

FAMILY CARE AND MEDICAL LEAVE

In accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, an eligible employee may be entitled to up to 12 work weeks of leave during any 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

1. the birth and care of a newborn child of the employee;
2. the legal placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
3. the care of an immediate family member (defined as the employee's spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
4. a serious health condition of the employee himself/herself, which renders the employee unable to perform the duties of his/her job.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, the employee must have worked for the University System of Georgia: (1) for at least 12 months total; and (2) for at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of such leave.

The Family & Medical Leave Act defines a serious health condition as an illness, injury, or impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

1. Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or
2. Continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.

A claim for leave because of a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's child, spouse, or parent must be supported by certification issued by the health care provider. In the case of a serious health condition of the employee, the certification shall be sufficient if it states (1) the date on which the serious health condition commenced; (2) the probable duration of the condition; and (3) a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of the position. In the case of a serious health condition of the employee's child, spouse or parent, the certification shall be sufficient if it states (1) the date on which the condition commenced; (2) the probable duration of the condition; and (3) a statement that the employee is needed to care for the child, spouse, or parent. The employee's immediate supervisor has the option to require recertification at times deemed appropriate. Requests for family leave should be submitted in writing to the immediate supervisor with supporting medical certification.

Employees are expected to provide as much notice as possible in requesting family leave in order that appropriate adjustments may be made to handle workload commitments.

Family leave may be unpaid (SSU is not required to grant FMLA as paid time off.).

Employees may elect to utilize, or SSU may require, that employees utilize their accrued paid sick leave and/or annual leave, as appropriate, for such absences. The employee will be informed in writing that the leave time is being counted toward the 12-week family and medical leave entitlement. If the requested leave period is less than 12 weeks and the employee desire a continuance of the leave, the employee will be required to furnish a physician's statement documenting the need for continued leave and estimating a date of return. If a request for family leave is denied for any reason, notice of the denial will be provided to the requesting employee by the supervisor denying the request in a timely manner.

The notification will be provided in writing and will include the reason for denial. In order for insurance benefits to continue (as in the case with other types of sick leave without pay) the employee must make the normal premium payment and must contact the Benefits section of Human Resources to arrange for premium payments during the period of the leave without pay.