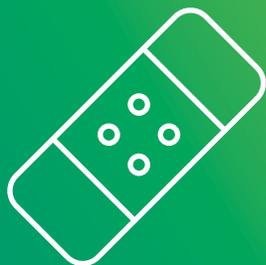


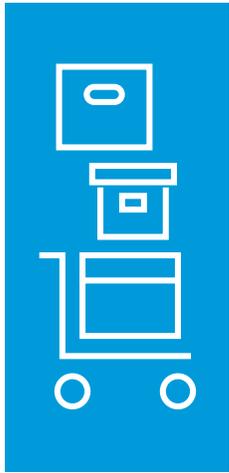
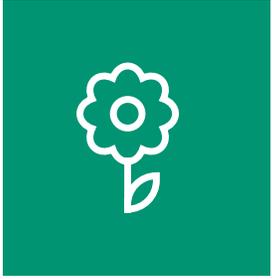
Take  
**time**  
**out**  
to learn  
about  
**your**  
**time**  
**off**



# TIME OFF & LEAVE GUIDE



Benefits



## Table of Contents

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- 1 | Your Time Away**
- 3 | Paid Time Off**
  - 3 | Annual Time**
  - 8 | Sick Time**
  - 12 | Paid Parental Leave**  
(Birth/Adoption/Foster Care Placement of Child)
  - 14 | Bereavement**
  - 14 | Jury and Witness Duty**
  - 15 | Holidays**
  - 17 | Voting Time**
  - 18 | Change in Employment Status**
  - 19 | Leaving the University**
- 21 | Unpaid Leave**
  - 21 | Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)**
  - 27 | DC Parental Leave (for School Events)**
  - 28 | USERRA Leave**
  - 30 | Personal Leave**
- 31 | We Are Here to Help**

The guidance and policies referenced in this Guide are not contracts with any employee. The university reserves the right to modify or discontinue its benefits programs in whole or in part at any time and without advanced notice, except as required by law. Nor does this guidance create, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment for any employee.



## Your Time Away

We invite you to explore your GW paid time off and unpaid leave options that aim to help you manage personal, medical and family needs.

**Important to Note:** While the Guide is the primary resource for time off and leave programs administered by Benefits, faculty may be eligible for additional leave programs unique to their employee role (such as faculty sabbatical). For more information about those programs, faculty should contact the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Medical Residents should contact the Office of Graduate Medical Education for information on Resident leave programs.

If there is a direct conflict between this Guide and an applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”), the CBA will prevail. For librarians who fall under the Code for Librarians, if there is a direct conflict between this Guide and the Code for Librarians, this Guide will prevail.

### Am I Eligible for Time Off?

Eligibility for the various time off and leave programs is based on your primary job at GW (e.g., faculty, staff, wage, temporary or student employees, etc.), years of benefits-eligible service, part-time or full-time status, and in some cases, your actual hours worked.

Check out the “quick look” lists below and refer to the details in each of the following sections for information related to your eligibility. If you have any questions, please contact Benefits at [timeoff@gwu.edu](mailto:timeoff@gwu.edu) or (571) 553-8382.

#### Quick Look at Paid Time Off Eligibility

- **Annual Time:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff)
- **Sick Time:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff), faculty, graduate teaching assistants, wage and temporary employees as well as student employees
- **GW Paid Parental Leave:** Full-time benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff) with at least two years of benefits-eligible service
- **Bereavement:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff)
- **Jury and Witness Duty:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff)
- **Holidays:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff)
- **Voting Time:** Benefits-eligible staff (including librarians and research staff) as well as all District employees

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Quick Look at Unpaid Leave Eligibility

- **Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA)**

- To qualify for FMLA, you must meet the following conditions:
  - ✓ You must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of less than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
  - ✓ Under the DC FMLA, you must have been paid for at least 1,000 hours during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of your leave.
  - ✓ Under the federal FMLA, you must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of your leave.

Please note: Temporary, wage and student employees **are** eligible for federal and DC FMLA if they meet the requirements above.

- **USERRA Leave**

- You must be called into service in the uniformed services, as defined by [USERRA](#).

- **Personal Leave (Benefits-Eligible Staff)**

- Benefits-eligible staff may request personal leave for situations that do not fall within the provisions of other university leave categories.

- **DC Parental Leave (for School Events)**

- You must be an employee who is a parent, guardian, custodian, aunt, uncle or grandparent of a child, or the spouse or domestic partner of any of the above.

## Other Statutory Disability and Paid Family and Medical Leave Programs

Employees may also be eligible for state disability and paid family and medical leave programs based on work location.

## Managing Your Time

You, with the help of your manager, are responsible for recording and managing your time off and leave. If you cannot schedule your time away in advance, your manager should be notified through established departmental procedures as soon as possible.

For unscheduled paid or unpaid time off, you must report those hours in your time reporting system upon your return. If you are unable to submit those hours in time to meet the payroll deadline, your manager can submit your paid and unpaid time on your behalf.

Managers should process (i.e., approve or deny) their direct reports' time off requests in a timely manner so that employees are able to plan time off and to ensure accrual balances are accurate.

Employees who use the [Time Reporting System \(TRS\)](#) for time off requests can find helpful tip sheets on the [Benefits website](#) such as how to submit or cancel time off requests.

**Please note:** Staff who have timekeeping or time off processing access in the TRS will be able to see their own time off requests but should not approve them. Their manager or their manager's delegate should approve those requests, not the staff member themselves.

## Impact of University Closures on Approved Paid Time Off

In the event of inclement weather, the university may announce a change in operating status. Additionally, the university may announce the closure of administrative offices for various reasons including early dismissal. In these instances, scheduled and approved paid time off hours will be deducted from the employee's time off balance and not changed to University Closing Leave. Only staff scheduled to work during those times will be eligible for University Closing Leave.

Please visit the [HRMD website](#) for more information about reporting to work under various operating statuses.



## Paid Time Off

### Annual Time

Annual time provides benefits-eligible staff with the opportunity to have leisure time and to attend to personal matters. Whether it's celebrating a birthday or anniversary, planning a vacation, observing a religious holiday or just needing some time to tackle a laundry list of home improvement projects, we encourage employees to take time away. Just remember to request the time in advance and in accordance with established departmental procedures, as manager approval is required.

### Using Annual Time

*Annual time may be borrowed in advance of accrual.*

On the first day of each fiscal year (July 1), your annual time accrual for the full fiscal year is available to use. Annual time can be taken in a minimum of fifteen (15) minute increments. Requests to use annual time must be submitted in accordance with departmental procedures.

For example, if you are a benefits-eligible full-time staff member with five (5) years of benefits-eligible service, you will have 21 days of annual time available to use as of July 1 (although you will accrue 1.75 days per month).

*Please note: Percentage of effort (the number of hours an employee is scheduled to work per week divided by 40) is used to determine part-time accrual calculations and is also referred to as full-time equivalent (FTE).*

◀ **Am I eligible for annual time?**  
All benefits-eligible staff (including librarians, research staff) are eligible for annual time. Please see the full-time and part-time accrual sections of this guide for details.

### Anniversary Date and Change in Accrual

Changes in the accrual rate for annual time are based on years of benefits-eligible service. Changes are effective the first of the month following a benefits-eligible employee's anniversary date, or on the employee's hire date anniversary if hired on the first of the month.

- Example 1: If an employee's anniversary date in a benefits-eligible position is March 18, any change in accrual rate would be effective on April 1.
- Example 2: If an employee's anniversary date in a benefits-eligible position is April 1, any changes in accrual rate would be effective on April 1.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Annual Time Accruals

### Staff

- **Full-time** benefits-eligible staff accrue annual time based on years of benefits-eligible service.

Benefits-Eligible Years (Months) of Service	Maximum Annual Days (Hours) Accrued
Up to 2 (0 to 24 months)	15 (120 hours)
More than 2 up to 4 (25 - 48 months)	18 (144 hours)
More than 4 up to 15 (49 - 180 months)	21 (168 hours)
More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)

*For annual time calculation purposes, one (1) day equals eight (8) hours.*

- **Part-Time** benefits-eligible staff accrue annual time based on years of benefits-eligible service and percentage of effort.

To calculate, take annual days accrued based upon years of benefits-eligible service and multiply by the percentage of effort (number of hours an employee is scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

Benefits-Eligible Years (Months) of Service	Maximum Annual Days (Hours) Accrued
Up to 2 (0 - 24 months)	15 (120 hours)
More than 2 up to 4 (25 - 48 months)	18 (144 hours)
More than 4 up to 15 (49 - 180 months)	21 (168 hours)
More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)

*For annual time calculation purposes, one (1) day equals eight (8) hours.*

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Research Staff

- **Full-Time**

Hired before July 1, 2019:

Benefits-Eligible Years (Months) of Service	Maximum Annual Days (Hours) Accrued
Up to 15 (0 - 180 months)	21 (168 hours)
More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)

Hired on or after July 1, 2019:

Benefits-Eligible Years (Months) of Service	Maximum Annual Days (Hours) Accrued
Up to 2 (0 - 24 months)	15 (120 hours)
More than 2 up to 4 (25 - 48 months)	18 (144 hours)
More than 4 up to 15 (49 - 180 months)	21 (168 hours)
More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)

For annual time calculation purposes, one (1) day equals eight (8) hours.

- **Part-Time** benefits-eligible research staff accrue annual time based on years of benefits eligible service and percentage of effort. To calculate, take annual days accrued based upon years of benefits-eligible service and multiply by the percentage of effort (number of hours an employee is scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

◀ **“Real world” example:**  
 “I’m a part-time Research staff member, hired prior to July 1, 2019, who works 20 hours per week and has three years of service. How do I calculate my annual time?”

Multiply the annual number of days accrued (21 days) by your percentage effort (20 hours/40 hours) 21 days x 0.5 = 10.5 days or 84 hours.

## Librarians

- **Full-Time**

Library	Benefits-Eligible Years (Months) of Service	Maximum Annual Days (Hours) Accrued
Gelman	N/A	22 (176 hours)
Himmelfarb	Up to 15 (0 - 180 months)	22 (176 hours)
	More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)
Jacob Burns Law	Up to 15 (0 - 180 months)	22 (176 hours)
	More than 15 (181+ months)	24 (192 hours)

- **Part-Time**

Part-time benefits-eligible librarians accrue annual time based on years of benefits-eligible service (if applicable) and percentage of effort.

◀ **“Real world” example:**  
 “I’m a part-time librarian at Gelman who works 25 hours per week and has one year of service. How do I calculate my annual time?”

Multiply the annual number of days accrued (22 days) by your percentage effort (25 hours/40 hours) 22 days x 0.625 = 13.75 days or 110 hours.



## Annual Time Carryover

Eligible employees are encouraged to use their annual time during the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) in which it is accrued. However, it is possible for an employee to have accrued but unused days as of June 30.

◀ **Tip:** If you have a carryover balance available in the TRS and request annual time, your carryover days will automatically be used before current fiscal year days.

- Full-time employees can carry over up to forty (40) accrued but unused hours of annual time.
- Part-time employees can carry over up to twenty (20) accrued but unused hours of annual time.

Carryover will automatically roll over into the new fiscal year and must be used by August 31 of the new fiscal year, or the time will be forfeited. Borrowing annual time from future fiscal years is not permitted.

Please see the “Leaving the University” section of this guide for information on the payout of carryover days when an employee separates from the university.

\*In states where annual time forfeiture is prohibited, the university will pay out accrued but unused annual time above the carryover amounts listed above.

## Unscheduled Annual Time

Requests for annual time should be made in advance. However, there may be occasions where the need to use annual time may not be foreseeable. In such cases, an employee must follow established department procedures to report their absence; otherwise, the absence may be treated as unauthorized. Employees with unauthorized absences will be considered absent without approval (AWOL).

If it is determined that an employee is AWOL, annual time will not be accrued for the month in which the AWOL occurs. The employee will not be paid for the day(s) for which AWOL occurred and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Manager Tip** Managers should establish call-in procedures for un-planned absences and provide to employees. A manager who believes that an employee is abusing paid time off, or that an employee’s performance is affected due to excessive use of paid time off, should consult with their HR representative for assistance in determining appropriate action.

## Introductory Employment Period (IEP)

The IEP is defined as the first 90 days of employment following your hire, transfer, or promotion into a GW benefited staff position (including research staff). While eligible employees accrue annual time from their date of hire, annual time may only be used by employees after completing their IEP. The [HRMD website](#) has additional information on the IEP.

### **Manager Tip Managing Time Off During the IEP**

Managers may consider permitting the use of annual time during the IEP based on extenuating circumstances. Please consult with your HR representative before approving or denying annual time requests during the IEP.

If an employee’s IEP period starts on or after March 1 and is successfully completed, **all** accrued but unused time will carry over to the next fiscal year.

If an employee terminates during the IEP and had taken accrued annual time with manager and HR approval (documentation of approval required), no repayment will be required. Employees will not be paid for accrued but unused annual time if they leave the university for any reason during the IEP.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Prorating Annual Time

Annual time accrual may be prorated based on the employee’s start date in a benefits-eligible position and during periods of unpaid absences.

### Proration during an Unpaid Absence

Annual Time Proration for Unpaid Absence (Staff)	
Unpaid Workdays in Month	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
Up to 5	Normal Accrual Rate*
More than 5 up to 11	1 (8 hours)*
More than 11 up to 16	0.5 (4 hours)*
More than 17	0

\*Part-time employees’ hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

### Proration for New Employees (Or Newly Eligible)

An employee who begins a benefits-eligible job after the first day of the month may have their annual time accrual prorated for that month.

For example, if a full-time employee’s hire date is the 14th of the month, they would earn one-half day (or four (4) hours) of annual time for that month. Please refer to the chart below for details.

Annual Time Proration for Newly Hired or Newly Eligible Staff	
Hire Date	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st - 7th	Normal Accrual Rate*
8th - 14th	1 (8 hours) *
15th - 21st	0.5 (4 hours) *
22nd or after	0

\*Part-time employees’ hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

## Leaving the University

Accrued but unused annual time is paid out upon separation from the university. If an employee has been paid annual time in excess of the accrued amount at the time of separation, those excess hours will need to be repaid\* to the university. Please see the “Leaving the University” section of this guide for details.

\*If an employee used accrued annual time during the Introductory Employment Period (IEP) period with manager and HRBP approval, no repayment will be required.

▶ **Returning to GW?**  
Rehires who leave GW and return with less than a 365-day break in service will have their most recent annual time accrual rate reinstated as well as their applicable sick time balance.



## Sick Time

Feeling under the weather? Stay under the covers. Sick time provides employees with paid time to take care of their basic health and safety needs as well as caring for family members.

### Using Sick Time

Unlike annual time, sick time **does not** need to be used during the fiscal year in which it is accrued. Sick time can be taken in fifteen (15) minute increments. Sick time may be used for absences due to illness, medical treatment or medical care, and care for the health of an employee or the employee's family member (including, but not limited to, mental health and behavioral health), the latter defined as:

- A person related by blood, legal custody or marriage;
- A foster child or child who lives with the employee and for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility;
- A person with whom the employee shares or has shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom the employee maintains a committed relationship.

#### Am I eligible for sick time?

All employees are eligible for sick time; however, accruals vary by primary job and, in some cases, hours worked. Please see accrual charts on the following pages for details.

#### Can I take a sick day for mental health reasons?

Yes! Sick time can be used for both physical and mental health reasons.

### Safe Time

Sick time may also be used for "safe" reasons including:

- If the employee or an employee's family member (as defined above) is the victim of stalking, domestic violence or sexual abuse, and the absence is directly related to seeking medical, social or legal services pertaining to the violent or abusive conduct; or
- If the employee or an employee's family member needs to obtain help from a victim services organization, prepare for or take legal action relating to the conduct, seek medical attention or counseling or relocate; or
- If the employee or an employee's family member needs to take another action (related to the assault) that could be reasonably determined to enhance the physical, psychological or economic health of the employee or the employee's family member.

### Sick Time Accruals

All employees accrue paid sick time; however, accruals vary based on an employee's primary job and, in some cases, hours worked. Employees can use accrued but unused sick time at any time during their employment with manager approval. Sick time begins accruing after an employee's first working day of the month and is credited on the last day of each month.

Sick time may not be used prior to its actual accrual.

**Please note:** Percentage of effort (the number of hours an employee is scheduled to work per week divided by 40) is used to determine part-time accrual calculations and is also referred to as full-time equivalent (FTE).

**Manager Tip** A staff member's manager may approve the use of annual time as a substitute for sick time if the staff member has used all accrued sick time.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Staff Accrual

Sick time for benefits-eligible staff begins accruing after an employee's first working day of the month and can be used at any time during employment with manager approval. Accrued sick time is credited on the last day of each month.

- Full-Time**  
 Full-time benefits-eligible staff accrue sick time at a rate of one (1) day per month. One day equals eight (8) hours when accruing paid time off.
- Part-Time**  
 Part-time benefits-eligible staff accrue sick time at a rate of one (1) day per month multiplied by the employee's percentage of effort. One day equals eight (8) hours when accruing paid time off. To calculate monthly sick time accrual rate, take 8 hours and multiply by the employee's percentage of effort (number of hours an employee is scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

**Please note:** Benefits-eligible staff who work at least fourteen (14) but less than forty (40) hours per week are considered part-time for benefit purposes.

Benefits-eligible staff at the GW Biostatistics Center who work thirty-five (35) or more hours per week are considered full-time staff for benefit purposes.

## Prorating Sick Time (Staff)

Sick time accrual may be prorated based on a staff member's employment start date in a benefits-eligible position and during periods of unpaid absences. Please see the charts below for details.

Sick Time Proration for Newly Hired or Newly Eligible Staff

Hire Date	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st - 7th	1 (8 hours) *
8th - 14th	0.5 (4 hours) *
15th - 21st	0.25 (2 hours) *
22nd or after	0

\*Part-time employees' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

Sick Time Proration During Unpaid Absence

Unpaid Workdays in Month	Sick Days (Hours) Accrued
Up to 5	1 (8 hours)*
More than 5 up to 11	0.5 (4 hours)*
More than 11 up to 16	0.25 (2 hours)*
More than 16	0

\*Part-time employees' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

**Did you know?** When determining prorated sick time accrual for staff in a partial pay status (for example, if working a reduced work schedule, or taking a leave of absence and receiving only 50 percent pay), every eight (8) hours of unpaid leave (multiplied by percentage of effort for part-time employees) equals one (1) unpaid workday.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Faculty Accrual

Faculty who wish to use sick time should submit those requests in the university's Time Reporting System (TRS) for approval.

- **Full-Time**  
Full-time benefits-eligible faculty accrue sick time at a rate of 6.23 hours each month up to 56 hours per year.
- **Part-Time**  
Part-time benefits-eligible faculty accrue sick time at a rate of 3.56 hours each month up to 32 hours per year.
- **Temporary Part-Time**  
Temporary part-time faculty accrue sick time at a rate of 1.34 hours each month up to 16 hours per year.

## Graduate Teaching Assistants Accrual

Graduate Teaching Assistants begin accruing sick time on their date of hire and can use accrued but unused sick time at any time during their employment with manager approval. Accrued sick time is credited on the last day of each month and may not be used prior to its actual accrual.

- Graduate Teaching Assistants accrue sick time at a rate of 2.25 hours each month up to 20 hours per year.

## Students, Temporary/Wage Accrual

Eligible student and temporary/wage employees begin accruing sick time on their date of hire and can use accrued but unused sick time any time during their employment with manager approval. Accrued sick time is credited on the last day of each month and may not be used prior to its actual accrual. Eligibility is determined based on primary job.

- Sick time accrual is equal to one (1) hour for every thirty-seven (37) hours worked.

**Please note:** Federal work study employees are **not** excluded from accruing sick time.

## Accrual Calculation Example

- A temporary employee works thirty (30) hours each week over a four-week period therefore would be eligible for three hours of sick time.
- The same employee then works twenty-eight (28) hours in week five therefore would be entitled to an additional hour of sick time.
- In week six (6), the same employee works thirty (30) hours again but would earn no sick hours however those thirty (30) worked hours would roll forward to be used in a future calculation.

	Hours Worked	Sick Hours Earned
Week 1	30	None
Week 2	30	1 hour (30 hours from week 1 + 30 hours from week 2 = 60; 23 hours carry forward)
Week 3	30	1 hour (23 hours from week 2 + 30 hours from week 3 = 53; 16 hours carry forward)
Week 4	30	1 hour (16 hours from week 3 + 30 hours week 4 = 46; 9 hours carry forward)
Week 5	28	1 hour (9 hours from week 4 + 28 hours = 37), no hours to carry forward)
Week 6	30	None, 30 hours carry forward to following week



## Sick Time Carryover

### Staff

A full-time or part-time benefits-eligible staff member can accrue and carry over up to a maximum of 180 days of sick time (180 days x 8 hours).

### Student and Temporary/Wage Employees

These employees can accrue and carry over a maximum of fifty-six (56) hours of sick time each year.

### Graduate Teaching Assistants and Faculty

These employees can accrue and carry over up to their maximum accrual of sick time each year.

## Absences Due to Unplanned/Unscheduled Sick Time

If an illness or injury occurs that prevents an employee from reporting to work, the employee (or representative) must notify their manager as soon as possible, following the established guidelines of the department. Once able, the employee is required to submit the time off in their time reporting system. If the employee is unable to submit those hours, their manager can submit the time on the employee's behalf.

If an employee needs to take unplanned or unscheduled sick time and does not follow established department procedures to report their absence, the absence may be treated as unauthorized. Employees with unauthorized absences will be considered absent without approval (AWOL).

If it is determined that an employee is AWOL, no GW provided sick time will be accrued for the month in which the AWOL occurs. The employee will not be paid for the day(s) for which AWOL occurred and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

HR may request certification if an employee has frequent unplanned absences due to illness, three (3) consecutive sick days or there is evidence of a pattern of abuse. The employee should provide a physician's statement directly to their HR representative.

The HR Representative will work with the appropriate stakeholder office to validate the documentation and to recommend approval where appropriate. If the employee is unable to provide appropriate documentation to the HR Representative, the employee's absence may be considered unauthorized.

## Income Protection Programs

GW provides income protection programs, such as short-term and long-term disability, for eligible employees should they experience an illness or injury. Note that neither STD nor LTD are job-protected leave programs. Please visit the [Benefits website](#) for further information on disability programs.

## Leaving the University

Upon separation from the university (for any reason), employees are never paid for unused accrued sick time. Please see the "Leaving the University" section of this guide for details.

### Returning to GW?

Rehires who leave GW and return with less than a 365-day break in service will have their most recent annual time accrual rate reinstated as well as their applicable sick time balance.



## Paid Parental Leave

(Birth/Adoption/Foster Care Placement of Child) - *updated effective July 1, 2023*

GW provides six (6) continuous weeks of paid parental leave to full-time benefits-eligible staff with two years of benefits-eligible service. Paid parental leave applies to eligible employees who have given birth or are the spouse/ partner of the birth mother; for the placement of a child (adoption, foster or other eligible custody); or for the placement of a child for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility. Employees must meet eligibility criteria for paid parental leave prior to the birth or placement of a child.

### Eligibility

Eligibility for paid parental leave will begin the first of the month coincident with or next following the employee's two-year anniversary date in a benefits-eligible position. Eligible staff can take up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave one (1) time during a defined twelve (12) month period. For instance, if the employee received paid parental leave benefits beginning in January and received six (6) or fewer weeks of paid parental leave, the employee would not be eligible for additional paid parental leave benefits until January of the following year.

In the event that the employee is not eligible for paid parental leave for a subsequent birth or placement, other university paid time off or leave programs may still apply (e.g., FMLA, short term disability, sick and annual time).

### Faculty

Faculty should refer to the Faculty Parental Childcare Leave policy contained in the [Faculty Code](#) and the [Faculty Handbook](#). For more information regarding eligibility, please contact the Faculty Affairs office.

### Using Paid Parental Leave

Paid parental leave covers up to six (6) continuous weeks for the birth mother and/or the partner, adoptive or foster parent. Paid parental leave must be taken within 12 months following the birth or placement of a child and may not be taken intermittently.

**Both parents GW employees?** If both parents are eligible for paid parental leave, both can receive the full six (6) weeks.

In certain situations, paid parental leave may be granted up to six (6) months prior to or following an adoption or foster placement to fulfill legal requirements of the placement but may not be taken intermittently. Leave must be completed within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement date. Paid parental leave eligibility must be met prior to the start of the qualifying placement of a child. If an employee returns to work within the first six weeks following the placement, any remaining unused paid parental leave will be forfeited.

### Coordination with Other Benefits

#### FMLA

If an employee elects to use paid parental leave and is also eligible for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) at the same time, paid parental leave will run concurrently with FMLA.

#### Short-Term Disability and Other Paid Benefits

If an employee is approved for Voluntary Short-Term Disability or GW Paid Short-Term disability due to the birth of a child, paid parental leave can be requested immediately following the period of short-term disability. GW short-term disability programs will continue to have a 14-day benefit waiting period before benefits are paid. Employees can elect to use accrued annual or sick time during this 14-day period or take unpaid time.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



Paid parental leave will be reduced if an employee is eligible for other paid benefits such as [state or local paid family leave](#) while receiving GW paid parental leave, even if the employee does not apply. It is the employee's responsibility to timely apply for all eligible paid benefits in order to receive all available benefits during their leave.

## Holidays

If a holiday falls within an approved paid parental leave payment period, an employee will be compensated for that day as paid parental leave pay and not holiday pay. Holidays do not extend paid parental leave beyond six (6) weeks.

## Paid Parental Leave Approved Mid-Pay Period

Paid parental leave benefits will only cover an employee's pay up to forty (40) hours per week. During pay periods where an employee both works and receives paid benefits, paid parental leave will not cover more than the difference between hours worked and forty (40) \*.

\*Biostatistics employees: A maximum of 35 hours of PPL will be paid for full-time staff who work 35 hours per week for the university's Biostatistics center. Paid parental leave will not cover more than the difference between hours worked and thirty-five (35).

## Benefits Continuation

Employees can continue eligible benefits during paid parental leave. All GW paid benefit contributions continue.

## Returning to Work

An employee on paid parental leave will be reinstated to the same position held when paid parental leave began or, in the university's sole discretion, to a position with equivalent pay and benefits, provided that the employee can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. The employee will not be restored to any position if:

- The employment relationship would have terminated had the employee not taken paid parental leave;
- The employee informs the university of the intent not to return to work at the expiration of the paid parental leave; and/or
- The employee fails to return to work at the expiration of the paid parental leave.

To apply for paid parental leave, contact Lincoln Financial at least 30 days prior to the start of your leave.

### Returning to GW?

If a full-time benefits-eligible staff returning to member ends employment and is then rehired into a full-time benefits-eligible staff position within 365 days, previous service will apply towards the two-year service requirement for paid parental leave.



## Bereavement

Benefits-eligible staff are eligible to receive paid bereavement time, should time off from work be needed because of the death of an immediate family member, as defined by:

- A person related by blood, legal custody or marriage
- Foster child or child who lives with the employee and for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility
- A person with whom the employee shares or has shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom the employee maintains a committed relationship

### Requesting Bereavement

Staff may request up to three (3) scheduled workdays of paid time off (per event) due to the death of a family member. One (1) workday equals 8 hours for full-time staff (pro-rated for part-time staff).

The requested workdays do not need to be consecutive. When requesting the use of bereavement time, notify your manager about the use of time as soon as possible; however, it is understood that in most cases, this time is unplanned.

### Leaving the University

Bereavement time is not paid out upon separation.

## Jury and Witness Duty

Paid time off for jury and witness duty is provided to benefits-eligible staff who have been summoned by the courts to serve on a jury or if subpoenaed or requested by university attorneys to appear as a witness in connection with a work-related matter on behalf of the university or are required by the university to attend certain university court or administrative proceedings.

One day (1 day) of paid time off for jury/witness duty is equivalent to 8 hours for full-time staff (pro-rated for part-time staff).

An employee who is scheduled for a shift beginning after performing jury or witness service during the day shall be granted jury duty time for the employee's regularly scheduled GW night shift.

### Other Witness Duty Situations

Employees subpoenaed or requested to be a witness for non-work-related matters, provide testimony in support of their own case or serve as an expert witness in situations other than on behalf of the university are not eligible for jury/witness duty pay. In these situations, an employee may request annual time, or unpaid time (if annual time is exhausted).

### Time Reporting

If an employee is summoned to jury or witness duty, the employee is expected to account for their hours in the applicable time reporting system and to provide supporting court documents to their manager. The employee's manager will approve paid time off for scheduled work hours and workdays that are missed and forward all approved requests and supporting court documentation to their HR representative for inclusion in the employee's record.

**Please note:** Employees are required to report to work on those days or partial days when court attendance is not required, unless otherwise instructed by their manager.

### Compensation

**What if I need to take time to attend an observance or funeral of someone not defined as an immediate family member?**

In this situation, you may request annual time.

**What if I've exhausted my bereavement time but need additional time?**

Once bereavement time has been exhausted, and upon manager approval, you may take annual, sick or unpaid time to extend a bereavement leave period. You should follow established departmental procedures.

**Please note:** You must exhaust all accrued but unused annual and sick time prior to using unpaid time.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



Employees called for jury duty or a court-related appearance may keep all court-provided compensation.

## Holidays

The university generally recognizes the following paid holidays. Exact dates for observance of these holidays are posted on the Holiday Schedule.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Inauguration Day  
*(If Inauguration Day coincides with the date on which Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is observed, the university will observe both holidays on the same day).*
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (December 25 - January 1) \*

*\*When calculating holiday pay during Winter Break, employees are paid only for the weekdays that fall between December 25 and January 1. Weekends are not considered paid holidays.*

## Holidays and Eligibility

- Full-time benefits-eligible employees are eligible to receive eight (8) hours of holiday time for each paid university holiday.
- Part-time benefits-eligible employees are eligible to receive prorated holiday time based upon percentage of effort (the number of hours they are scheduled to work per week divided by 40).

## Holidays and Paid Status

Benefits-eligible staff must be in paid status on the last scheduled work day immediately preceding and first scheduled work day following a holiday in order to be paid for that holiday.

Employees in "paid status" are those who receive pay that is processed through GW payroll and includes regular hours worked as well as approved annual time, sick time, GW paid short-term disability and GW paid parental leave.

Please Note: *Voluntary short-term disability, long-term disability and workers' compensation are paid by outside administrators; therefore, those pay types are not considered "paid status".*

## Holidays during Approved Annual and Sick Time

University holidays that occur during approved periods of annual or sick time should be charged to holiday time on the employee's time card, not to accrued annual or sick time.

### Example

If I am non-exempt, will I be compensated as straight time or overtime for working on a holiday?

If a non-exempt full-time employee worked five hours on the holiday, five regular hours and three holiday hours would be paid to the employee. Five holiday hours would be available to use before the end of the fiscal year.

### Example for Holidays and Paid Status

An employee is scheduled Monday-Friday both weeks of the biweekly pay period. A holiday falls on Monday, February 15. The employee needs to be in paid status on Friday, February 14 and Tuesday, February 18 to receive the holiday pay.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



## Holiday Time for Part-Time Employees

Part-time benefits-eligible employees receive *prorated* holiday time based upon percentage of effort. The number of prorated holiday hours is equal to an employee's weekly scheduled hours divided by five (5) weekdays worked. See the table below for examples:

Scheduled Work Hours	Holiday Proration Hours
36	7.20
30	6.00
24	4.80
16	3.20

## Options for Using Prorated Holiday Time

When a holiday falls on a part-time employee's regularly scheduled workday:

- Option 1 - The employee can take the prorated holiday time (based on percentage of effort) and will not receive pay for the remaining hours not worked, if any.
- Option 2 - The employee can take the prorated holiday time and use annual time for the difference between the prorated holiday time and any additional time normally worked.
- Option 3 - The employee can take the prorated holiday time and, if approved by manager, work any additional hours that would normally be worked on another day during the same week.

When a holiday falls on a day a part-time employee does not work:

- Option 1 - Employee works a regular day and receives additional pay for prorated holiday time.
- Option 2 - Employee takes prorated holiday time on a regular workday in the same week as the holiday.

### "Real world" example

A benefits-eligible part-time employee works M-Th and is scheduled to work 24 hours each week (six hours per day). The holiday falls on Monday.

The employee would be eligible for 4.8 holiday hours and able to choose one of the following options: (Option 1) take the 4.8 holiday hours, (Option 2) use annual time (1.2 hours) to supplement the holiday hours to reach a normal six-hour workday or (Option 3) work the additional 1.2 hours on another day during the same week (requires manager approval).

## Additional Holiday Compensation Guidelines

The university operates on a 24/7 schedule and, therefore, some employees must work on scheduled holidays. When university departments remain open on holidays, the following guidelines apply:

### Employees Scheduled to Work on a Holiday

An employee in an exempt or nonexempt position who works on a holiday will be paid as if the day were not a holiday and will be provided a substitute day off (up to 8 hours), to be used by the end of the fiscal year. The employee and their manager are responsible for tracking and coordinating the substitute day off.

### Employees Not Regularly Scheduled to Work on a Holiday

An employee in an exempt or nonexempt position who is not regularly scheduled to work on a holiday will be provided a substitute day off (up to 8 hours), to be used by the end of the fiscal year. The employee and their manager are responsible for tracking and coordinating the substitute day off.

## Timing for Using a Substitute Day

A substitute day off must be taken before the end of the fiscal year. If a non-exempt employee cannot take a substitute day off within that time, the employee will receive holiday pay equivalent to their base rate. The employee and their manager are responsible for submitting that holiday time to Payroll Services.



Exempt employees will not be paid out above their normal salary so the substitute day should be taken in a timely manner.

## Failure to Report to Work on a Scheduled Holiday Workday

An employee is not entitled to a substitute day off if they fail to report work on a scheduled workday that falls on a holiday. The manager may treat the absence on the holiday as an unauthorized absence (AWOL). Managers should review the situation with their HR representative prior to assigning AWOL status to the employee.

If the employee is AWOL on the scheduled workdays immediately preceding or following the holiday observance but works on the holiday, the employee will be paid for the holiday, but no substitute day off will be granted.

*Remember: Annual and GW sick time will not be accrued for the month in which an AWOL occurs.*

## Voting Time

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Polling places are generally open for extended hours on Election Day, but some employee schedules may make it difficult to vote during these hours. In instances where a polling location is not open at least two to three (2-3) hours before or after an employee's scheduled shift, a department should provide the employee with sufficient time, generally up to two (2) hours of paid time off, for voting. The two (2) hours is considered paid time off, but will not be deducted from the employee's annual time balance and will not be used to calculate overtime and other premium pay.

Employees should provide reasonable notice to their managers if they will need to be absent from their regularly scheduled work shift to vote. Employees should provide the hours of operation of their polling location before paid time off is approved. An increasing number of jurisdictions offer "early voting" prior to Election Day. Some employees may find it convenient to vote during these early voting periods.

**Note:** The Leave to Vote Amendment Act of 2020, gives all District employees the right to at least two hours of paid time off to vote.



## Change in Employment Status

Changes in employment status, such as moving from a full-time benefits-eligible position to a part-time benefits-eligible position or from a temporary position to a benefits-eligible position, may impact an employee’s annual and sick time balances.

**Annual Time:** Employees are able to transfer all accrued but unused annual time into a new position as long as the new position accrues annual time and the carryover amounts are within the limitations of the new position. If the new position does not accrue annual time, all accrued but unused annual time will be paid out.

**Sick Time:** Employees are able to transfer all applicable accrued but unused sick time up to a maximum of 180 days.

This chart covers the most frequent change in status examples.

Transfer From	Transfer To	Effect on Annual Time	Effect on Sick Time
Full-time benefits-eligible	Part-time benefits-eligible	Carry over up to 20 hours of any accrued but unused time in excess of 20 hours will be paid out.	Transfer all accrued but unused sick time up to a maximum of 180 days.
Part-time benefits-eligible	Full-time benefits-eligible	Retain all unused, accrued annual time.	Transfer all accrued but unused sick time up to a maximum of 180 days.
Benefits-eligible position	Non-benefits-eligible position	Paid out for any accrued but unused annual time calculated on the number of months employed during the fiscal year; this will be paid at the employee’s base rate exclusive of shift differential and overtime premiums.	Transfer all applicable accrued but unused sick time.
Former full-time benefits-eligible employee	Rehired in a full-time benefits-eligible position within 365 days of effective date of separation or retirement	The accrual rate in effect at the time of separation or retirement is reinstated.	Eligible for sick time reinstatement.

Note, new accruals available to employees who move from a non-benefits eligible position to a benefits-eligible position are effective on the effective date of the new position. If the effective date is after the first of the month, accruals may be prorated that month. Please see the charts in the annual time and sick time sections for more details.



## Leaving the University

### Annual Time

Employees will be paid for accrued but unused annual time upon separation of employment. Annual time is prorated in the month of separation if the separation date is prior to the last day of the month, as outlined in the chart below. The prorated time is credited on the date of separation. Additional proration may occur if an employee has unpaid workdays during the month prior to the employee's separation date. Details on proration due to unpaid time can be found on page 7.

If an employee used annual time in excess of the accrued amount at the time of separation, the excess days must be repaid to the university. Under no circumstances will un-accrued annual time be paid out upon separation.

Annual Time Proration for Separated Employees (Staff)	
Separation Date	Annual Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st - 7th	0
8th - 14th	0.5 (4 hours)*
15th - 21st	1 (8 hours)*
22nd or after	Normal Accrual Rate*

\*Part-time employees' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

### Annual Time Carryover

If a benefits-eligible employee leaves the university between July 1 and August 31, the following amounts of accrued but unused annual time carryover hours may be paid out upon separation:

- Full-time benefits-eligible employee: up to 40 hours
- Part-time benefits-eligible employee: up to 20 hours

### Sick Time

Employees are never paid out for unused accrued sick time at time of separation. Sick time is prorated in the month of separation if the separation date is prior to the last day of the month, as outlined in the chart below. Additional proration may occur if an employee has unpaid workdays during the month prior to the employee's separation date.

Sick Time Proration for Separated Employees (Staff)	
Separation Date	Sick Time Days (Hours) Accrued for Month
1st - 7th	0
8th - 14th	0.25 (2 hours)*
15th - 21st	0.5 (4 hours)*
22nd or after	Normal Accrual Rate*

\*Part-time employees' hours accrued will be based on percentage of effort.

### Additional Guidelines

#### Last Work Day

An employee's last working day cannot fall on a holiday or any other scheduled time off, except when the employee is on job-protected leave or is regularly scheduled to work on the holiday. Annual time cannot be used to extend the separation date beyond the last day worked (excluding those on an approved, job-protected leave of absence).



## Retirement Considerations

Employees who have provided at least 90 days' notice of retirement from the university can use accrued annual time after their retirement notice but the employee must work the last two work weeks to provide adequate transition time within the department. If the retirement notice is not provided timely, accrued annual time cannot be used through the retirement date.

Employees who have provided notice that they will be retiring at the end of the calendar year on December 31 are eligible to receive holiday pay for the Winter Break, even though they will not be in a paid status the day after the Winter Break period. The employee must still be in paid status on the last working day before Winter Break begins.

## Proration during an Unpaid Absence

If an employee was on approved unpaid leave (or was placed on unpaid leave) in the month of separation, the **Proration during an Unpaid Absence** rules will take precedence. All unpaid workdays in the month will be considered, including those post-separation. For example, if an employee was on unpaid leave in November and then separated on 11/16, all workdays between 11/17 through 11/30 would be considered unpaid days (in addition to the leave period) for purposes of calculating accrual for November. For annual and sick time proration details, please refer to those individual sections of this guide.



## Unpaid Leave

### Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Acts, both the federal FMLA and the District of Columbia (DC) FMLA, provide unpaid, but job-protected, leave to eligible employees so that they can care for their families or themselves in the event of specified family and medical situations. The university has elected to extend the leave provisions under the DC FMLA to eligible employees whose U.S. work location is outside of DC (i.e., GW DC FMLA). Employees may qualify for leave under the federal and DC Acts (or GW DC FMLA), and requests for FMLA leave will be considered under all programs.

#### Qualifying Reasons

FMLA provides eligible employees with job reinstatement and benefits continuation rights while on a qualifying leave of absence for:

- The birth, adoption or placement of a child for foster care
- The employee's own serious health condition
- The care of a family member who has a serious health condition
- A qualifying exigency leave related to a family member who is on covered active duty, has been called to covered active duty status, or has been notified of an impending call to covered active duty
- To care for a covered service member or veteran with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of active duty

#### Eligibility

To qualify under this policy, an employee must meet the following conditions:

- An employee must have worked at the university for a period totaling twelve (12) months. Periods of employment prior to a break in service of fewer than seven (7) years count towards eligibility.
- Under the DC FMLA, an employee must have been paid for at least 1,000 hours during your prior (12) month period of employment with the university. These twelve (12) months do not need to be consecutive but must be within the past seven (7) years.
- Under the federal FMLA, an employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of the leave.

*Federal and DC FMLA run concurrently and cannot be used consecutively if leave is covered under both laws.*

#### Entitlements

Under the DC FMLA, eligible employees are permitted up to sixteen (16) workweeks of unpaid family leave **and** sixteen (16) workweeks of unpaid medical leave during a twenty-four (24) month period.

Under the federal FMLA, eligible employees are permitted up to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave during a twelve (12) month period or up to twenty-six (26) workweeks during a single twelve (12) month period for military caregiver leave. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave for any federal FMLA-qualifying reason during the "single twelve (12) month period".

Employees can request FMLA to cover a continuous period of absence. Employees may also be able to take FMLA leave intermittently (taking leave in separate blocks of time for a single qualifying reason) or on a reduced work schedule basis (temporarily reducing an employee's usual weekly or daily work schedule).

GW uses the rolling backward method to determine an employee's FMLA entitlement. Under the federal FMLA, an employee's FMLA balance is the remainder of twelve (12) weeks of federal family and medical leave not used within the last twelve (12)

◀ Did you know annual and sick time can be used during family and medical leave?

Employees may elect to use accrued annual and/or sick time during an approved family and medical leave (FMLA) period in order to remain in paid status. Any period of annual (or sick) time taken while on FMLA will run concurrently with the FMLA leave and **cannot be taken in lieu of FMLA** if the absence is FMLA qualifying.



months. Under the DC FMLA, the employee's balance is the remainder of the sixteen (16) weeks of DC family and sixteen (16) weeks of DC medical leave not used within the last twenty-four (24) months.

## FMLA for Birth, Adoption or Placement of a Child for Foster Care

Eligible employees may request FMLA leave during the twelve (12) months following the birth, adoption or placement of a child for foster care in order to bond with their new child. FMLA may also cover leave required for prenatal care or for absences required before an actual adoption or placement of a child in order for the adoption or foster care to proceed.

Helpful Resources for Pregnancy and Birth

- [Healthy Pregnancy & New Parent Support](#)
- [Advocacy Resources for Expecting Parents \(PDF\)](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#)

## Benefits Enrollment and Changes

The birth, adoption or placement of a child for foster care are [Qualifying Life Events](#) allowing employees to make applicable changes to benefit elections. Employees have sixty (60) calendar days from the date a child is born, adopted or placed for foster care to add the new child as a dependent under the employee's GW health coverage or request other applicable changes. Employees will also need to provide supporting documentation to Benefits within sixty (60) calendar days of the event date confirming the date of birth, adoption or placement in order for the requested changes to be approved. Approved benefit changes will be effective from the date of birth, adoption or placement for foster care.

**Please note:** A Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) cannot be newly elected or continued during a paid or unpaid leave of absence longer than thirty (30) days. If employees wish to elect a Dependent Care FSA, employees need to elect the benefit within thirty (30) calendar days of returning from leave.

## Intermittent or Reduced Schedule FMLA Leave for Bonding after Birth

As well as requesting continuous leave, an eligible employee may use intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA family leave for bonding purposes after the birth or placement of a child. However, requests for intermittent or reduced work schedule FMLA family leave require departmental approval. Intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA family leave for bonding purposes must be scheduled in advance and requested in writing at time of FMLA application. Remember that thirty (30) calendar days' notice is required when the need for leave is foreseeable.

**Manager Tip** The department's approval is neither required for intermittent leave due to the serious health condition of the mother or child nor for continuous family leave for bonding following birth or placement, or for any other FMLA qualifying reasons.

## FMLA for the Employee's Own Serious Health Condition

An eligible employee may request FMLA when leave is required due to the employee's own serious health condition.\* A serious health condition is defined as any illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves:

- An incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient care;
- A period of incapacity of more than three (3) calendar days and continuing treatment by a health care provider;
- Continuing treatment by a health care provider for a chronic or long-term condition that is incurable or so serious that if untreated would likely result in incapacity of more than three (3) days; or
- Prenatal care.

\* Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, the flu, earaches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraines, routine dental or orthodontia problems, periodontal disease, etc., are examples of conditions that do not meet the definition of a serious health condition and do not qualify.



## FMLA for the Care of a Family Member

An eligible employee may request FMLA if leave is required in order to care for a family member who has a serious health condition.

### Federal Family Leave - Family Members Defined

- Spouse - as defined in the statute, means a husband or wife. For purposes of this definition, husband or wife refers to the other person with whom an individual entered into marriage as defined or recognized under state law for purposes of marriage in the state in which the marriage was entered into or, in the case of a marriage entered into outside of any state, if the marriage is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one state. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex or common law marriage that either:
  - Was entered into in a state that recognizes such marriages; or
  - If entered into outside of any state, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one state.
- Parent - defined as a biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood "in loco parentis" (stood in place of a parent) for the employee. This term does not include parents-in-law.
- Son or daughter - defined as a biological, adopted or foster child; stepchild; legal ward; or child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is either under age eighteen (18), or age eighteen (18) or older and "incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at the time that FMLA leave is to commence.

### DC Family Leave - Family Members Defined

- Person related by blood, legal custody or marriage
- Foster child
- Child who lives with the employee and for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility. Leave can be taken for children up to age twenty-one (21), individuals over age twenty-one (21) who are incapable of caring for themselves and individuals up to age twenty-three (23) who are full-time students at an accredited college or university
- Person with whom the employee shares or has shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom the employee maintains a committed relationship

#### Do you work outside of DC?

Employees who work outside of DC may be eligible for additional leave programs. For more information, contact Benefits at [timeoff@gwu.edu](mailto:timeoff@gwu.edu).

## FMLA for Military Family Leave

FMLA leave can be taken under the federal FMLA for caregiver leave and for qualifying exigencies.

### Caregiver Leave

Under the federal FMLA, an eligible employee may take up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of FMLA leave in a designated twelve (12) month period—measured forward from the first time an employee takes FMLA leave for this purpose—in order to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury. A "covered service member" includes a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, as well as a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness and who was a member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, at any time during the five (5) year period preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes medical treatment, recuperation or therapy.

### Leave for Covered Exigencies

Also under the federal FMLA, an eligible employee may take up to twelve (12) workweeks of FMLA leave during a designated twelve (12) month period when the employee's son, daughter or parent, who is a "covered service member," is on active duty or call-to-active-duty status for one or more qualifying exigencies, including: short-notice deployment, military events and related activities; certain childcare and related activities; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation; post deployment activities; and any other event that the employer and employee agree constitute a qualifying exigency.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



Covered active duty is when a member of the regular or reserve components of the Armed Forces is deployed to any foreign country.

Employees may request Military Family Leave for a covered service member or covered veteran who is the employee's spouse, child, parent or next of kin (defined as the nearest blood relative other than the service member's spouse, parent, son or daughter).

[The Employee's Guide to Military Family Leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act](#) provides a helpful overview of how the FMLA may benefit military families.

## Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the FMLA

Employees are required to provide thirty (30) days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When thirty (30) days' notice is not possible, employees must provide notice as soon as practicable.

In order to be approved for FMLA leave, employees must provide the anticipated duration of the leave as well as sufficient information and supporting documentation to determine if the absence qualifies for FMLA leave. Sufficient information includes (as applicable):

- If an employee is unable to perform the essential job functions due a serious health condition;
- If an employee has a need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider;
- If an employee needed to care for an eligible family member due to that family member's serious health condition;
- The need for intermittent and/or reduced schedule leave; and/or
- Circumstances supporting the need for military family leave.

If an employee does not submit the required documentation to be approved for FMLA, the leave may not be job-protected under the FMLA regulations. The university may also require a second or third medical opinion in appropriate circumstances. Employees must also identify if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees may also be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. While on continuous leave, employees may also be required to furnish the university with periodic reports of current status and intent to return to work.

The university does not discriminate or retaliate against employees for taking FMLA leave. However, the FMLA does not protect employees from disciplinary action, including separation, for performance or conduct on any other basis not related to FMLA absences.

## Intermittent FMLA Reporting

When leave is needed for scheduled medical treatment or other planned FMLA absences, employees must provide advanced manager notification and make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so not to unduly disrupt the university's operations. If approved for intermittent leave for unforeseen absences, employees must follow established departmental call-in procedures for unplanned absences. The employee's manager or [HR representative](#) can provide departmental call-in procedures, if needed.

Employees approved for intermittent FMLA must also notify Lincoln Financial, GW's FMLA administrator, of FMLA absences within seven (7) days of the absence for accurate record keeping. [Instructions for reporting ongoing intermittent FMLA absences \(PDF\)](#) are available. If these absence-reporting procedures are not followed, these absences may not be approved for job-protected leave.

**Please note:** Any annual, sick or unpaid time used during intermittent FMLA absences should be submitted using the employee's departmental time reporting system.

## Benefits Continuation

Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.



## Employer Rights and Responsibilities under the FMLA

Employees who are requesting leave for an FMLA-qualifying reason will be informed that they may be eligible for FMLA and will be provided with information about how to request FMLA leave. If eligible, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employee's rights and responsibilities. If the employee is not eligible, the notice will provide the reason(s) for ineligibility. Employees will also be notified if the leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

Employees who require intermittent or reduced work schedule FMLA may be transferred to an alternative position, for which the employee is qualified, during the period of intermittent or reduced work schedule FMLA. The alternative position must have equivalent pay and benefits but does not have to have equivalent duties. Upon conclusion of FMLA, the employee must be placed in the same or equivalent job the employee had prior to being on FMLA.

**Please note:** Federal and DC FMLA include provisions that allow an employer to deny restoration of employment to individuals defined as key employees under certain circumstances.

## Coordination with Paid Time Off

### Annual and Sick Time during FMLA

FMLA provides job protection; however, it does not provide pay. Employees can elect to use their available annual and sick time during approved FMLA leave to remain in paid status. Employees can also elect to take FMLA unpaid. Employees are not required to use available annual or sick time; however, any annual or sick time used will run concurrently with FMLA leave.

Any annual or sick time that an employee wishes to use during FMLA absences should be submitted using the employee's departmental time reporting system.

### Other Paid Benefits during FMLA

Full-time benefits-eligible staff with two (2) or more years of service may also be eligible for up to six (6) weeks of continuous paid parental leave, during FMLA, following the birth or placement of a child. In addition, an employee on FMLA leave due to birth may also be eligible for short-term disability (STD) benefits if required to be off-work for medical reasons before the birth and during the recovery period after birth. (STD and paid parental leave will run concurrently when both apply.) Any paid time off employees elect to use while on approved FMLA will run concurrently with the FMLA entitlement. Applicable staff paid parental leave and disability claims will be opened at Lincoln Financial in coordination with the FMLA leave for eligible employees; there is no separate application required.

**Please note:** Benefits receives approval notifications from Lincoln Financial and processes any applicable staff paid parental leave and GW Paid STD pay for employees, not managers or timekeepers.

### Paid Status and Accruals during FMLA

Employees who maintain full paid status during FMLA leave will accrue annual and sick time as normal. For the purpose of accruals, employees in "paid status" are those who receive pay that is processed through GW Payroll Services, such as regular hours, holiday pay, annual and sick time, GW paid short-term disability as well as staff paid parental leave. Voluntary short-term disability, long-term disability and worker's compensation are paid by outside administrators; therefore, those pay types are not considered "paid status" under the GW time off policy.

An employee in an unpaid status for a full calendar month will not accrue annual or sick time for that month. Employees, who maintain paid status for some portion of a calendar month, may receive prorated annual and sick time for that month, as outlined in the proration charts in those respective sections of this guide.

## Returning to Work

### Reinstatement - FMLA

Employees should contact their HR representative prior to returning to work. Failure to notify HR of an impending return to work may negatively affect payroll and benefits processing.

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



If an employee does not return to work following FMLA leave for a reason other than those listed below, the employee may be required to reimburse the university for the employer share of benefits premiums paid on the employee's behalf during FMLA leave. The exceptions include:

- The continuation, recurrence or onset of a serious health condition that would entitle the employee to FMLA leave;
- The continuation, recurrence or onset of a current service member's or veteran's serious injury or illness that would entitle the employee to FMLA leave; or
- Other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Employees who return in a timely manner from approved FMLA leave will be restored to the same or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment, provided all required documentation, including the "authorization to return to work" form described below, have been submitted. Employees returning from FMLA have no greater right to reinstatement than if the employee had been continuously employed during FMLA leave.

## Fitness for Duty

Employees out on FMLA leave for their own serious health condition, will be required to present an [authorization to return to work \(PDF\)](#) prior to reinstatement. If such authorization is not received in a timely fashion, the employee's return to work may be delayed until authorization is provided. The university may request a second medical opinion at its own expense prior to the employee's return to work.

## Benefits Enrollment

Upon return to active employment, employees may re-enroll or make a change (consistent with a qualifying life event) to benefits coverage within thirty (30) calendar days of returning to work. If no election is made, the next opportunity to enroll will be during open enrollment or within thirty (30) calendar days of a Qualified Life Event (QLE).

**Did You Know?** Employees who wish to participate in the FSA dependent care account upon returning to work must enroll/re-enroll in the FSA dependent care benefit within thirty (30) calendar days after their return date.

## How to Apply for FMLA

Contact Lincoln Financial at least 30 days prior to the start of your leave (when foreseeable) or as soon as possible (when not foreseeable). [Instructions on filing a claim or leave \(PDF\) are available.](#)



## DC Parental Leave (for School Events)

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Under the [District of Columbia Parental Leave Act](#), employees may take twenty-four (24) hours of unpaid DC Parental Leave per year to attend school-related events for the employee's own children or other children in the employee's direct family.

School-related events are those sponsored by a teacher, school or parent-teacher association, including concerts, plays, rehearsals, sporting games or practices and meetings with teachers or counselors.

**Please note:** *The university has elected to extend the leave provisions under the DC Parental Leave Act to eligible employees whose work location is outside of DC.*

This Act applies to an employee who is a:

- parent of a child;
- guardian of a child;
- custodian of a child;
- aunt of a child;
- uncle of a child;
- grandparent; or
- spouse or domestic partner to a person listed above.

Employees must provide at least ten (10) days' advance notice, unless the school event was not foreseeable.

During DC Parental Leave, employees may elect to use annual time to remain in paid status or take the leave unpaid. Those time off requests should be made via the applicable time reporting system.

### How to Apply for DC Parental Leave

Contact Lincoln Financial at least 10 days prior to the start of your leave (when foreseeable) or as soon as possible (when not foreseeable). [Instructions on filing a claim or leave \(PDF\)](#) are available.



## USERRA Leave

The [Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994](#) (USERRA) protects the rights and protections of employees who voluntarily or involuntarily, leave employment positions to undertake military service, eligible FEMA service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA guarantees an employee returning from qualifying service the right to be reemployed at their former job (or as nearly comparable a job as possible) with the same benefits. [Your Rights under USERRA \(PDF\)](#) summarizes the employment and reemployment rights for qualifying service members.

### Pay Protections

USERRA leave is unpaid; however, employees may elect to use accrued annual or sick time during USERRA leave. While USERRA forbids an employer from requiring an employee to use accrued paid time off during a period of qualifying service, if elected, the paid time off would be paid at the employee's regular base pay rate.

### Benefits Continuation

When activated for duty, uniformed service members receive TRICARE however you can elect to continue your GW health coverage, with premium payment. An employee may not be subjected to a waiting period for health insurance coverage after the employee returns from military service and is reemployed. Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.

### Reemployment Guarantees

If the criteria listed below are met, returning service members will be reemployed upon application for reinstatement. Service members must return to their jobs within a predetermined period after they are deactivated, based on how long they were gone.

In general, if the employee has been absent from a position of civilian employment because of qualifying service, the employee will be eligible for reemployment under USERRA by meeting the following criteria:

- The employer had advance notice of the employee's military or National Disaster Medical System obligations;
- The employee has been away from this employer five (5) years or fewer due to qualifying obligations (excluding exemptions);
- The employee returns to work in a timely manner as defined under USERRA;
- The employee has not been separated from uniformed services with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions; and,
- The employee was not in a position that was temporary or limited to a specific time period or project where there was no reasonable expectation that employment would continue indefinitely or for a significant period.

**Manager Tip** Employers may fill positions with temporary or contract workers for the duration of the original employee's service. Employers must notify employees temporarily filling such positions when service members are slated to return.

With certain exceptions, returning service members, upon reapplication, will be reemployed in the job that they would have attained had they not been absent for qualifying service, with the same seniority, status and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority. To be eligible for protection under USERRA, the service member must report to work or apply for reemployment within the following guidelines:

- 1 - 30 days of service: Report next scheduled workday after safe travel and eight (8) hours rest;
- 31-180 days of service: Apply within fourteen (14) days after completion of service; or

# TIME OFF & LEAVE



- 181+ days of service: Apply within ninety (90) days after completion of service.

Reasonable accommodation must be made for returning employees who have become disabled during their service. If the employer is unable to make reasonable accommodation within the old position, the employee will be offered another position for which the employee is qualified or could become qualified. Disabled veterans have two (2) years to return to their jobs after their service ends. Returning service members should contact their HR representative prior to returning to work as outlined in the USERRA rules. Failure to notify HR of an impending return to work may negatively affect payroll and benefits processing.

## Benefits Enrollment

Upon return to active employment, employees may [re-enroll or make a change](#) (consistent with a qualifying life event) to benefits coverage within thirty (30) calendar days of returning to work. If no election is made, the next opportunity to enroll will be during open enrollment or within thirty (30) calendar days of a Qualified Life Event (QLE).

## Retirement Contributions

Eligible employees will also receive any base contributions to their [retirement savings account](#) that would have been made if the employee had not been on unpaid USERRA. Eligible employees also have the right to make up any missed contributions to the Supplemental Retirement Plan and receive matching contributions within a certain period after returning to work. Please contact [Benefits](#) for details.

## Annual Time Reinstatement

Returning employees who had an accrued annual time balance prior to going on USERRA leave that was forfeited at the end of the fiscal year will have that balance reinstated. Please contact Benefits at [timeoff@gwu.edu](mailto:timeoff@gwu.edu) for further details.

## How to Apply for USERRA Leave

Contact Lincoln Financial at least 30 days prior to the start of your leave (when foreseeable) or as soon as possible (when not foreseeable). [Instructions on filing a claim or leave \(PDF\)](#) are available.



## Personal Leave

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Benefits-eligible staff may request personal leave for situations that do not fall within the provisions of other university leave categories. Examples include:

- For educational or training purposes
- To attend a personal or family event
- For an extension of family leave after exhausting FMLA
- To care for a family member when not eligible for FMLA

### Personal Leave Eligibility

Unpaid personal leave may be requested after completion of ninety (90) days of employment.

Staff members who have fewer than six (6) months of service in a benefits-eligible position may request a personal leave of absence for a period not to exceed ten (10) workdays.

Staff members who have completed a minimum of six (6) months of service in a benefits-eligible position may request longer periods of personal leave.

### Coordination with Paid Time

All applicable accrued annual and sick time must be exhausted during approved personal leave. For example, if an employee is requesting personal leave to care for an ill family member, both annual and sick time will be exhausted. If the leave is for training or educational purposes, only annual time will be exhausted.

### Benefits Continuation

While on approved personal leave, employees are eligible to continue specific benefits and may be required to pay applicable contributions toward premiums. Detailed [benefits continuation](#) information is available on the Benefits website.

### Effect of Personal Leave on Merit Increases

For personal leave periods exceeding ninety (90) calendar days, the amount of merit increase, if any, may be prorated based on time spent at work during that performance review period.

### Requests for Personal Leave

An employee should submit a personal leave request to their manager as far in advance as possible. The request must include the purpose of the leave, the date the leave is to begin and the date the employee intends to return to work. In deciding whether to grant the request, the department's operational and staffing needs, the reason for the request and the employee's job performance should be considered. The approval of the request does not guarantee job reinstatement, and the employee's position may be filled, modified or eliminated during the period of personal leave. If the employee is not reinstated, the employee may apply for vacant positions.

To apply, complete the [personal leave request form \(PDF\)](#) posted on the Benefits website and submit to [timeoff@gwu.edu](mailto:timeoff@gwu.edu).

### Leave for Religious Observances

Employees may use annual time for religious observances that are not part of the university's regular [Holiday Schedule](#) by submitting their paid time off request via the applicable time reporting system, in accordance with established departmental procedures. For further support, please contact [Equal Employment Opportunity & Access](#) at [accommodations@gwu.edu](mailto:accommodations@gwu.edu) or (202) 994-9656.



# We Are Here to Help

For questions regarding GW's paid time off and leave of absence programs, please contact Benefits at:

 **(571) 553-8382**

 **timeoff@gwu.edu**

 **hr.gwu.edu/time-and-leave**

Please contact Payroll Services for time reporting and paycheck questions at:

 **(571) 553-4277**

 **timerep@gwu.edu or payroll@gwu.edu**

 **hr.gwu.edu/payroll**

Follow Benefits for the latest updates, reminders and events:

 **@gw\_benefits**

 **blogs.gwu.edu/gwbenefits**