


MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

November 9, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA)
Academic Specialist Advisory Committee (ASAC)

FROM: June Pierce Youatt, Provost 

SUBJECT: Parental Leave Policy

Our Parental Leave policy was originally adopted in December 2000 as one of many efforts to support the career and family life needs of faculty and academic specialists. The policy provides six weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child. As was common for many such policies adopted by our peers during that time period, if both parents are MSU faculty or academic specialists, they must share the six weeks paid parental leave between them. This seemed to us a policy not in the best interest of our faculty and academic staff.



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The Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Human Resources conducted a review of our parental leave policy relative to our peer institutions in the Big Ten Academic Alliance. While our policy of providing six weeks of paid parental leave for the birth of adoption of a child is still in the mainstream, we were not surprised to find that many of our peers no longer require a sharing of this leave when both parents are faculty or academic staff.

As a result, I am proposing that the MSU policy be revised to provide six weeks of paid parental leave to each parent. The intent of this policy change is to support our faculty and academic staff in the integration of personal and family life with work life. We are proud to provide practices, programs and policies that contribute to MSU's ability to recruit and retain the best faculty and academic staff members. Please find drafts attached to this memorandum for your review and feedback.

Parental Leave for Faculty and Academic Staff - Faculty Handbook

IV. ACADEMIC HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES (Cont.)

This policy was issued by the Office of the Provost on December 27, 2000 and revised on January 1, 2017.

Faculty and academic staff who are appointed on at least a 50 percent basis for nine months or more are eligible for parental leave in accordance with this policy. This policy is to be read in coordination with the Short-Term Disability policy and the Family and Medical Leave Policy for faculty and academic staff.¹

Faculty and academic staff are eligible to receive up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth of a child. Faculty and academic staff who adopt a child younger than age six and/or not attending school full-time are eligible to receive up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave. Additional unpaid leave may be available for the birth of a child or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Policy and/or the policy regarding Leaves of Absence Without Pay for faculty and academic staff.

In situations where the University employs both parents of a newborn/adopted child as faculty/academic staff, ~~each may have a combined maximum of six (6) weeks of paid parental leave is available under this policy. Both parents are expected to coordinate leave arrangements between their respective units so that the maximum parental leave period is not exceeded.~~ Parents employed in the same department or school should plan the timing of their leaves in consultation with the chairperson, school director or dean. Depending on the circumstances, additional unpaid leave may be available pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Policy or with the approval of the academic unit administrator.

Requests for parental leave must be accompanied by evidence of adoption or by a health care provider's medical certification that provides the projected delivery date. Faculty and academic staff are expected to make leave arrangements with the academic unit administrator as far in advance as possible. The timing of parental leave can be arranged to provide some variation in scheduling the leave of absence period before and/or after the projected delivery/adoption date in recognition of constraints associated with academic responsibilities. Faculty and academic staff are encouraged to schedule leave periods with input from the academic unit administrator regarding the needs of the individual unit.

Leave for purposes relating to ongoing child care is not to be confused with parental leave or medical leave of absence relating to pregnancy and child birth. Faculty and academic staff may arrange to use available vacation time or leave without pay for child care purposes with the approval of the academic unit administrator.

Footnote:

¹ In cases where a faculty/academic staff member provides medical certification that she is unable to work due to a disability related to pregnancy, childbirth and/or recovery, such absences will be covered by the Short Term Disability Policy for faculty and academic staff. Normally, short term disability leave related to pregnancy, childbirth and/or recovery is for 6 weeks but may be longer with proper medical certification. ~~Note that the combination of Short Term Disability and Parental leave replaces the 12 weeks normally provided by the Maternity Leave policy, which has been discontinued.~~