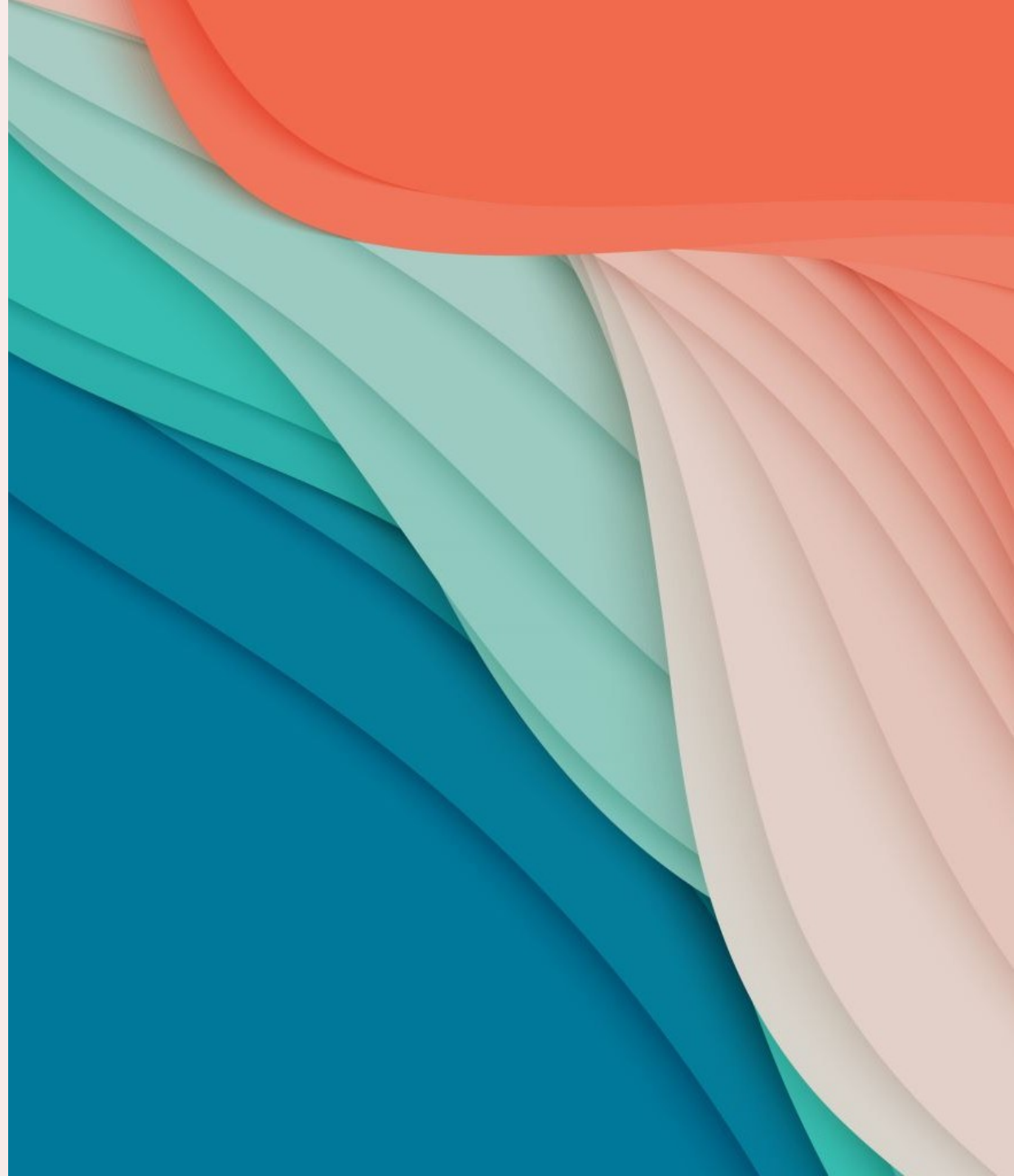

PATHWAYS TO PARENTHOOD

REQUESTING STAFF SENATE
ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE
POLICY, BENEFITS, AND DATA

Presentation to Staff Senate Executive Committee

September 23, 2025



WHAT IS P2P?

- Pathways to Parenthood is an inclusive group for employees on exceptional paths to becoming parents.
- Members may be navigating adoption, assisted reproductive technologies, surrogacy, fostering, or other avenues.
- P2P aims:
 - *to connect* those taking similar paths
 - *to influence* university policy and practice to promote a campus community that supports the people on them

P2P REQUESTS

1. Bereavement Policy
2. Adoption Policy and Benefits
3. Foster Care Policy and Benefits
4. Reproductive Health Policy and Benefits
5. Data Needs

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

- UofL's bereavement policy currently omits reproductive loss.
- Employees who have experienced loss report uncertainty and discomfort about requesting leave under this policy.

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

P2P REQUESTS

1. Revise the bereavement policy to explicitly include reproductive loss.
 2. Use inclusive language (“reproductive loss” vs. “miscarriage”).
 3. Align with [statewide proposed language changes](#) and echo support from the College of Arts and Sciences Ad Hoc Total Rewards Committee.
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THE ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE PATHWAYS

CHALLENGES

Parental Leave

- UofL employees are eligible for standard parental leave under the FMLA.
- Adoption pathway is distinct in two primary ways that make this inadequate.
 1. Leave begins at legal finalization, months after the child is placed.
 2. Families often must travel, prepare homes, and care for the child before FMLA eligibility begins.

THE ADOPTION PATHWAY

CHALLENGES

Cost

- Adoption can cost \$15,000-50,000+, with costs frontloaded.

THE ADOPTION PATHWAY

P2P REQUESTS

Explore benefits such as:

1. Paid leave during travel and post-placement.
2. Phased leave to support family adjustment.
3. Additional unpaid leave beyond FMLA.
4. Financial reimbursements with tax guidance (e.g., \$5,000 tiered package).

THE FOSTER CARE PATHWAY

P2P Requests: Explore Potential Benefits

Tiered Paid Leave Options

- **Placement Leave (Short-Term):** Offer a set number of paid days (5–10) when a new foster child is placed, since those first days are often chaotic with school enrollment, medical appointments, and settling in.
 - **Bonding Leave (Medium-Term):** For long-term or pre-adoptive placements, extend a few weeks of paid leave similar to adoption leave (2–6 weeks).
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THE FOSTER CARE PATHWAY

P2P Requests: Explore Potential Benefits

Flexible Unpaid Leave

- **Protected Unpaid Leave:** Guarantee job protection for court dates, therapy appointments, and emergencies without docking PTO. This could mirror FMLA but be more flexible.

THE FOSTER CARE PATHWAY

P2P Requests: Explore Potential Benefits

Hybrid PTO Banks

- **Foster Leave Bank:** Instead of forcing vacation use, create a separate category of paid leave hours for foster care (like bereavement or jury duty).
 - **Donation Pools:** Allow employees to donate unused PTO into a “foster/adoption leave bank” to support coworkers navigating new placements.
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THE FOSTER CARE PATHWAY

P2P Requests: Explore Potential Benefits

Other Ideas

- **Incremental Leave:** A few paid hours/days here and there to manage unpredictable foster-related obligations.
 - **Emergency Placement Leave:** A policy that grants same-day or next-day paid leave for last-minute placements (parents often get little warning).
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THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PATHWAY

Years ago, UofL showed leadership by offering infertility benefits before the University of Kentucky and many peers.

Employees are grateful.

Gaps in coverage are causing preventable hardship.

THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PATHWAY

BARRIERS TO CARE

- **Health Plan Selection/Enrollment Period:** When diagnosed with infertility, no way to switch if benefit was missed during open enrollment.
 - **UofL Two-Employee Household:** Only the patient can use the benefit (female), even with male-factor infertility.
 - **Exclusion of LGBTQ+ Families:** Current definition excludes same-sex couples and others needing donor gametes or surrogacy.
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THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PATHWAY

BARRIERS TO CARE

- **Lifetime Maximum:** \$5,000 per medical and pharmaceutical costs is far below average treatment costs (average cost of IVF = \$12,400 per cycle, excluding medication, pre-screening, or additional treatments; many individuals require multiple rounds).

THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PATHWAY

BARRIERS TO CARE

- **Out-of-Pocket Costs**
 - **Low Reimbursement Rates:** Local providers bypass insurance, increasing out-of-pocket expenses.
 - \$300 New Patient Consultation Appointment
 - >\$23,000 for IUI + IVF (with UofL insurance)
 - **Pharmaceutical Limitations:** Unused benefits can't always be applied to later treatment stages.

THE HEALTH CARE PATHWAY

P2P REQUESTS

1. Add infertility as a “qualifying life event” for mid-year plan changes.
 2. Allow both partners in a two-employee household to apply benefits.
 3. Include LGBTQ+ employees.
 4. Consider raising or eliminating lifetime maximums.
 5. Explore reinstating infertility services via UofL provider.
 6. Support improved reimbursement rates and pharmaceutical coverage.
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DATA NEEDS

In Response to Requests for Changes, HR Responses Often Cite Either:

Too many employees would use expanded benefits (too costly)

OR

Too few would benefit (not worth it)

(They want us to show them that a significant number of people want changes.)

These conflicting messages emphasize the need for clear data.

DATA NEEDS

P2P REQUESTS

- UofL share existing data related to adoption and health care benefits with P2P.
 - Conduct a university-led feasibility assessment for adoption-related support.
 - Conduct a university-led feasibility assessment for improving health care-related support.
 - Share results of assessments with employees, including P2P.
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P2P REQUESTS

1. Bereavement Policy

- Staff Senate Support Revision

2-3. Adoption and Foster Care Policy and Benefits

- Staff Senate Support Exploration

4. Reproductive Health Policy and Benefits

- Staff Senate Support Exploration

5. Data Needs

- Staff Senate Support Data Acquisition, Sharing

UPDATE SINCE 9/23 PRESENTATION TO SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Presented to Faculty Senate Executive Committee on 9/24
 - Returning to future meeting to make a formal motion for support.
2. Faculty Senate XC representative will invite our group to present to a future Human Resources Advisory Committee (rechartered) meeting.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

QUESTIONS?

NEXT STEPS?
