

4209-R Family Recognition

Definitions

- Family Recognition Leave - a period of paid leave (does not reduce an employee's balance of accrued time under any other District paid leave program) for the purpose of recovery from childbirth and/or to care for and bond with a newborn or newly-adopted child.
- **New parents-birth mothers, fathers, adoptive parents of a child under the age of 18, and parents of a child under a gestational agreement.**
 - Birth mother - a female who gives birth to a child.
 - Father - a male who is legally responsible for ~~child-rearing as the male spouse of the birth mother~~ **the child under state statute or pursuant to court order.**
 - Adoptive parent - a parent who has taken a child into one's family, through legal means, to raise as one's own child.
 - **Parent of a child under a gestational agreement - upon the birth the intended parents of the child under the agreement are deemed to be the mother and father upon completing the requirements under state statute. Parents under a gestational agreement shall be treated as having a birth or adoption event.**
- Adoptive child - a child up to 18 years of age who is adopted through public, private, domestic, international or independent means and who is not the step-child of the adoptive parent.
- Stillbirth - the loss of a fetus during or following the 20th week of pregnancy.
- Year of service – the 12-month period immediately prior to the date of the birth or adoption event, during which an employee has obtained at least 1,250 hours of employment.

Guiding Principles

A. The purpose of Family Recognition Leave is to ~~provide a birth mother, father, or adoptive parent~~ **new parents** with paid time off to recover from childbirth and/or to care for and bond with a newborn or newly-adopted child.

B. It is the intent of this policy to provide staff members with a paid leave benefit that may be combined with other leave programs to maximize the length of paid leave available and to supplement paid time off under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), in the event of a birth or the adoption of a child.

C. Family Recognition Leave is a benefit of employment and its use shall not have a negative impact on employment status or opportunities.

D. Departments should be flexible in managing Family Recognition Leave requests, so as to permit employees to effectively combine career and family responsibilities.

E. Workload issues should be proactively managed so excessive work demands are not placed on remaining faculty and staff.

PROCEDURE

Eligibility-defined as meeting all of the following criteria:

A. A staff member who becomes a new parent. ~~as a:~~

~~-birth mother,~~

~~-father,~~

~~-adoptive parent, or~~

B. A staff member **who earns sick leave**. ~~holds a regular appointment of at least 50% FTE.~~

C. A staff member who has completed at least one year of service prior to the date Family Recognition Leave is to commence.

Program Design

A. Family Recognition Leave is paid at 100% of the employee's regular pay (based on FTE) for the specified number of hours outlined in this policy.

B. Up to 80 hours (10 work days, based on a 100% FTE) constitutes Family Recognition Leave for ~~a birth mother or father, for recovery from childbirth and to care for and bond with a newborn~~ **the new parent(s)**.

Use

A. Family Recognition Leave should commence **immediately** following the birth or adoption of a child, but in some instances, may occur prior to the event when deemed medically necessary or when requisite to fulfill the legal requirements for an adoption, provided all eligibility requirements are met.

B. Family Recognition Leave will run concurrently with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), to the extent that an individual has an available amount of FMLA equivalent to the length of the Family Recognition Leave to be taken.

C. Family Recognition Leave may be used in cases of stillbirth.

D. Family Recognition Leave shall be exhausted prior to the use of Vacation Leave or Compensatory Time when such leave is requested for the purpose of a birth or adoption event.

E. Family Recognition Leave shall be exhausted prior to the use of Unpaid Leave.

F. Family Recognition Leave shall be exhausted prior to the use of Sick Leave.

G. One Family Recognition Leave benefit is available per employee, per birth or adoption event. The number of children involved does not increase the length of Family Recognition Leave granted for that event.

~~H. Family Recognition Leave will be used in the same fiscal year it is granted.~~

Employee Responsibilities

A. When the use of Family Recognition Leave is anticipated, provide written notice to the ~~administrator or to the appropriate person within the department~~ **Human Resources** as far in advance as possible.

~~B. Submit an Application for Leave form to the Return to Work Committee in conjunction with any other appropriate documentation, pursuant to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy~~ **leave request form to the Human Resources Department.**

Department Responsibilities

~~A. Ensure that Family Recognition Leave is appropriately documented and Human Resources is notified.~~

~~B. Manage Family Recognition Leave requests effectively to provide flexibility for individuals to use the leave when appropriate, while balancing remaining workloads within the unit.~~

~~C. Consult with employees to assist with understanding of all leave benefits.~~

Office of Human Resources Responsibilities

A. Consult with individuals and units on appropriate use of Family Recognition Leave and other applicable leave programs.

B. Consult with departments to ensure that Family Recognition Leave is managed effectively for the ~~mother, father, or adoptive parent~~ **new parent.**

C. Ensure employees understand all leave benefits.

ADOPTION DATE: June 13, 2006; **Revised February 28, 2023.**

LEGAL REFERENCE(S): **W.S. § 14-2-504; W.S. § 35-1-410(e)**

CROSS REFERENCE(S):

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION: