
Applies to: Regular faculty and staff

Responsible Office

Human Resources

POLICY STATEMENT

Faculty and staff may request a leave without pay for personal or medical reasons, including pregnancy.

Requests for leave are subject to approval by the appropriate supervisor within the employing department. All unpaid family and medical leave is governed by this policy.

A leave implies that the same or similar position will be made available to the individual upon return from leave subject to the provisions set forth in Reduction in Workforce policy 2.7.25 (staff) or relevant provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the college and the faculty union.

Being in an unpaid status does not constitute approved unpaid leave and is not governed by this policy.

Purpose of the Policy

To provide guidance on, and consistent application of, unpaid leave for personal or medical reasons.

Policy Details

- I. Employees may be granted unpaid leave at the discretion of the college.
- II. Faculty and staff do not receive pay for holidays that occur during an unpaid leave.
- III. Vacation and sick leave credits do not accrue during an unpaid leave.
- IV. Eligibility for multiple leaves is based on leave time previously taken.
- V. If a leave is used for a purpose other than that stated, the balance of the leave may be canceled and the individual may be subject to disciplinary action or dismissal.
- VI. The right to return to work earlier than scheduled is subject to the availability of work. In the case of a medical leave, medical evidence will be required. If staff member requests to return to work before the expiration of the leave, the Office of Human Resources must be notified in writing prior to the desired date of return. If a faculty member elects to return to work prior to the expiration of the leave, he/she must notify the appropriate administrator and the Chief Academic Officer in writing at least one week prior to the desired date of return. The right to return to work earlier than scheduled is subject to the availability of work in the faculty member's position and in the academic unit concerned.
- VII. Personal leave
 - A. The specific reason for the personal leave must be included in the employee's written request for unpaid personal leave.
 - B. Personal leaves are to be granted only with the clear understanding that the employee is planning to return to the college.
 - C. Available vacation leave must be used prior to the approval of a personal leave, in accordance with Paid Leave policy 2.6.40.
 - D. Personal leave that qualifies as FML must be so designated and counted toward both the 12 weeks of FML and the time limit for personal leave.
 - E. The college discourages faculty requests for leaves to enter private business or to accept a faculty position elsewhere unless such request is considered by the appropriate administrator and the president to be an opportunity to enhance and strengthen the professional development of the faculty member.

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VIII. Medical leave

- A. Employees may be granted unpaid leave up to six months, at the discretion of the college. For staff, one extension of up to two months may be granted to allow a decision regarding OPERS disability retirement, at the discretion of the college.
- B. Satisfactory medical documentation is required for medical leave and must indicate a projected date for return to work or reevaluation, medical verification of ability to return to work, and other appropriate information.
- C. Available vacation and sick leave must be used prior to the approval of a medical leave, in accordance with the Paid Leave policy 2.6.40. A waiver of this requirement may be made in workers' compensation, short-term disability, and long-term disability cases.
- D. Medical leave must be designated as Family Medical Leave (FML) and counted toward both the 12 weeks of FML and the time limit for medical leave, if applicable.

IX. Approval and guidelines

- A. The college may grant leaves of absence to an employee upon written request from the employee and the approval of the appropriate administrator. Faculty requests for unpaid leave require final approval of the President.
- B. Unpaid leave requests in excess of three months require the approval of the Office of Human Resources.
- C. All requests for unpaid leave must have a definite starting date and a definite date of return. Neither of these dates should be a holiday or scheduled day off.
- D. No supplemental payments or appointments can be made to a faculty member while on an approved leave of absence.
- E. A faculty member on a nine-month appointment is paid in 26 bi-weekly installments, leave of absence without salary for such a person for one academic semester requires that thirteen (13) bi-weekly payments or one-half of the annual salary be withheld. During fiscal years which include 27 pay periods, an equivalent number of pays will be withheld equaling one-half of the annual salary.

X. Retirement service credit for leaves from the college

- A. **STRS Member** - Under provisions of the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), a member of STRS may, subject to college and STRS approval, contribute to the retirement system in order to obtain service credit for the period of leave. Eligibility requirements and procedures are outlined in the Purchasing Service Credit section of the STRS website.
- B. **OPERS Member** - Under provisions of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio (OPERS), a member of OPERS may contribute to the retirement system to obtain service credit for the period of leave. Eligibility requirements and procedures are outlined in the Purchase Service Credit section of the OPERS website.

XI. Benefits while on unpaid leave

A faculty or staff member who receives an unpaid leave should contact the Office of Human Resources for the continuation of group benefit programs. Faculty and staff will be billed for benefits contributions while on unpaid leave.

PROCEDURE

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Faculty leave	
Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request an unpaid leave by completing the Application for Leave form along with the required documentation outlined in this policy. 2. Submit the form and documentation to the designated administrator prior to the beginning of the leave.

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Position or Office	Responsibilities
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a request for personal leave at least ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the leave Submit a request for medical leave as far in advance as possible prior to the beginning of medical leave.
Designated Administrator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the request for leave along with his/her recommendation to the Chief Academic Officer. The recommendation should contain complete information regarding the proposed leave, a statement of duties vacated, how these duties will be covered during the employee's absence and the address of the employee during the proposed leave. Inform the faculty member of the decision upon approval of the president.
Vice President for Academic Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend approval or denial of the request to the president (denial of an initial or extension of unpaid medical leave must be approved by the Office of Human Resources). Inform the designated administrator of the decision upon approval by the president. Forward all required documentation to the Office of Human Resources for processing upon the approval of the president. All required documentation must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources at least two weeks prior to the commencement of any leave. Failure to forward a request and all required recommendations to that Office prior to the start of leave places the faculty member's eligibility for benefits and employment status in jeopardy.
President	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approve or deny the request. Inform the chief academic officer of the decision.
Staff leave	
Staff member	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Request a leave by completing the Application for leave form. Submit the form and supporting documentation, as appropriate, to the appropriate supervisor/manager within the department prior to the beginning of the leave
Supervisor/manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend approval or denial of the request to the appropriate executive leadership team member. (Denial of an initial or extension of unpaid medical leave must be approved by the Office of Human Resources.) Inform the staff member of the decision upon approval of the executive leadership team member.
Executive Leadership team member	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approve or deny the request. Inform the supervisor/manager of the decision. Forward all required documentation to the Office of Human Resources for processing.
Office of Human Resources	Consult with employees and departments/managers regarding this policy.

Resources

- I. Policies
 - A. [Family and Medical Leave Policy 2.6.41](#)
 - B. [Paid Leave Policy 2.6.40](#)
 - C. [Reduction in Workforce Policy 2.7.25](#)
- II. Websites
 - A. [COTC benefits](#)
 - B. [Ohio Public Employees Retirement System \(OPERS\)](#)
 - C. [State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio \(STRS\)](#)
- III. Forms
 - A. [Leave forms](#)

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy and benefits questions	Office of Human Resources	740-366-936	https://go.cotc.edu/hr

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Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
	Founders Hall—Rm 1014		

History

Issued: 09/01/2014
 Revised: 12/01/2008
 Revised: 10/01/2010
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