

PARENTAL LEAVE – SUPPLEMENTAL PARENTAL LEAVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Updated: July 1, 2025

What is Parental Leave vs Supplemental Parental Leave?

Parental Leave is the policy that outlines the circumstances for which eligible employees may use accrued sick leave for qualifying events. Paid Supplemental Parental Leave (SPL) is a leave quota that may be requested when an eligible employee does not have eight (8) weeks of sick leave available for their event/incident.

Who is eligible for the Parental Leave described in this policy?

Regular employees holding Faculty, Administrative, Managerial/Professional, Office/Service or Postdoctoral appointments are eligible, this includes part-time regular employees. Temporary employees are not eligible for the leave given under this policy, however they can use their accrued leave balances for the events cited in this policy.

Am I required to use my sick leave before accessing Supplemental Parental Leave?

Yes; employees are expected to use all available sick leave before paid Supplemental Parental Leave (SPL) is granted. For faculty represented by a bargaining unit, please contact your respective Academic Affairs or HR representative for further clarification.

I am a faculty member. What happens if I do not have enough sick leave or disability leave to cover the full eight (8) weeks?

The University will continue your pay for the remainder of the leave, up to a total of eight (8) weeks for you to remain in a paid status.

Can I take additional leave beyond the eight (8) weeks of Parental Leave?

Yes. If additional time is needed, employees may request to use other leave types, as available under University policies (e.g., vacation leave, unpaid leave).

Will I be required to teach during my Parental Leave if I am a faculty member?

No. Faculty members will be excused from teaching/instructional duties during the semester or period when the majority of the leave occurs. If excused, the faculty member will be required to perform non-teaching or noninstructional duties for the remaining portion of the semester that is outside of the parental leave period, subject to FMLA provisions.

Will my pay be reduced if someone else teaches my course during my Parental Leave?

No. Faculty members' pay will not be reduced during Parental Leave, even if a substitute is assigned to your instructional duties.

What does it mean for Parental Leave to “run concurrently” with FMLA?

The time an employee is on Parental Leave may also count towards the 12-weeks of Family Medical Leave (FMLA). Employees often use Family Medical Leave for events/incidents related to Parental Leave as FMLA provides job and benefit protections.

Do I need to complete paperwork for Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and Parental Leave?

Family Medical Leave paperwork is sufficient in most instances to document the need for Parental Leave. Follow your campus/unit department procedures to submit Family Medical Leave.

If you do not have a sufficient leave balance and require additional leave up to a total of eight (8) weeks of paid leave for an event/incident, you may request Supplemental Parental Leave (SPL) by submitting the SPL Request Form.

Do I have to use all my available leaves, including vacation leave, before using Supplemental Parental Leave?

No; only sick leave must be exhausted or projected to be exhausted during the eligible event/incident. You do not have to use or exhaust your Floating Holidays, Vacation, Compensatory Time, or other leave balances to receive Supplemental Parental Leave. Parental leave allows for usage of up to eight (8) weeks of accrued sick leave. If an eligible employee does not have eight (8) weeks of sick leave at the start of a qualifying event/incident or will exhaust their accrued sick leave during the event/incident, Supplemental Parental Leave (SPL) can be provided for a total eight (8) weeks.

What forms should I complete to request Supplemental Parental Leave?

If you do not have eight (8) weeks of available sick leave or will exhaust sick leave during the eligible event/incident, you may request Supplemental Parental Leave (SPL) by submitting the Supplemental Parental Leave Request form.

If you have a sufficient sick leave balance and do not require additional paid leave to complete eight (8) weeks, you do not need to submit a request form for Supplemental Parental Leave.

Family Medical Leave may be applied concurrently for an eligible event/incident; please follow the existing FMLA procedures for your campus/unit.

Do I need to submit documentation to support Parental Leave or paid Supplemental Parental Leave?

Yes, employees can either provide the healthcare certification form that supports FMLA and/or documentation verifying the birth of the child (e.g., a birth certificate, hospital admission/ dismissal paperwork associated with the event). If you have questions, contact your respective HR office. [NOTE: additional documentation is submitted to HR not the immediate supervisor]

Do I need to enter my leave time for Parental Leave?

If you have eight (8) weeks of sick leave for an eligible event/incident, then yes a Firefly Sick Leave Request should be submitted.

If you need to utilize Supplemental Parental Leave, upon approval of your SPL form, a SPL leave quota will be created in Firefly for you to request paid leave. For questions, contact your respective HR office or Payroll coordinator.

Do I need to pay back the Supplemental Parental Leave that was granted?

No; Supplemental Parental Leave does not need to be paid back.

If I earn more sick leave during my time away from work while using Supplement Paid Leave, am I required to use that additional sick leave?

No; additional sick leave accrued will not need to be used.

Are part-time employees eligible for eight (8) weeks of Parental Leave?

Yes, part-time employees are eligible to participate but prorated to their FTE based on hours worked. For example, if you work twenty (20) hours a week, you will receive parental leave for twenty (20) hours per week for eight (8) weeks. This means that an employee that is a 0.5 FTE working twenty (20) hours per week, and has no accrued sick leave, would receive a maximum Supplemental Parental Leave granting of one hundred sixty (160) hours.

Who is a benefit eligible adult designee?

An eligible adult designee follows the definition of an Employee Plus One:

- Has resided in the same residence as the employee for at least the past consecutive twelve (12) months and intends to remain so indefinitely;
- Is at least nineteen (19) years old;
- Is directly dependent upon, or interdependent with, the employee, sharing a common financial obligation that can be documented in a manner prescribed by the university; and
- Is not currently married to or legally separated from another individual under either statutory or common law.

The following individuals are not eligible to be a qualifying Adult Designee:

- Parents or step-parents of employee;
- Employee's parents' or step-parents' other descendants (siblings, nieces, nephews);
- Employee's grandparents, step-grandparents, or their descendants (aunts, uncles, cousins);
- Employee's renters, boarders and tenants, and people who are employees of the employee;
- Children of employee or a descendant of an employee's child;
- A person hired or directly supervised by the employee in an employment setting; or
- A person the employee may transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline as an employee, or if the employee has responsibility to direct an employee's own Adult Designee or to adjust that person's grievances, or effectively to recommend any such action, if the exercise of such authority is not merely of a routine or clerical nature but requires but requires the use of independent judgment.

Who can grant intermittent Parental Leave?

Intermittent Parental Leave requires supervisor approval, and may require additional Department Head, Vice Chancellor, and Human Resources approvals.

When can intermittent Parental Leave be used?

Intermittent Parental Leave may be used for the care of a newborn or the care of a birth parent; with prior designated approvals.

Intermittent Parental Leave cannot be used for periods of incapacity, prenatal care, serious health condition, or adoption.

Intermittent Parental Leave, once approved, must be used within six (6) months of the qualifying event/incident.

When does Parental Leave begin?

The start of Parental Leave depends upon the reasons for taking leave. For example:

Care of or Bonding with a Newborn:

Parental Leave begins when the birth parent is dismissed from the hospital.

Period of incapacity, or need to be off work due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, post-partum recovery, or a serious health condition:

The University requires employees to submit a statement from their healthcare provider verifying the underlying condition and the period of any incapacity.

Care for a Birth Parent: Employees who need to care for a spouse or a benefits eligible adult designee who is incapacitated, who needs assistance during their prenatal care, or who needs assistance due to a serious health condition attributable to or caused by that individual's pregnancy, childbirth, or subsequent recovery:

The University requires employees to submit a statement from their healthcare provider verifying the underlying condition and the period of any incapacity. In these situations, the employee may utilize up to eight (8) workweeks of parental leave. Employees who need to care for a spouse or a benefits-eligible adult designee following a miscarriage or the termination of a pregnancy may utilize up to five (5) workdays of parental leave. If employees need additional leave beyond the eight (8) work weeks or five (5) workdays permitted under this policy, then they may request to use other leave available to them under University policy.

Adoption:

Employees may utilize up to eight (8) workweeks of parental leave to care for and bond with an adopted child following placement. Placement is deemed to commence when the child is placed in the physical custody of the employee or, if travel is required, when the employee commences the trip needed to obtain physical custody of the child, whichever occurs earlier. The University requires employees to submit documentation verifying the placement and date of placement of the adopted child with the employee

How much time can I take off for a spouse or benefits eligible adult designee for miscarriage or termination of pregnancy?

Five (5) days of either sick leave (if available) or Supplemental Parental Leave. If additional time is needed, employees may request to use other leave available under other University policies (e.g., vacation leave, unpaid leave).

If intermittent Parental Leave is granted, how long do I have to utilize the time?

Intermittent leave must be used within six (6) months following the event/incident.

Can both parents employed at the University use Parental Leave for the same birth of a child or adoption of a child?

Yes.

What increments can Parental Leave be used for?

Parental leave can be used in fifteen (15) minute increments.

My wife is having a baby on June 25, 2025; would I be eligible for Supplemental Parental Leave?

No. Parental Leave begins from the event/incident date of incapacitation, or need to be off work due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, post-partum recovery, or a serious health condition. Any events prior to the July 1, 2025 effective date of this policy would not be eligible.

Can I use Parental Leave more than once in a calendar year?

Yes, an employee could potentially use parental leave more than once in a calendar year since such leave is tied to each individual event.

Are there any Collective Bargaining Agreements that have not adopted the Parental Leave policy?

At this time, the new policy does not apply to UNO Faculty. However, Academic Affairs and the UNO AAUP are in conversations.