



# Paid Parental Leave

## CITATION REFERENCE

<b>OFFICIAL TITLE</b>	POLICY ON PAID PARENTAL LEAVE
<b>VOLUME</b>	HUMAN RESOURCES
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICE</b>	USG HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE
<b>ORIGINALLY ISSUED</b>	JULY 1, 2021
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### Policy Statement

In accordance with Georgia’s Paid Parental Leave law the University System of Georgia (USG) provides up to a maximum of 240 hours of paid parental leave, during any 12-month period, to eligible employees for qualifying life events as defined in this policy. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the eligible employee to care for and bond with a newborn, newly adopted or newly placed foster child of the eligible employee.

### Applicability

All units of the USG are covered by this policy.

### Who Should Read This Policy

All University System of Georgia employees should be aware of this policy.

### Definitions

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy:

None

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### Process and Procedures

Effective July 1, 2021, a USG employee who meets the established eligibility and qualifying life event criteria as defined by law or this policy, may request paid parental leave.

So long as the use of paid parental leave does not unduly disrupt the institution's operations, no institution shall interfere with, restrain, or deny an eligible employee's leave request associated with this policy. Additionally, no institution shall discharge or in any other manner discriminate or retaliate against any eligible employee for lawfully exercising the provisions of this policy.

Institutions may take disciplinary action as deemed appropriate, to include termination, against an employee who provides false or fraudulent information to obtain paid parental leave.

This policy provides guidance for situations involving paid parental leave for eligible employees and ensures consistency among USG institutions.

USG employees should seek guidance from their institutional office of human resources should they have questions regarding paid parental leave.

**Paid Parental Leave.** Paid parental is provided to eligible employees who experience a qualifying life event.

1. Effective 7/1/2024 an eligible employee may take a maximum of 240 hours of paid parental leave in a 12-month period.
2. The amount of leave taken cannot exceed 240 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying events that occur during that period and regardless of transfers between USG institutions.
3. Paid parental leave may be taken continuously or intermittently in increments as small as one hour.
4. Paid parental leave may only be taken during the months in which an employee is in active pay status and receiving compensation.
5. Unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying life event will not carry over for future use.
6. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at the time an eligible employee separates from the employing institution.

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7. Institutions must provide notice of paid parental leave benefits to each eligible employee upon hire and annually thereafter.

**Employee Eligibility.** Eligible employees are defined as:

1. Regular benefits eligible employees who work 30 hours or more per week and have at least 6 months of continuous USG service. There is no requirement to work a certain number of hours within the 6-month period for these employees.
2. Regular partially benefits eligible employees who work between 20-29 hours per week, have at least 6 months of continuous service with USG, and have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the 6 months preceding the requested leave.
3. Regular non-benefits eligible employees who work less than 20 hours per week, have at least 6 months of continuous service, and have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the 6 months preceding the requested leave.
4. Temporary non-benefits eligible employees who have at least 6 months of continuous service and have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the 6 months preceding the requested leave.

Rehired retirees who are receiving retirement benefits and students are not eligible for paid parental leave.

**Qualifying Life Events.** The following are eligible qualifying life events:

- The birth of a child of an eligible employee.
- The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
- The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.

### **Requests for Paid Parental Leave**

- The employee must provide their supervisor and the human resources department with notice of their paid parental leave request at least 30 days prior to the proposed leave start date (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible).
- The employee must follow institutional leave request procedures and provide all documentation as required by the HR department to substantiate the request and the qualifying life event.

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Documentation of the qualifying event may include certification from a healthcare provider related to the birth and care of a newborn or court documents related to adoption or foster care placement.

- If both parents are USG employees who meet the eligibility criteria, each parent is eligible to receive up to the maximum 240 hours paid parental leave benefit within 12 months of the qualifying life event provided that the use of such leave does not unduly disrupt the institution's operations.
- Paid parental leave must be appropriately entered in the HCM system to ensure proper tracking and reporting.

**Expiration of Leave.** The full leave entitlement must be taken within twelve months of the qualifying life event.

### Coordination with Other Leave and Benefits

- **Other Paid Leave.** Employees may not concurrently use vacation, sick leave, holidays, or another Paid Time Off (PTO) while receiving paid parental leave.
- **FMLA.** Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Thus, any leave taken under this policy that also qualifies for FMLA leave due to the birth or placement of a child or due to adoption or foster care, will count towards any available FMLA leave. In no case will the total amount of leave—whether paid or unpaid—granted to the employee under the FMLA exceed 12 weeks during the 12-month FMLA period. Please refer to the [HRAP on Family and Medical Leave Policy](#) for further FMLA guidance.

After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave may be compensated through accrued sick, vacation, or other eligible accrued leave, if approved by the employing institution.

- **Short Term Disability.** Female employees who give birth must coordinate between any applicable short-term disability leave benefit and any requested paid parental leave. An employee may not receive paid parental leave or any other type of paid leave concurrently while receiving short term disability benefits.
- **Benefits.** The institution will maintain all benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period in the same manner as any other paid leave such as vacation or sick leave.
- **Holidays.** If a holiday or emergency closure occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay or unscheduled closing instead of paid parental leave.

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### Usage and Overtime

- Paid parental leave hours for nonexempt employees are not added to hours worked in calculating overtime.

### Employment outside of the state of Georgia

If a USG employee is working and residing outside of the State of Georgia, due to their employment situation, local state law may be applicable for Paid Parental Leave. The Human Resource department of the employing institution may need to seek assistance from either the employing institution's or the University System's Office of Legal Affairs for interpretation of applicable state law.

### Responsible Parties and Contact Information

Party	Responsibility	Phone/Email/URL
<b>Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, USG</b>	Maintain and revise paid parental leave policy as appropriate.	404-962-3235 <a href="mailto:usg-hr@usg.edu">usg-hr@usg.edu</a>
<b>Institution Chief Human Resources Officers</b>	Each institution shall establish and maintain procedure for implementing this policy.	See University System <a href="#">HR Officer Listing</a>

### Appendices (Internal Documents, Forms and Web Links)

- [HRAP on FMLA](#)
- [USG Parental Leave FAQs – Last updated 7.1.2024.](#)
- [Sample Paid Parental Leave Form – Last updated 7.1.2024.](#)
- HR Practitioner Job Aids – Knowledge Articles
  - USGKB0012455: How Do I Enter Parental Leave as an Administrator? (PRA Job Aid)
  - USGKB0012213: How Do I Update Job Data When an Employee is Using Paid Parental Leave? (PRA Job Aid)
  - USGKB0012209: Parental Leave Request Form (ESS Form)
  - USGKB0012306: How Do I Request Parental Leave as a Temporary Employee? (ESS Job Aid)
  - USGKB0012210: How Do I Request Parental Leave as a Benefited Employee? (ESS Job Aid)

### Related Documents and Resources (External)

OCGA § 45-20-17

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