

Parental Leave of Absence Fact Sheet



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Human Resource Services

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

Leave Benefits

Northern Illinois University offers five weeks (25 working days) of continuous paid Parental Leave of Absence benefits at 100% salary to eligible employees for the birth of a child or the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care.

Eligibility Requirement

The following employee categories are eligible for paid Parental Leave of Absence benefits:

- Tenure/Tenure Track Faculty
- Temporary Instructors
- Supportive Professional Staff
- Civil Service Employees (does not include graduate student, undergraduate student, or extra-help appointments)

Employee must have a full time equivalency or percentage of contract of 50% or greater to be eligible for this paid benefit.

There is no minimum service requirement to be eligible for paid Parental Leave of Absence.

Parental Leave of Absence is allowable for the primary and/or coequal caregiver of the child.

Leave Usage

The five weeks (25 working days) of paid leave benefits must be taken on a continuous basis. The only exception to this is if the five continuous weeks extend beyond an employee's contract period. In this instance, the employee must utilize the remaining time at the start of the next contract period.

Paid Parental Leave of Absence must be utilized within 12 months of the date of birth of the child or the placement with the employee of the child for adoption or foster care.

Employees who qualify for FMLA (one year of service and 1250 hours of work in the prior calendar year) will be eligible to request leave for up to twelve weeks as permitted under FMLA. This time allowed under Parental Leave of Absence will run concurrently with the time provided under FMLA. For employees that do not qualify for FMLA, any additional leave time requested beyond the five weeks of Parental Leave of Absence will be considered for the medical necessity of the employee only and will be handled as a request for additional medical leave for the employee's own serious health condition. This time allowed under Parental Leave of Absence will run concurrently with the time provided under NIU Illness Leave of Absence.

Employees utilizing the paid Parental Leave of Absence benefits will not be eligible for Non-Accumulative Sick Leave for the employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of an immediate family member as outlined in the NIU Board of Trustee Regulations during their Parental Leave of Absence.

There is no expectation of work from employees that are on Paid Parental Leave of Absence. Any employees choosing to perform work while on Paid Parental Leave of Absence will forfeit the paid leave benefit during the time worked, however, and the work time will not count against their FMLA entitlement.

Application Process and Documentation

- Eligible employees wishing to apply for paid Parental Leave of Absence benefits should apply for leave by submitting the Parental Leave of Absence request form.
- The application should be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the expected start date of the leave of absence or as soon as practical.
- Upon receipt of the Parental Leave of Absence request form, the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office will determine if the employee is also eligible for FMLA. The employee will be notified of the determination by a Notice of Eligibility Rights and Responsibilities form that will be sent to them via email.
- Upon review of the application, the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office will also email the employee and their supervisor when the Parental Leave of Absence is approved.
- To initiate the Parental Leave of Absence, the employee is required to submit the following documentation within 14 calendar days of the date of birth of the child or the date of placement of the child for adoption or foster care:
 - Birth certificate (hospital issued certificate is acceptable)
 - Adoption decree or order with judge's signature and the circuit clerk's file stamp*
 - Petition for adoption with the circuit clerk's stamp*
 - Foster Care documentation*

*If the 14 calendar day documentation deadline is not feasible for the adoption or foster care process, employees should notify the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office of the expected submission date.

- Upon receipt of the required documentation, the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office will send a leave confirmation to the employee, the supervisor, NIU Payroll, and NIU Employment Services.
- Departmental attendance procedures are expected to be followed until the Parental Leave Notification has been processed. Employees should notify their department once their child has been born or placed for adoption or foster care.

Payroll Information

Employees that are on a paid Parental Leave of Absence must record all absence time as personal sick leave on their hourly time sheet or salaried benefit usage form. Additionally, 'paid Parental Leave of Absence' should be noted in the comments section. The Payroll Office will ensure time recorded in this manner will be accessed from the University provided benefit.

Return to Work

All employees are expected to return to work on the date indicated in their leave confirmation. Any proposed change in this date must be communicated to the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office.

Human Resource Services assumes that any employee returning from Paid Parental Leave of Absence or any employee that chooses to work while on Paid Parental Leave of Absence has the necessary clearance from their physician to do so.