

Family Leave Policies for Faculty at Auburn University



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Auburn University Leave Policies

Who is Eligible for leave programs?

Eligible Employee – Employees eligible for participation in Auburn University leave programs are:

- Those on a regular appointment of 50 percent time or more and who are expected to be employed continuously for twelve months or longer.
- Those not on a regular appointment who work 50 percent time or more and who have been employed continuously for twelve months or longer.

What are acceptable reasons for taking leave?

- Court and Jury Duty Leave – Employees will be granted leave with pay when legally required to attend court when summoned for jury duty. Evidence of attendance (including applicable dates and times of service) in court is required before payment by the University.
- Poll Workers – Alabama Act 2002-412 requires employers to grant unpaid leave to employees who serve as poll workers.
- Military Leave – An eligible employee who is an active member of the National Guard, State Guard, Naval Militia or the reserve components of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force or Coast Guard will be entitled to military leave of absence for training or other service (including short periods necessary to retain active reserve status or instances when one is called by the Governor to duty in the active service of the State).
- Funeral Leave – Eligible employees may be granted paid leave up to three working days for the funeral of an immediate family member. One additional day may be granted for travel purposes when the funeral is more than 100 miles from the regularly assigned work site or two additional days (i.e., five days total) when the funeral is more than 200 miles distant from the work site.
- Annual Leave – The University provides annual leave which an employee may use for recreation or other activities which provide a change from the pattern of day-to-day work. Employees are encouraged to take, not accumulate, annual leave. Annual leave may not be used until it is accrued. Nine month faculty do not accrue annual leave.

Paid Sick Leave

What is Auburn's Policy on paid sick leave?

- Full-time faculty, both nine- and twelve-month appointees, and Alabama Cooperative Extension System employees accrue sick leave at a rate of eight hours for each month of employment with no limitation on the maximum number of hours that can be accrued.
- For nine-month employees, sick leave will not accrue during summer terms if they are not working.
- Faculty on both nine- and twelve-month appointments should record these absences on the appropriate University leave forms.
- For leave with pay, the time away from work is charged to the faculty member's accumulated sick leave. Upon expiration of accumulated sick leave time, application may be made for leave without pay.

Are there other forms of paid leave at Auburn?

- Long Term Disability Insurance: After one year of continuous, full-time service employees become eligible for certain benefits under a Long-Term Disability Insurance plan.
 - The plan consists of two parts: (1) Salary Continuation during the first 180 days of disability, and (2) Long-Term Disability Insurance beginning with the 181st day.
 - All full-time employees are eligible to participate in a supplemental disability insurance plan on a voluntary basis.
 - The employee is responsible for the cost of coverage. Further information is available from a brochure that can be obtained from the Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits.

Unpaid Leave: Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

What is FMLA?

FMLA is a federal policy that requires covered employers to provide up to twelve weeks a year of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for any combination of the following reasons:

1. The birth or adoption of a child, or the placement in the home of a child for foster care
2. To care for a family member (child, spouse or parent) who has a serious health condition
3. A serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform his or her functions



Published by the Texas Association of Counties (Personell Poiners, 2009).

What qualifies as a serious health condition under FMLA?

FMLA defines a serious health condition as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualifies family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

The continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment (U.S. Department of Labor).

Who is eligible for FMLA?

- Full-time faculty members on nine-month and twelve-month appointments, or employees who have worked for a covered employer for at least 1 year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months.
- Faculty are eligible if they have been employed with the University for at least twelve months and have been appointed for at least two-thirds time during the twelve-month period prior to the date the FMLA leave would begin.
- FMLA leave itself is unpaid, but employees may choose to use accrued annual leave and remain on the payroll.
- Employees must take accrued sick leave during the FMLA period provided that the reasons for the leave are covered under the University Sick Leave Policy.

Who do I notify when using FMLA?

- Application for FMLA should be initiated with the faculty member's departmental supervisor.
- For determination of how other benefit programs may or may not apply during periods of leave without pay, the faculty member should consult with the Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits
- Leave forms are located at the following website:
http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/forms/index

Why use FMLA?

- FMLA is intended to allow employees to balance their work and family life.
- Parental provisions of FMLA leave apply equally to men and women.

Tenure Clock Extension

What is Auburn University's policy on tenure clock-extension?

- A faculty member who has qualified for FMLA leave while holding a tenure accruing appointment may request a one-year extension of the date on which the probationary period would end. Only two such extensions are allowed.
- Any request may be made only during the first five probationary years of the tenure process. The faculty member will retain the position of full-time employee.
- A written agreement must be received by the Provost within the probationary year in which the extension is requested.
- A faculty member on leave of absence without pay need not count his or her leave time toward tenure and/or promotion.
- Under no circumstances should the length of a faculty member's probationary period exceed seven years of full-time service **except where the faculty member has agreed in writing that a year in which the faculty member qualified for FMLA leave or took leave without pay will not count towards the probationary period.**

How do I request that my tenure clock be stopped?

- Those who qualify for leave under FMLA should write a brief memo requesting the tenure clock extension and submit through their department chair/head. This memo will be forwarded to the Dean of the college and on to the Provost's Office where a final decision will be made.
- Faculty members have up to one year after the qualify event to request tenure clock extension.
- Memo should be brief. A great deal of detail of surrounding circumstances is not required if the faculty member qualifies for FMLA leave. Please see below for example memo, provided by the Office of the Provost.

What else do I need to know about extending the tenure clock?

- The decision to elect the option of tenure clock extension is up to the individual faculty member. For example, if the extension has already been granted the faculty member could still elect to come up for tenure in the original year established when the faculty member was hired.

- Tenure-clock extension policies are designed to allow for faculty members to make decisions in their best interests regarding work and family demands without negative feedback or consequences.

Example memo of request for tenure clock extension due to qualified FMLA leave:

TO: Provost & Vice President Academic Affairs

THROUGH: _____, Dean

College of _____

_____, Department Head

Department of _____

FROM: _____ (Name)

_____ (Title)

Department of _____

DATE: _____

SUBJECT: Request for Tenure Clock Extension

This memo is to request a one year extension of my promotion and tenure calendar from (semester, year) to (semester, year). This request is due to my qualified FMLA leave during (semester, year).

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Additional Information/Resources

Office of the Provost

- <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/>

AU Faculty Handbook

- <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Office of Human Resources

- http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/

AU Human Resources: Forms

- http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/forms/

Auburn University Office of Women's Initiatives

- <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/odma/womensinitiatives/>