Policy 4.73
Family & Medical (FMLA)

This policy version was not current at the time of printing. Please see http://policies.emory.edu/4.73 for the current version.

Responsible Official: VP for Human Resources
Administering Division/Department: Leaves of Absence
Effective Date: March 30, 2007
Last Revision: May 20, 2009

Policy Sections:

I. Overview
II. Applicability
III. Policy Details
IV. Related Links
V. Revision History

Overview

Eligible employees may take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") in a rolling 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons. In addition, eligible employees may qualify for up to 26 workweeks of unpaid job-protected leave under the FMLA in certain situations related to a covered family member's service in the Armed Forces.

Applicability

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must:

- Have worked at least 12 months for Emory (need not be consecutive);
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours for Emory over the preceding 12 months (these hours must be actual hours worked, not to include holidays, sick leave and vacation leave); and
- Work at a location where there are at least 50 Emory employees within 75 miles.

Policy Details

REASONS FOR LEAVE

FMLA leave may be taken for the following reasons:

- Birth of the employee's child, or to care for the employee's newborn child;
- Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- To care for an immediate family member (employee's spouse, same-sex domestic partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
  - NOTE: The term spouse as set forth above may include an employee's same-sex domestic partner to the extent that this individual is otherwise covered by our benefits policy.
  - NOTE: Definition of a child is 18 years or younger, or a child over the age of 18 with a physical or mental disability that renders them incapable of self-care.
- Because of the employee's serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job.
• To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of the service member.
  
  - NOTE: Eligible employees are entitled to up to 26 work weeks of unpaid FMLA leave to care for a current member of the Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserves who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty for which he/she is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; is otherwise in outpatient status; or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list.
  
  - NOTE: Eligible employees may not take leave under this provision to care for former members of the Armed Forces, former members of the National Guard or Reserves, or members on the permanent disability retired list.

• A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on active duty (or has been notified on an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation for one or more of the following exigencies:

  • Short-notice deployment
  • Military events and related activities
  • Childcare and school activities
  • Financial and legal arrangements
  • Counseling
  • Rest and recuperation
  • Attending to certain post-deployment activities, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered military member's active duty status, and addressing issues arising from the death of a covered military member.
  
  • Additional activities that the employer and employee shall qualify as an exigency and agree to both the timing and duration of such leave.

  - NOTE: If the employee is on FMLA leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition and the family member dies during the FMLA leave, the FMLA leave ends at that time.

Employees are not eligible for FMLA leave from Emory University if they are employed by another organization.

DURATION OF LEAVE

Eligible employees may receive up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any "rolling" 12-month period, measured backward from the date that any FMLA leave is to be used. FMLA leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.

When leave is to care for an injured or ill service member, an eligible employee may take up to 26 work weeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for that service member. Leave to care for an injured or ill service member when combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, may not exceed 26 weeks in a single 12-month period during which the 26 weeks of military caregiver leave is available begins on the first day that an employee takes military caregiver leave and ends twelve months after that date, regardless of the rolling 12-month period that Emory University utilizes for determining available leave for other FMLA-qualifying reasons.

EXAMPLE FOR 12-MONTH ROLLING PERIOD

If an employee used 4 weeks beginning February 1, 2006, 4 weeks beginning June 1, 2006, and 4 weeks beginning December 1, 2006, the employee would not be entitled to any additional leave until after February 1, 2007. However, beginning on February 1, 2007, the employee would be entitled to 4 weeks of leave, on June 1, 2007, the employee would be entitled to an additional 4 weeks, etc.

If the employee and his/her spouse are employed at Emory, they are limited to a combined total of 12 workweeks of FMLA leave if the reason for the request is for the birth and care of a newborn child, foster care placement or adoption of a child. However, for other qualifying reasons under FMLA (other than leave to care for an injured or ill service member), each eligible spouse is entitled to 12 workweeks. If the employee and his/her spouse are employed by Emory University, they are limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of FMLA leave during a single 12-month period for the care of a service member with a serious injury or illness.

INTERMITENT LEAVE

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave intermittently (in blocks of time), or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule, when medically necessary for their own or an immediate family member's serious health condition. Intermittent or reduced schedule leave is not permitted for birth of a child, to care for a newborn child, or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Employees who require intermittent leave or reduced-schedule leave must try to schedule their leave so that it will not disrupt the department’s operations.

USE OF ACCRUED LEAVE

Employees who are granted FMLA leave must use any applicable accrued paid leave beginning with the effective date of the leave. Upon exhaustion of any applicable paid leave, the remainder of any FMLA leave will be unpaid. For FMLA leaves other than those taken to care for a service member with a serious injury or illness, the combination of
paid and unpaid FMLA leave will not exceed 12 workweeks in any 12-month period. If the employee is taking FMLA leave because of his or her own serious health condition and continues to be medically unable to work beyond the 12 weeks allowed by FMLA, the employee may request and may be approved for medical leave and allowed to continue using accrued leave. However this extension will not be counted as FMLA leave. Employees do not accrue leave while in an unpaid status.

**EXEMPT EMPLOYEE**

If an exempt employee is on Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA), the employee will be paid for actual hours worked during workweeks that include any FMLA leave. Hours not worked due to FMLA will be charged against an employee’s leave balance or will be leave without pay. Thus, employers can ‘dock’ the pay of otherwise-exempt, salaried employees for FMLA leave taken for partial day as well as full day absences.

**STAFF AND PRINCIPAL EMPLOYEES**

Employees on leave for the care of a child, spouse, same-sex domestic partner, or parent, for the care of a service member with a serious injury or illness, or for his/her own serious health condition must use unused sick leave at the commencement of FMLA leave. The amount of sick leave allowed will be based on the period of time the employee is needed to care for the family member or is medically unable to work as indicated on the health care provider’s certification. Employees are given the choice to use accrued vacation or holiday leave or go into an unpaid status after sick leave is exhausted.

**CHILDBIRTH AND ADOPTIONS**

Employees on leave for care of a newborn child or adoption or placement of a foster child must use unused vacation leave, floating holidays or accrued holiday leave. Only when all applicable paid leave has been used will the balance of the FMLA leave be unpaid leave.

**FACULTY**

Faculty requesting FMLA leave must refer to the dean of their school or college for guidelines and processing.

**MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH, DENTAL AND LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS**

While on paid leave, benefits premiums will be deducted from an employee’s paycheck.

While on an unpaid leave, the employee will be responsible for submitting payment for premiums before or on the date specified by Human Resources. If an employee does not pay the required contributions, coverage will be canceled. However, the employee will be given 15 days notice before coverage is canceled. For those employees who return from FMLA leave, Emory may elect to recover any employee share of contributions paid by Emory for maintaining coverage(s) for the employee while on FMLA leave to the extent permitted by law.

Employees who elect to continue participation while on FMLA leave must notify Human Resources to cancel the coverage. If employee elects not to continue coverage during leave, the employee will be reinstated to health, dental, and life insurance benefits upon return to work at the end of an FMLA leave.

An employee on family leave may elect to continue participation in optional health, dental, life and BeneFlex plans for the duration of the FMLA leave and the employee will be responsible for paying his/her share of the contribution.

**RETIREMENT PLAN/DISABILITY**

In accordance with Emory’s written retirement policy for employees on leave without pay, eligibility for both Emory and the employee retirement contributions will cease during the FMLA leave without pay. Eligibility for disability insurance will continue; however, the employee has to pay the COLA portion of the Long-Term Disability coverage. Paying the required premiums will continue Short-Term Disability.

**COURTESY SCHOLARSHIP/TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

Eligibility for participation in the Courtesy Scholarship or Tuition Reimbursement programs will continue during the FMLA leave.

**JOB RESTORATION**

Upon returning from FMLA leave, eligible employees normally will be restored to their original job or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

Exceptions are permitted when the original position is abolished during the FMLA leave due to reduction in force, reorganization, or if the employee would not otherwise have been employed even if leave had not been taken.
NOTICE AND MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

When seeking FMLA leave, employees may be required to provide:

1. Thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave, if the need is foreseeable, or notice as soon as practicable in the case of leave that is not foreseeable 30 days in advance;

2. Medical, military exigency or other certification supporting the need for leave must be returned before the employee's leave begins, or if not possible, within 15 days of the department's request to provide the certification. If the employee fails to do so, Emory University may delay the commencement of the employee’s leave or withdraw any designation of FMLA leave, in which case the employee’s leave of absence would be unauthorized, subjecting the employee to discipline up to and including dismissal.

3. Second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certifications may also be required;

4. Periodic reports as deemed appropriate during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work;

5. Additional medical documentation to support extensions of leave beyond the original certification period; and;

6. Medical documentation of fitness for duty before returning to work, if the leave was due to the employee's serious health condition.

Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements may result in delay or denial of leave or reinstatement from leave.

FAILURE TO RETURN AFTER FMLA LEAVE

Any employee who fails to return to work as scheduled after FMLA leave may be subject to dismissal from employment. Employees who exceed their FMLA entitlement without extension(s) of their leave approved under other appropriate leave provisions, may be subject to dismissal from employment.

LIMITED NATURE OF THIS POLICY

This policy is intended to provide only those leave benefits and protections required by FMLA.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

A Human Resources Action Form (HRAF) must be submitted to Human Resources when an employee is on paid and unpaid FMLA. A HRAF does not need to be submitted for employees on intermittent leave. An online FMLA leave request must be completed and submitted by the employee, manager or departmental Human Resources Representative prior to submitting a HRAF. The online FMLA Leave Request may be found at: https://apps.hr.emory.edu:8443/FMLA/

FMLA ELIGIBILITY NOTICE

Supervisors should consult with Human Resources immediately upon learning of the employee's request (verbally or in writing) for FMLA leave or of an absence that may qualify for FMLA leave.

FMLA DESIGNATION NOTICE

If an employee meets the FMLA eligibility requirements, they will be notified by Human Resources whether or not the leave is designated as FMLA leave within 5 business days of receipt of the health care provider, exigency or other certification. Leaves will be designated as 'approved', 'not approved', or 'additional information needed.' Employees will be notified when additional information is needed and will have 7 calendar days to remedy the deficiency.

Related Links

- Current Version of This Policy: http://policies.emory.edu/4.73
- HRAF Form (https://apps.hr.emory.edu:8443/FMLA/)

Revision History

Emory University policies are subject to change at any time. If you are reading this policy in paper or PDF format, you are strongly
encouraged to visit policies.emory.edu to ensure that you are relying on the current version.