

[UW System Administrative Policy 1221: Paid Parental Leave](#) provides Eligible Employees with up to 6 (six) weeks of paid time off following a qualifying birth or adoptive event to allow for time to bond with their new child, adjust to their new family situation, and balance personal obligations that result from a birth or adoptive event.

### Leave Provisions

- 1) Question: I had a baby/adopted a child prior to the effective date of the Paid Parental Leave policy. Can I qualify for Paid Parental Leave for that qualifying event?**

Answer: No. An employee's qualifying event must occur on or after the effective date of the Paid Parental Leave policy.

- 2) Question: If I don't use my Paid Parental Leave within the 12 months following the qualifying event, can I use it later?**

Answer: No. Paid Parental Leave must be used and completed within 12 months following the qualifying event (a birth or adoptive event). Any unused Paid Parental Leave remaining at the end of the 12-month period is forfeited and may not be banked for later use, paid out, or combined with any future Paid Parental Leave.

- 3) Question: Can Paid Parental Leave be used continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced schedule basis?**

Answer: Yes. If approved for Paid Parental Leave it can be used on a continuous basis. To use Paid Parental Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule, advanced approval is required from the eligible employee's department, except when leave is designated as falling under the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA). The employee's institution Human Resources Contact will determine if their leave will be designated as WFMLA.

- 4) Question: If I have used the maximum six weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period, when am I eligible for any new Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: The Paid Parental Leave 12-month period begins on the date of the qualifying event. To be eligible for a new allocation of Paid Parental Leave, a new qualifying event (a birth or adoptive event) must occur after the original 12-month period ends.

- 5) Question: If I have used the maximum six weeks of Paid Parental Leave within a 12-month period and have another qualifying event occur before the end of the 12-month period, what are my options?**

Answer: Employees should reach out their institution Human Resources Contact to discuss their leave options. Employees may be eligible for additional leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA), or Universities of Wisconsin leave policies. Employees may also be eligible to use their paid leave balances such as sick leave, vacation, personal holiday, or request to take leave without pay.

- 6) **Question: I am having twins or adopting more than one child on the same date. Am I eligible to receive Paid Parental Leave for each child?**

Answer: No. When a pregnancy results in the birth of more than one child (twins, triplets, etc.), all children born are treated as one qualifying event. In the case of multiple children being adopted on the same date, all children are treated as one qualifying event.

- 7) **Question: My request for Paid Parental Leave was approved, but my qualifying event didn't occur on the expected date. Am I allowed to change the date(s) of my Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: If an employee becomes aware that their original anticipated date for their qualifying event was inaccurate, the employee must update their notice as soon as practicable. If the date of the qualifying event is different from the anticipated date submitted on the application, it is the responsibility of the employee to notify their institution Human Resources Contact, no later than three days after the qualifying event. Regardless of any difference between the anticipated date of the actual date of the qualifying event, employees shall provide notice to their institution Human Resources Contact that the event occurred as soon as is practical. Notice may take the form of a phone call or email.

- 8) **Question: My qualifying event occurred earlier than expected and I have not yet submitted a Paid Parental Leave Request Form. When can my Paid Parental Leave take effect?**

Answer: It is understood that under some circumstances it is not feasible to provide 30 days notice. In these cases, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable. If an employee becomes aware that their original anticipated date for their qualifying event was inaccurate, the employee must update their notice as soon as practicable.

- 9) **Question: I need to begin a leave of absence prior to giving birth due to complications of my pregnancy or I am adopting and need to attend required appointments, training, or travel. Do I qualify for Paid Parental Leave at the time I start my leave of absence if my child has not been born yet or the adoption has not occurred?**

Answer: No. Paid Parental Leave may not be used prior to the date of the qualifying event. Employees should check with their Human Resources Contact to discuss other leave options.

- 10) **Question: If I am not going to use Paid Parental Leave, can I give my 6 weeks to another employee?**

Answer: No. Paid Parental Leave cannot be donated or transferred to other employees.

### Relation to Other Leave

- 11) **Question: Is Paid Parental Leave different from Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)?**

Answer: Yes, Paid Parental Leave is different from FMLA. These two benefits have different eligibility criteria, and Paid Parental Leave provides paid leave, while FMLA leave is unpaid. Additionally, FMLA provides job-protected leave. Employees do not need to qualify for FMLA to use Paid Parental Leave.

**12) Question: Do I need to qualify for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) or Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA) in order to receive Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: No. Employees do not need to qualify for FMLA or WFMLA to be eligible to use Paid Parental Leave.

**13) Question: What happens if I am eligible for both Paid Parental Leave and Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) and/or Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA)?**

Answer: When an employee is eligible for both Paid Parental Leave and FMLA and/or WFMLA, they will be applied concurrently (at the same time). The amount of FMLA and/or WFMLA leave available to an employee will decrease by the same amount of Paid Parental Leave used, in whole or in part.

**14) Question: Am I required to use my sick leave hours before using Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: No. For child bonding purposes, employees must use Paid Parental Leave prior to using any of their paid leave balances (sick leave, vacation, personal) or unpaid leave.

Paid Parental Leave is applied concurrently (at the same time) with FMLA or WFMLA.

Other paid leave balances must be used before the Paid Parental Leave qualifying event. Other paid leave balances may also be used after Paid Parental Leave has been exhausted to extend the leave of absence.

### Requesting Paid Parental Leave

**15) Question: Is documentation required to support a request for Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: Yes. Employees are required to submit documentation as soon as practical. Forms of documentation include: a health care certification from a medical doctor, a birth certificate, a certified copy of an adoption order listing the eligible employee as a parent, a certified copy of a foreign adoption order registered in the State of Wisconsin, or a comparable official or professional documentation.

**16) Question: When do I need to submit my request for Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: An eligible employee must submit a completed [Paid Parental Leave Request Form](#) at least 30 calendar days in advance of the Paid Parental Leave start date. If 30 days' notice is not given, the leave may be denied until 30 days after the notice is received.

**17) Question: What should I do if I am not able to provide 30 days' notice in advance of my leave date?**

Answer: It is understood that under some circumstances it is not feasible to provide 30 days notice. In these cases, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable. If an employee becomes aware that their original anticipated date for their qualifying event was inaccurate, the employee must update their notice as soon as practicable. Employees must follow their department's normal procedures for requesting time off and calling in absences.

### Eligibility

**18) Question: If both parents work for the Universities of Wisconsin can both qualify for Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: Yes. Paid Parental Leave is available to both parents, regardless of gender, as long as both parents meet the eligibility criteria listed in the policy. When two eligible Universities of Wisconsin employees have the same qualifying event, each will receive the full Paid Parental Leave benefit they are entitled to receive.

**19) Question: If both parents work at the Universities of Wisconsin and qualify for Paid Parental Leave, can they take Paid Parental Leave at the same time?**

Answer: Yes. Both parents may take Paid Parental Leave at the same time. Paid Parental Leave also allows parents to take Paid Parental Leave at different times.

**20) Question: How does the eligibility requirement for six continuous months of employment apply if my appointment includes a period of a work break?**

Answer: For those employees who are appointed to a 9-, 10-, or 11-month renewable position, periods spent on a work break with an expectation of continuing employment counts towards the six month requirement.

**21) Question: Do I need to have six months of continuous employment at my current Universities of Wisconsin campus to be eligible for Paid Parental Leave, or does prior service with a different Universities of Wisconsin campus count toward the eligibility requirement?**

Answer: Prior service with all Universities of Wisconsin campuses count toward the six months of continuous employment if the prior service was in an appointment that qualifies for Paid Parental Leave at the Universities of Wisconsin and only if there is no break in service between the Universities of Wisconsin appointments. Other eligibility requirements apply and are outlined in UW System Administrative Policy 1221: Paid Parental Leave.

**22) Question: Do individuals in research associate, postdoctoral fellow, and/or postdoctoral trainee (postdocs) appointments qualify for Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: Yes. Individuals in postdoc appointments qualify for Paid Parental Leave if they qualify for leave under [UW System Administrative Policy 1220: Postdoc Absence with Pay and Legal Holidays](#) and meet the eligibility requirements of [UW System Administrative Policy 1221: Paid Parental Leave](#).

### Questions About Appointments

**23) Question: If I move to a new appointment, do I get a new amount of Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: No. Eligible full-time employees are able to take up to a maximum of six weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a 12-month period. That 12-month period begins on the date of their qualifying event. If part of Paid Parental Leave was used at a previous appointment within the same 12-month period, the remaining available Paid Parental Leave balance will be prorated for the new appointment.

**24) Question: If I have a qualifying event while I am in an appointment that is ineligible for Paid Parental Leave, but then move to an appointment that is eligible for Paid Parental Leave, can I take Paid Parental Leave at that time?**

Answer: No. If the employee was in an ineligible position at the time of the qualifying event (a birth or adoptive event) but later move to an eligible position, they may not use Paid Parental Leave for that qualifying event because they were not eligible when the event occurred.

**25) Question: How is Paid Parental Leave applied if I have two concurrent appointments?**

Answer: Each active appointment will be evaluated to see if the employee meets the Paid Parental Leave eligibility requirements. Paid Parental Leave is prorated for less-than-full-time appointments.

If the employee has appointments at more than one institution the employee must apply for Paid Parental Leave separately at each institution working with their Human Resources Contact and supervisor at each institution.

**26) Question: Will I be returned to my original appointment after taking Paid Parental Leave?**

Answer: At the conclusion of the Paid Parental Leave, the employee will typically return to the same position held at the time the leave began. In certain circumstances, the employee may be returned to an equivalent position. An employee on Paid Parental Leave is still subject to a layoff or reassignment that would have occurred otherwise had the employee been working. A fitness for duty exam may be required should the employee experience a serious health condition during Paid Parental Leave.