

**Parental Leave Policy Changes
Effective January 1, 2011**

Finance Committee – October 14, 2010
Board of Trustees – October 14, 2010

Recommendation:

The President recommends:

That the Parental Leave policy (PER 4.18) be amended as provided in the attached document to increase the parental leave benefit for regular faculty and staff from three weeks to six weeks of paid time off in connection with the birth or adoption of a child and to establish eligibility at the current full-time-equivalent thresholds for regular part-time employees, equivalent to vacation leave, sick leave, family medical leave, and catastrophic shared leave.

Purpose: To promote a work-family friendly environment, acknowledge that additional leave time will contribute directly to the mental health and wellbeing of University employees, and convey institutional value to employees. To promote consistency and coordination in the administration of leave programs by establishing the same eligibility threshold for parental leave as related leave programs.

Background:

The Board of Trustees established the Parental Leave Policy effective November 1, 1995, which provides that regular full-time and part-time faculty and staff may receive three weeks of paid parental leave.

More recent and contemporary practices among higher education support the extension of leave from three weeks to six weeks and reflect the reality that public child care facilities will not generally accept children less than six weeks old. Among UofL peer institutions that have established formal parental leave policies, one institution provides two weeks, one institution provides four weeks, two institutions provide six weeks, and two institutions provide one full semester.

During academic year 2009-10, the Commission on the Status of Women – with the endorsement of the Executive Committees of the Faculty & Staff Senates and the Great Places to Work Committee – proposed that the University increase its parental leave allowance from three weeks to six weeks of paid leave for all regular full-time and part-time faculty and staff.

When the Board approved the original parental leave policy, the eligibility threshold for regular part-time employees was based on the number of hours worked in the previous 12 months (or 2/3 FTE for faculty). This results in a different threshold from vacation leave, sick leave, family medical leave, and catastrophic shared leave – all of which

establish the eligibility threshold at .50 FTE for employees who were hired after May 1, 1992 or .40 FTE for employees who have been in continuous employment status since May 1, 1992. To promote consistency in the application and coordination of various leave programs, the Office of Human Resources recommends adjusting the eligibility threshold for parental leave to be the same as other leave policies.

Estimated Cost: The U.S. birthrate is currently 13.9 per 1,000.

- The U.S. birthrate applied to UofL faculty would project 22 leaves among full-time faculty and eight leaves among part-time faculty per year. The estimated cost for additional faculty leave would be \$168,000 per year.
- The U.S. birthrate applied to staff would project 52 leaves among full-time staff and three leaves among part-time staff per year. The estimated cost for additional staff leave would be \$142,000.
- Total estimated cost would be \$310,000 per year, to be funded initially through the University's Health & Wellness program budget administered by Human Resources, and subsequently through a centralized fringe benefit pool, if adopted.

Overall Assessment: The parental leave program has proven to be a valuable resource for employees in significant need during their family-building years and has fostered a greater sense of community and well being among employees. Increasing the parental leave benefit from three weeks to six weeks would expressly support the 2020 Vision Plan by promoting a more balanced, work-family friendly environment.

Recommend approval, effective January 1, 2011.

COMMITTEE ACTION

BOARD ACTION

PASSED _____

PASSED _____

DID NOT PASS _____

DID NOT PASS _____

OTHER _____

OTHER _____

DATE (Oct 14, 2010) _____

DATE (Oct 14, 2010) _____

/s/ (Kathleen M. Smith)

/s/ (Kathleen Smith)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Policy: PER 4.18
Title: Parental Leave
Approved: November 1, 1995
Revised: January 1, 2011

I. POLICY AND/OR OBJECTIVE

The university will provide paid Parental Leave for university faculty and staff effective November 1, 1995. Eligible employees will receive ~~three~~ six weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child of the employee or of the qualifying adult.

The parental leave shall begin no sooner than two weeks before the anticipated delivery date or adoption and must end no later than six weeks after the birth or adoption of the child. Parental leave must be taken during the term of the employee's appointment. Eligible employees who work for the university only during part of the year will receive no parental leave pay for any part of the leave that falls outside the appointment period. Parental leave pay will be at the same rate as the employee is then paid.

An "eligible employee" means any current university employee who has completed at least twelve (12) consecutive months of employment as a regular full-time or regular part-time employee ~~and who worked at least 1,250 hours (2/3 FTE for faculty) in the last twelve (12) months.~~ where part-time employee shall be construed as an individual whose appointment status is at least .50 FTE for employees who were hired after May 1, 1992, or at least .40 FTE for employees who have been in continuous employment status since May 1, 1992.

In the case of parents who both work at the university, the policy would apply to both parents provided each otherwise meets the "eligible employee" criteria. This policy does not apply to temporary employees, student positions, trainees or house staff.

II. PROCEDURE

To receive parental leave, a staff member must submit a request for parental leave on the [Request for Leave Form](#) to their supervisor and/or unit head. The request should indicate the days the leave begins and ends.

A faculty member should submit a request for parental leave to their department chair indicating the days the leave begins and ends. The department chair would report such request to the Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Health Affairs as appropriate.

BoT.Parental Leave Proposal.v1
HR:sc:2010-10-08