



Proposal to Revise the University's Parental Leave Policies

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UNIT	Stamp	CONSTITUENCY	Non-exempt

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE

There is currently campus support to make changes to the existing parental leave policies.

- VII-7.49(A) UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND POLICY ON STAFF PARENTAL LEAVE AND OTHER FAMILY SUPPORTS (<https://policies.umd.edu/assets/section-vii/VII-749A.pdf>)
- II-2.25(A) UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND POLICY ON FACULTY PARENTAL LEAVE AND OTHER FAMILY SUPPORTS (<https://policies.umd.edu/assets/section-ii/II-225A.pdf>)

There are several concerns that exist with the current policies:

1. "Leave may only be used on one occasion in a twelve-month period" While rare, there are siblings who are born within 12 months of each other or parents who choose to adopt and give birth in a short time frame and this section of the policy negatively affects these parents. As the policy currently stands, a parent would have to immediately return to work upon the birth of their second child or be required to use their own leave.
2. "...and up to three (3) separate occasions during the duration of their employment with the University System of Maryland (irrespective of job category)." These limitations unfairly disadvantage families who choose to have multiple children. Parents without a college degree and those who are Black or Latinx, are more likely to have more than 3 children, compared to white parents (<https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/05/07/family-size-among-mothers/>). This systemic policy disadvantages groups who have already historically faced, and currently face, discrimination in our society. Such a policy is antithetical to the University's claimed tenets of diversity and inclusion. Even if USM has an umbrella policy, UMD can stand to create a more inclusive, affirming parental leave policy.
3. "During the Parental Leave period, staff shall use any accrued and available annual leave; personal leave; observed holiday leave; and/or discretionary paid administrative leave that is granted during the Parental Leave period for institutional closures." The current policy requires that staff/faculty use their own accrued leave balances (annual/holiday/administrative, not including sick) before they are eligible for parental leave. While it is understandable that we want to assure that all staff have leave to be with their new children, this policy unfairly punishes those who may be responsible for planning for a child and avoid taking any time off. There may be two coworkers with equal tenure who start the year off with equal amounts of leave, but coworker 1 saves their leave for 3 years and does not take any vacations because they are planning to have a child, while coworker 2 depletes their entire leave bank every year and once they have/adopt a child they are now assured 12 weeks of leave from the university.

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

Recommendations for revising current policies:

1. I recommend removing the limit of use within the 12-month period.
2. I recommend removing the 3-use limit.
3. I recommend removing the requirement of parents to deplete all existing annual leave, prior to receiving parental leave.

### **SUGGESTION FOR HOW YOUR PROPOSAL WOULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE**

This proposal is an amendment to an existing policy. Because this policy is already in practice, no changes would need to be made in the administration of leave.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Benefits of changes (in no particular order and relating to all changes):

1. Greater employee retention, saving money long term on turnover and training
2. Greater health of parent and child, leading to reduced days out of work
3. Less stressed employees who are able to enjoy time off work and avoid burnout, leading to greater productivity at work. People who don't take vacations are at greater risk for heart attacks.
4. Support for parents who choose to have multiple children.

Negative Consequences

1. Cost