily be postponed if a postponement would move the review into the final year of an appointment. Contract extensions are not available for faculty members serving in the terminal year of their appointment following a promotion review or otherwise. Faculty may request additional consideration for clock and contract extensions for a third birth or adoption event while in the ladder ranks.

Procedures

Specific procedures for Deans' conversations and certifications for medical leave and primary caregiver status are at the discretion of the Schools, provided that all provisions of the policy framework are upheld.

Utilization Data

At the beginning of each academic year, each School will report to the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity the number of faculty by rank and gender who added children to their family, and/or who took paid medical leave or its equivalent, and/or a workload reduction during the previous year.